



UNIVERSITAT  
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## **Inclusive Schools: Literature Review and Proposal of an Inclusive Middle School Model for San Salvador, El Salvador.**

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Máster Universitario en Gestión de Empresas, Productos y Servicios

Trabajo Fin de Master

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10 de Septiembre 2015



## **Abstract**

The aim of this Final Dissertation (TFM) is to propose an improved model of inclusive school for a city in El Salvador to support the economic development of the country through education policies.

The work will include a literature review on inclusive education, a historical background of the education statistics in El Salvador, the study of a new education plan launched on year 2011 called 'Escuela Inclusiva de Tiempo Pleno', and the proposal of different guidelines and strategies for middle schools.

Inclusive Education is a new topic since the 48<sup>th</sup> session of the International Conference Education on year 2008, held in Geneva by the UNESCO. This conference remarkably intended to introduce the concept of Inclusiveness in Education because 'quality inclusive education is fundamental to achieving human, social and economic development' (ICE, 2008). El Salvador, member of the UNESCO since 1948, was represented in the conference by the Minister of Education. At the time each participant country in the conference, including El Salvador, made the commitment of taking actions for improve inclusiveness in the educational system. El Salvador sent a final report where inclusiveness was included in a plan called 'Plan 2021' that at the end had not a real focus in inclusiveness. Because of this later the reform 'Vamos a la Escuela' was introduced which included the plan 'Escuela Inclusiva de Tiempo Pleno'.

Seven years later, literature review shows that there is a lack of unanimity on what the concept of Inclusive Education implies, the guidelines to apply it correctly and the evaluation methods to measure it progress and achievements through the years. Also, each country, and being more specific developed countries and countries in

development, applies it according to their needs or priorities. It is clear that improvements can be done based on successful cases; for example Costa Rica, almost neighbor of El Salvador, is nowadays considered one of the most competitive countries in Latin America according to the International Monetary Fund, besides Chile and Panama. But in El Salvador, the educational programs has not been as successful as expected, for this reason some improvements will be necessary.

**Keywords:** inclusive education, inclusive school, education, El Salvador, development, countries in development, inclusiveness.



## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank first my advisor, María de Miguel, who encourage me to pursuit my goal of investigate about inclusiveness worldwide and in El Salvador; her ideas, support and cheer up words help me to overcome the difficulties I found through the project.

Second, I want to give thanks to my family and God, my mother, father, sister, baby Diego, Ernesto, aunties and Lucky pet that have been always there for me and gave me the support to do what I always wanted to do, study in Spain.

And finally to my closest friends who are my family too, Rosina Castro, Paola Maravilla and Ivan Rivera, and many others that helped me to get information from the country and gave me the contacts to reach people involved in the educational system.



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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

ARENA: Nationalist Republican Alliance of El Salvador

EITP: Inclusive School of Full Time (Escuela Inclusiva Tiempo Pleno)

FEPADE: Fundación Empresarial para El Desarrollo

FMLN: Farabundo Martí Front for the National Liberation

FUSADES: Fundación Salvadoreña para el Desarrollo Económico y Social

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

HDI: Human Development Index

HSBC: Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Company

IMF: International Monetary Fund

Mined: Ministry of Education from El Salvador

MS: Salvatrucha Gang

NGOs: Non- Governmental Organizations

NTU: Nanyang Technological University

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development

OSCE: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

OEI: Organization of Ibero-American States

OXFAM: Oxford Committee for Famine Relief

PAES: Test for Superior Education

PISA: Programme for International Students Assessment

SQC: Statistical Quality Control

UCA: Central American University ‘ José Simeón Cañas’

UN: United Nations

UNESCO: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

## **GLOSSARY**

**Bachiller:** Person who finished the high schools studies and is ready to enter to the university.

**Curricula:** “the aggregate of courses of study given in a school, college, university, etc. or the regular or a particular course of study in a school, college, etc”. (Dictionary Online.Com, 2015)

**Illiteracy:** the inability to read and write and the lack of capacity to understand and to do a critic reflection of the information, and also the inability to think with mathematical concepts and do conclusions based on evidence. (BBC Mundo, 2015)

**Lancasterian Method:** “teaching method, practiced most extensively in the 19th century, in which the older or better scholars taught the younger or weaker pupils”. (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2015)

**Marero/a:** Refers to a person who is member of a criminal gang in El Salvador.

**Normal – Superior School:** Schools that in the seventies and eighties were in charge of the formation of the professors in El Salvador.

**Positivist Method:** “used to describe a method approach to the study of society that relies specifically on scientific evidence, such as experiments and statistics, to reveal a true nature of how society operates”. (In Study Dictionary, 2015)

# Chapter 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Reasons for choosing the topic

It was some years ago, while I was doing social work at the end of the school that I had a close view of the educational reality in the country where I was born, El Salvador. I volunteered to teach English, the most international language nowadays. It is widely known that people with a better English level have better opportunities, which make it a compulsory subject in El Salvador's public school system.

For my surprise, my temporary ninth grade students had been studying English for years, but at that point they were not able to write a short essay or to speak more than ten basic words. Maybe it was something about the poor quality teaching from the professor, was my first thought, but, day after day I realized that the poor knowledge and performance was not only in English, they had the same problems in Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, etc. The deficiency was everywhere, sadly for these students. Thus, the chances to enter to a prestigious high school or university are limited, almost inexistent. First, they do not have the economic capacity to pay the fees and, second, how they are going to win a scholarship when they do not even know the basic knowledge of the subjects? The most likely is that they will never finish their education, would never have a career, and the cycle repeats again, a high populated small poor country with undereducated habitants, a country categorized as an underdeveloped country with the highest rates of violence.

After my social work, I understood how different the reality in this small country is. While I had school classmates successfully applying to study their careers in universities as prestigious as Harvard and Cambridge, with a brighter future than the half of El Salvador's population, all the students I met in the social work were

thinking to leave the school or illegally move to another country, because for them, education is for rich people, they do not feel included in the society, in the system.

Known the reality beyond my close circle of friends and family, brought me the interest in research about the phenomenon of deficiency in the educational public system, the lack of inclusiveness, the difficulties beyond being a underdeveloped country with a limited educational budget, and that is how the model of Inclusive School came across my path. After many years I am glad to have the opportunity to investigate deeper about Inclusive School and how it would be possible to apply it in El Salvador's society reality.

## 1.2 Inclusive education theory basis (Literature Review).

In order to have a deeper and scientific knowledge about the area. In the first semester of this Master, I made the final report of the subject Research Methodologies about Inclusive Education. For it, I searched in two different academic websites, Dialnet.com and Scopus.com. Through them, using the keywords: 'inclusive education', 'education in underdeveloped countries' and 'inclusive school', I found different academic papers and academic references made by different authors.

The summary of the articles found are presented next.

### 1.2.1 Inclusive Education Concept by the UNESCO

In the International Conference of Education of year 2005 organized by the UNESCO the concept given of inclusive education is: 'a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches,



structures and strategies, with a common vision that covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children'. (UNESCO, 2005, p.3).

It is important to remark that is the only recognized international organization that has given an official concept.

### 1.2.2 Inclusive Education Concepts and Guidelines by Different Authors

Table 1 Literature Review Summary

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Focus Region</b>	<b>Important Conclusions</b>
Fernández-Batanero (2006)	Not specified	-Inclusive Education implies to answer the needs of all the students independently of their nature and the level of need. - It must include the socializing and learning of student's with different economic conditions, culture, capabilities, religion and interests, from the most capable one from the one that has a special need. -The inclusive education is not limited to students with disabilities, it implies all the students that want to be in the school.
Sapon (2013)	Not specified	-Inclusion in Education means that inclusion is not simply an organizational structure, but rather a commitment to making

		<p>classrooms, schools and the world places in which everyone is valued and belongs and diversity is seen as enriching and positive.</p> <p>-Moving beyond narrow understandings of inclusion will involve a through unpacking of societal beliefs about difference and connection. Is not ignoring all the differences of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, language, religion.</p>
Solla (2013)	Not Specified	<p>-There is a link between inclusive school and teaching vocation, as the last mentioned works as a tool to improve the possibilities of learning and the involvement of all the students no matter their background.</p> <p>-The educational system has to adapt to it students and not the contrary as it actually happens, that students has to adapt to the system.</p>
Blanco, Aguerrondo, Ouane, & Shaeffer (2008)	Not Specified	<p>-Inclusive education is a process that implies the transformation of school and other learning centers for attending all the students, girls</p>

		<p>and boys, students from ethnicity minorities, students infected with HIV and AIDS, students with disabilities, and with learning difficulties.</p> <p>-The inclusion must include families, community, and school as a whole, hence if students at a young age are not available to develop their potential, families are in risk of being poor or poorer.</p> <p>- Educational inclusion implies social justice.</p>
<p>Casanova (2011)</p>	<p>Not Specified</p>	<p>-In a social democracy, education is inclusive or it cannot be called education, because it wouldn't comply the functions of a society that is to form future citizens that must participate actively, creatively and critically in the making of a future nation or pertinence group.</p> <p>-Education has to include children and youth in the ages of compulsory education, because it is the only guarantee to social access in equity conditions.</p>

		<p>-School must provide everything that the environment doesn't, hence compensating the difficulties and deficiencies that their family or society context have for them.</p> <p>-All include everyone, no matter their characteristics and conditions.</p>
<p>Foutoul &amp; Fierro (2010)</p>	<p>Latin America</p>	<p>-Inclusive school promote coexisting forms based in participation and the systematic effort for include in a pertinent way a wide range of traditionally excluded students, assuming responsibility for their learning. In the commitment for the learning of all students, resides the distinctive element of the experiences.</p> <p>-Inclusive schools are schools that left being persons associations that share circumstantially space, time and tasks.</p> <p>-They established an ethical link at making themselves responsible of the well-being</p>

		<p>and learning of every student.</p> <p>-Inclusive schools acquire more relevancy when it is shown that Latin America is one of the most unequally region in the world and schools have to adapt their systems to this, by overcoming the bad distribution of richness, and the racial, ethnic, gender discrimination, with students categorized as high or low class.</p> <p>-The schools must modernize itself over the basis of the worst income distribution in the world.</p>
Aguadero (2012)	Sub-Saharan Africa	-Inclusive education means that every student, no matter the different scholar, cultural and social background, must have the same learning opportunity but also should be pertinent, equally and effective in contributing to reduce the poverty and improve the health and subsistence ways of the population to achieve more fair and solidary societies.
Ainscow, Dyson, Goldrick, & West (2013)	Not specified	-Inclusive school is a school committed to fairness, where

		<p>all the students should expect to be welcome in their classrooms in explicit and implicit ways that embrace cultural, social, intellectual differences, so they will not feel marginalized because a lack of interaction or feedback on their behavior and performance from their professors.</p> <p>-All students must feel welcome and they can expect positive interactions as a normal part of their classroom experience. As a result, they will feel included, valued, acknowledged.</p>
Blanco & Duk (2011)	Caribbean and Latin America	<p>-Inclusive education offers educational high quality opportunities to everyone and generates conditions so that every person can take advantages of them, physical and economical accessibility.</p> <p>-A pertinent education for every person, the contents and the quality of the education should be relevant for every social group.</p> <p>-Inclusive Education is the one</p>

		that allows every student be conscious of the diversity and to learn to socialize with every person different, developing values of solidarity, cooperativism and mutual understanding.
Fernández & Malvar (2009)	Not specified	-Inclusive education means that the scholar system shares a unique curriculum in every school, whether it is for students with special needs or the rest of students.  -Inclusive school is one that integrates, gives response to diversity, with acting principles and resources according to the particular students' needs.
Escudero & Martínez (2011)	Not Specified	-Inclusive education is democratic, fair and equitable, that is a good education for every person, including all the excluded, not only people with physical disabilities.
Montaño & Rodríguez (2012)	Not Specified	-Educational inclusion implies a total insertion of every child, with abilities and disabilities, in every single school activity, involves much more than the presence of students with

		especial educational needs in the classrooms and schools; it is their participation and recognition as individuals who belong to the community and who must have the same rights and opportunities of every single person.
Heredero (2010)	Not Specified	-Inclusive school is a school that includes every student independently of their singularity (blind, deaf, paralyzed etc.) in a regular school, the school provides specialized support to students with peculiarities.
Echeita & Ainscow (2011)	Not Specified	-Inclusive education is a process that it has to be performed as a constant improvement research, responding to the student diversity, learn how to coexist with differences and how to take advantage of it. This inclusion searches for the presence, participation and success of every student and also identifies and eliminates barriers meaning that each belief and attitude must be changed to better ways.



		-Inclusive education must emphasize in groups in risks of been excluded, forgotten or with scholar failure.
Díaz (2013)	Not Specified	-Inclusive education implies an advancement and an accomplishment in the educational system. It has to be quality education that allows not only the entry of students, but also their permanence and egress of students. -There has to be the implication of every sector that is involved in the education of a person.
Laorden, Prado, & Royo (2006)	Not Specified	-Inclusive education is a deeply respect of the differences and a commitment as a task, which result to an opportunity of learning and development. - Every student has the right of acquire a deeply knowledge according to its reality, needs and potential.
Vega & Garín (2013)	Not Specified	-Inclusive education is a right, every person, no matter his/her situation should integrate in the educational system, and their

		<p>limitations shouldn't affect their learning process.</p> <p>-Inclusion helps to build a better society and it must provide solutions to students that are not able to learn in the normal process, avoiding exclusion is the most important task, also focusing on students with learning problems.</p>
Cordero (2004)	Not specified	<p>-Educational inclusion first of all is an attitude, a group of values and beliefs, not an action or a group of actions. It means being part of a whole. It must give support to the qualities and needs of each student in the educational community, so they feel welcome and secure, making easier their success.</p> <p>- Every difference should be accepted.</p>
Escudero (2012)	Not specified	<p>-Inclusive education implies that every student graduate from the scholar system (especially in the compulsory period) acquires enough and fair knowledge that allow his/her to continue their posterior studies or to transit</p>

		<p>with dignity to the working environment.</p> <p>-It should provide conditions and opportunities, so every student learns and succeeds and would never finish school without the knowledge needed</p>
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*Source: Edited by Writer*

After seeing many difference concepts and similarities, it is important to get some conclusions from the literature review.

### 1.2.3 Conclusions of the Literature Review

There are different concepts surrounding the meaning of inclusive education an inclusive school; despite this, it is clearly fundamental for all the authors that inclusive education integrates and has the main goal of avoid the exclusion of different groups, not only people with physical disabilities like it was twenty years ago, but people with different capabilities, cultures, religions, economic status, and is clear that one of the biggest challenges is in how to take advantage of the richness existing in having such a vast diversity of students in an educational system.

It is also noticeable that, because there is not an official concept of what inclusive educations means, implies and the requirements to achieve it, educational systems adapt it to their reality and prioritize it according to their criteria and challenges. In the case of Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa, the level of inequality is so big that governments focus more on inclusion of every child in the educational system, because most of them due to their poverty or social violence situation are not able to join a school, and there is a gap between their participation, permanence and the type of quality education they receive. In the case of wealthier countries, there is more focus on the cultural integration because of the wide range of

ethnicities as a result of immigration.

Despite, at the present there is not an official version of every aspect of inclusive education, it is concluded that the changes that it implies will result in a developed an integrated society, because education is the basis of a high level of economic activity in a country, and an inclusive education will give the same opportunities to each member in the society, giving opportunities to marginalize sectors of the society.

Although inclusive education is a right, is one that is not fully complied yet, but there are highlights that give hope that an inclusive education system is not impossible or far away.

### 1.3 Methodology

According to Aaker et al. (2011), there are three main groups in which a research can be classify based on the goal of the researcher. In most of the cases, a research's purpose can be in more than one group but there is always one group dominating among the others.

The three main categories are: Exploratory, Descriptive and Explanatory. First, in the case of the exploratory, first, the approach is to learn about a new topic that hasn't been studied extensively; second, in the case of the descriptive, the goal is to recount characteristics about a phenomenon or population, and, third, the aim of the explanatory, is to find the reasons why something happens.

In this dissertation the type of research used will be the exploratory, through a case study and the data used are primary and secondary.

Regarding the primary data, some interviews have been performed to different people involved in El Salvador's educational system. The interviews were done through online communication platforms.

And for secondary data we have used information from different governmental organisms and international NGOS.

## 1.4 Objectives

### 1.4.1 The problem

The objective of this work is to find different guidelines and overviews to propose a better model of inclusive middle school for a city in El Salvador. Moreover, with a future final aim of supporting the economic development of the country through integrated education policies.

By doing different searches through literature, it can be said that there have not been too many authors focusing exclusively in El Salvador's education system, which is understandable from the point of view that, after all, the concept of inclusiveness is somehow new in the country. However, there are plenty authors studying other countries systems, in many of them there have been different conclusions, about the concepts and guidelines, but in all the cases it is clear that the circumstances in which the initiative of inclusiveness is launched influences the way on how is introduced and the results expected from it.

From this searches, it is remarkable important to stand out that the priorities changes by culture, countries and different aspects, and something that gives excellent results in Finland, not necessarily will be the magic solution to El Salvador. As these countries live different realities, one extreme to another in terms of violence and richness, it is not possible to apply the same methods and expect the same results from kids whose parents are gangsters and risk their lives daily,

with a kid that has never seen poverty or violence. This may seem very obvious, but in terms of studies, there is not a clear conclusion about the impact of different factors surrounding the environment in which the schools are.

Hence, the lack of information about it, confirms the importance of doing a research to have an amplified insight of the situation in El Salvador and to propose something that really could be applied, something suitable to the country's conditions.

#### 1.4.2 Research Questions

To have a clear direction of the problems and proposal, the list of questions below must be answered:

- ❖ *Is there any relation between inclusive education and country development?*
- ❖ *Which is the actual status of education in El Salvador in terms of inclusiveness?*
- ❖ *Are inclusiveness and violence related?*
- ❖ *Which role should play parents and professors to support students to be included?*
- ❖ *Does the inequality in El Salvador slow down the efforts to increase the sense of inclusiveness in public schools?*

## **Chapter 2 Education in El Salvador overview**

### 2.1 Education in El Salvador

In the chapter we present the origins of education in El Salvador, how it has evolved through the years and the status of different factors that influence and shape it in a peculiar way. It is important to know how education has been in the past and in the present, in order to understand it better and purpose adequate improvements, having a better vision of the problems.

#### 2.1.1 Origins of Education in El Salvador

The first formal movements in terms of education started in the year 1832 when in this same year was created the first regulation for elementary education, which ordered the public instruction that established the creation of public primary schools in each municipality across the country with funds provided by the same municipality, and, in the cases where there was not possible, the parents of the children would have to contribute to the cause.

In 1841, it was created the first National University, which was named Universidad de El Salvador, and there were defined three educational levels: primary (elementary), secondary (middle) and tertiary (superior). With the Executive Decree published February 15, 1841, by the president Juan Lindo, the first middle private school was also created under the name of Colegio La Asunción.

In 1860, there were created three Normal Schools, these schools were designated to form professors for elementary school that did not have previous studies before, and most of them were empiric at that moment. For middle school there was only one Normal School, hence most of the professors were educated there or in private schools. In the case of superior education there was not an official school to form



them, most of them were military workers with superior studies or graduated doctors, it was some decades later that a superior school to form them was created.

Later, in year 1886, it was promoted a new Constitution under the mandate of General Francisco Meléndez, in which it was declared the education free of religion and the State was responsible of giving education to the less privileged sectors in the society. In those years it was believed that elementary education would be enough to cover the necessities of those sectors; despite this, pre-school education was created that year, but was not considered essential and it was not part of the official educational system.

The Lancasterian System of mutual education was chosen to be used in the first learning centers, being predominated at the beginning of the XX century. In general, the elementary school education at the ending of the XIX century and the beginning of XX century, was centralized in unitary schools, where the professors were imparting knowledge to two or three different sectors.

With the purpose of elaborating similar educational plans and programs for the Central American region, that will fortify it, it was held the first Central American Educational Congress in Guatemala in 1893. The most important results of the congress was the rise in value of sciences teaching and the perpetuation of the spirit's sciences, being practical subjects like drawing, calligraphy, manual work, singing, agriculture and this positivism model dominated the official Educational Program.

The Education Ministry of El Salvador was created in 1939, before that date there was not existence of an institution especially dedicated to education, instead the educational main instructions were managed by the Public Instruction sub-secretary, which depended on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Justice. This sub-secretary had a scholar inspection and a technical section. The scholar inspection was the responsible of hiring and supervising personal and the technical

section was dedicated to the planning in the different educational levels and programs' elaboration.

With the creation of the Ministry of Education, all the educational aspects were centralized in the institution and the managing of the education improved.

### 2.1.2 Educational Reforms in El Salvador

The **first official educational reform** in El Salvador was in 1940 under the mandate of the dictator Maximiliano Hernández Martínez, this reform called was only for elementary school. It

was considered as an important advance because it brought innovations in different aspects. It was expected the continuity and sequence of the educational plans and programs to give the professors the opportunity to follow them depending on the particular situation of the population were they teach.

Regarding the course of study, the list of themes were deleted to introduce the plans of study, which should serve as didactic guides to treat the themes corresponding to the scholar cycle. Each content had the purpose to be accomplished during the scholar year. As other innovations, diagnostic exams and physiological test were introduced to the students in order to determinate their learning capacities.

The programs for Normal Schools were also modified in this reform with the finality of training better professors.

It is important to outline that, regardless the innovations brought with the reform, the economic and social reality in the country was not considered in the elaboration of educational plans and programs and most of them were created without previous feasibility research. The deficiencies in the professors' training was difficult to overcome in a short period of time, and it was not possible to transmit the new

purposes intended with the reform. On the other hand, the subjects were extremely demanding in time and the professors did not have time to prepare their classes.

After this reform, there were some improvements between 1948-1950, when the doctor Reynaldo Galindo Pohl assumed the Ministry of Culture and improved the academic sphere with some relevant changes, like the construction of schools and the creation of experimental schools with new technologies. Additionally, there were created the Social Work School and the Normal Superior School. Also, the Normal Schools of Izalco and Suchitoto were strengthened.

Regarding to the programs for adult's literacy, it was pretended to give them systematic character and fundamental knowledge as in that period the illiteracy index was profoundly high.

The **second educational reform** was in 1968. The objective of this new restructuration was to broaden the internal market from the industrial development, the priority was given to the qualification of workers in a medium technical level with the idea of integrate them in a short term to the working market. The strategic sectors were education, agriculture and industry.

There was one key modification, the 1968 reform joining the basic education, hence the increase of basic studies from six to nine years divided by three cycles. The first and second cycle were given by one professor, while the third one by two professors. The third cycle was the secondary level (middle and high school), for teens from sixteen to eighteen years old, the length was three years, and was declared as not compulsory, neither free of charge, and to grant access to it, an access exam was needed.

The new structure aimed to transform the reality and satisfy the demands of the economic development through the modernization of the workers, which later would contribute to the social development of the country. However all the efforts,

the country was in a tense situation with institutionalized violence, the friction with Honduras and the unequal economic growth of Central America countries.

In this reform, Normal School disappeared and professors started to be trained in universities.

The **third educational reform** was in 1995 and was developed from 1995 to 2005. The objectives of this reform were: to increase the working human capital in accordance to the global economy, to teach values and attitudes to consolidate peace in the country, to teach tolerance and understanding according to a social democracy, also to transmit knowledge and technologies to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty . Resulting from these objectives, there were others more specific included in relation with increasing the access, improving the quality, reforming of administrative issues, and other positive aspects.

To improve the quality, it was proposed a curricular reform, professors training to improve their pedagogy and capacities. This was based on the profile expected from the students, which was considered the key element to improve education in the country.

The **last biggest reform** known is from 2009, named ‘Vamos a la Escuela’. This has been categorized as the most integral reform towards globalization, it covers from basic levels to superior educational levels in all the country, and one of the main objective was to perform different efforts to include all the children and teens in the schools, especially from the poorest areas, where dropping out of school was extremely common because the extremely poor conditions of the parents did not allow them to buy school supplies, uniforms, etc.

After years of efforts, it has been the first time that all students from public schools have received school supplies, shoes, uniforms and a daily breakfast. It reincorporated more than twenty five thousands students that have dropped school because of the lack of economic resources.

In this reform, free public education has been included as a human right, from kinder-garden to ninth grade, technologies have been included as key supplies for learning, thus included a plan to give computers and laptops to students. Also it was considered the hiring of more professors, construction of new schools and teaching centers to prepare professors better (Normal School).

Besides this, the reform includes an alphabetization massive program for youth and elder (adults) that have not got the opportunity to assist to school. With this reform the country in 2013 declared 20 municipalities free of illiteracy.

### 2.1.3 El Salvador Integral Education Plan 2021

In March of 2005, it was launched the educational plan named 'Plan 2021', which was planned to be developed from 2005 to 2021, with the idea of coinciding with the 200 anniversary of the country's independence.

The total cost for 'Plan 2021' was estimated in periods, starting in 2006 and finishing in 2021, the details are shown below:

Table 2 Budget for 'Plan 2021' El Salvador

Period	2006-2009	2010-2014	2015-2019	2020-2021	2006-2021
Total Cost Increase	\$510,501,504	\$613,085,220	\$820,614,635	\$80,790,601	\$1,720,129,420

*Source: Organización De Estados Iberoamericanos (2005)*

The aim of the plan was to improve the education of all Salvadorian's students with the programs detailed next:

#### **Edúcame**

- Education for everyone. The idea was to increase flexibility in the educational services offers in middle and high school.

- Programs for long distance education and accelerated programs for people that dropped the system before finish or are older.

### **Poder**

- Participation, Opportunities, Development, Education, Recreation were the bases for this program in order to encourage the growth of positive attitudes to make responsible decisions in students of middle and high schools.
- Launching of educational contests

### **Megatec**

- Designated to students at the last year of high school, it was a curricular system focused on technology and technique.

### **Comprendo**

- Program for children in elementary school, created to improve the capacities in mathematics and language.
- The components of the program were: implement a new curricular model, professor training, following system, parents and community involving.

### **Redes Escolares Efectivas**

- The idea of the program was to achieve the total access to a quality education to children and teenagers.
- Improve the efficiency of the education in the 100 poorest areas of the country.
- Integrate schools to create a net with a single directive board with a technic responsible from the Ministry of Education.
- Reduce over age index in schools.

### **Red Solidaria**

- The program was combined with Redes Escolares Efectivas with the idea of increase kinder-garden and basic education services.

- In areas where the demand of enrolment is low, the grades would be combined.
- Promoted the alphabetization and education in youth and adults.
- Focused in the improvement of mathematics and language.

### **Conéctate**

- Created to improve the access to technology in the schools.

### **Compite**

- The goal of the program was to have students that talk, listen, read and write in English perfectly at the ending of middle school.
- Also to make an effective use of the educative supplies in the schools by distribute them accurately, according to the needs of the municipalities.

### **Edifica**

- Improvement of the scholar infrastructure.

### **Juega Leyendo**

- Process of support in the initial education and elementary school.

### **Todos Iguales**

- Programm of attention to the school diversity.

The 'Plan 2021' has been recognized as one of the best plans launched in the country, it was designed with the help of international and national experts in education, and also with the participation of the population that lives inside and outside the country.

## 2.2 Education environment in El Salvador

The overall objectives of the plans and reforms proposed by the Ministry of Education have been made with the aim to improve the quality and access to the education in the country. Without a doubt, most of the efforts accomplished some of their objectives and El Salvador's educational reality has changed significantly in some areas, but many of the objectives have failed because there have been different external circumstances that influence their possibility to succeed, hence it is important to recognize this factors to understand the reality in which they are proposed to function.

### 2.2.1 Political Factors that Influence Education

The political decisions greatly influences the functionality of the educational system. The governmental authorities have an enormous responsibility in the proposal of adequate solutions and budgets to the educational programs besides their political beliefs.

El Salvador traditionally had been an ultra-conservative nation, from 1989 to the beginning of 2009 the government was held by the nationalist party ARENA (Alianza Republicana Nacionalista de El Salvador). The leaders of ARENA at one point in the history where considered ultra-right wing against any communist or socialist tendency in the governmental proposals, including education.

It is clearly seen in the reforms of their period, that ARENA made efforts to adapt the educational system to the workforce needed in each period of time in accordance to the international tendency. Although the great ideas, the political party failed in their proposals as they did not adapt them to the national reality, in a poor country. The majority of the poor population is focused in fast ways to



obtain food and basic supplies to survive, and education is not a priority, worse if they have to pay for uniforms, minimum enrolment fees, etc.

It was until 2009 that the political party, that is still in government, FMLN (Frente Farabundo Martí para La Liberación Nacional) with a center-left wing ideals, won the presidency. They included new policies to animate the parents to send their children to school, as their released programs to facilitate their inclusion in it although their economic limitations as it was explained previously in the last reform.

Also, as it can be seen in the graphic below, the budget designated to education has been considerable increasing in the years of the new government in comparison to previous years. The maximum increase of investment per student in the period 2005 to 2008 was of 11.21 dollars, contrary to the period 2009 to 2011 where the investment has increased up to 55.94 dollars.

Figure 1: Average Cost per Students from elementary, middle, high school, from year 2005 to 2011 (dollars)



*Source: Ministerio de Educación de El Salvador. Estadísticas 2009-2013.*

Even with these changes, El Salvador's investment in education has been fluctuated between the 2 - 3.47% of the GDP in the last 20 years, extremely under the average in Latin America that is 5.3%.

Every investment in education is valuable in a country with such an unequal educational history, but it is important not to confuse that the quantity of students in a classroom not always means that they are learning or that they are quality learning. It is good to have more children in the school, it is good to invest more in them, but it is primordial not to forget that all the students deserve quality.

In 2014, the political party FMLN won again the presidency in second round. The new president is the professor Salvador Sánchez Cerén, who was the Minister of Education in the previous mandate. In terms of education, the whole population has high expectations because of its experience, but at this point is only known the guarantee of the continuity and improvements to the reforms proposed in 2009. But he promised that the investment of education will reach the 6% at the end of his mandate. However, some experts consider that El Salvador should invest the 7.5% if it really wants to improve the level of education (UN, 2014).

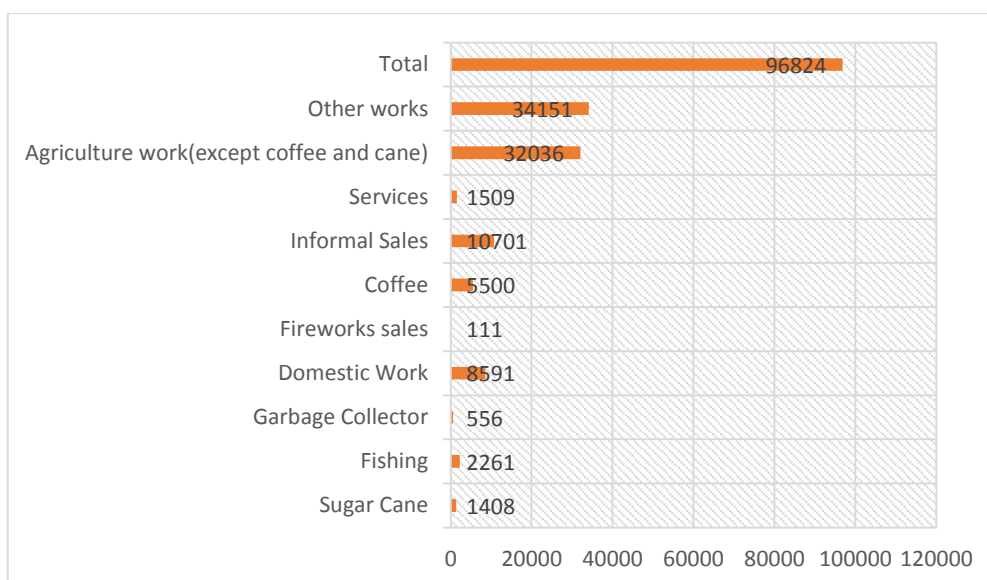
As political parties with completely opposite political ideas have been in the presidency, not alternately but blocks of period of time, there is a sense of after and before in the political history of the country. Although the population ultimately expects the best from the current government, as through the years, education has been the biggest debt.

### 2.2.2 Economic Factors involved in Education

The financial situation in a family greatly interfere in different factors that may support or obstruct the access to education. Wealthy families have economic resources to pay the best school to their children in contrast with poor families that do not have other options than not sending their children to school because they need to work or their only option is to send them to a public school where sometimes the professors do not have enough training or the infrastructure is poor.

In El Salvador, the financial situation of many families lead the children to left the school before finish it or they seem forced to work and study at the same time. This definitely affects their capacity to learn, as at a young age they are not able to achieved excellence in both areas, in the graphic below it can be seen that in 2013 (last census), a total of 96,824 students enrolled in public schools were working. In that year the total quantity of students enrolled in public school was 1,486,602 , at figure 2 it can be seen which type of activity they performed:

Figure 2 Students between 4 - 18 years working in 2013 (Classified by type of work)



Source: *Ministerio de Educación de El Salvador .Estadísticas 2009-2013.*

Latin America is one of the most unequal regions in the world, and El Salvador is not an exception. According to the World Ultra Wealth Report (2012/2013) made by WEALTH X Singapore, from a total of 42 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, El Salvador is the position number 15 in the ranking of millionaires in the country, despite the history of misery and social marginalization in it.

The 2014 Oxfam Report, highlights that in El Salvador, the number of millionaires grew from 150 to 160 between 2013-2014, their richness is equivalent to a 0.041% of the population as there are 6.2 millions of Salvadorians. As a group, this

millionaires accumulate 21,000 millions of dollars in fortune, which equals the 87% of the gross domestic product of the country.

This data contrasts with the quantity of students that dropped school for economic reasons in 2013; the detail is shown below:

Table 3 Percentage of Students that Dropped School by Cause (2013)

<b>Cause</b>	<b>2013</b>
Change of domicile	29.5%
Other cause	14.0%
Change of school	9.2%
Delinquency	8.1%
Left the country	6.2%
Low academic performance	5.4%
Agriculture Work	5.1%
Parents do want them to go	5.0%
Economic Problems	4.9%
Other work	3.5%
Domestic work	3.0%
Illness	2.1%
School is too far	1.5%
Pregnancy	1.4%
Emigrated of educational system	0.6%
Death	0.2%
Physical Problem	0.2%
Accident	0.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Ministerio de Educación de El Salvador. Estadísticas 2009-2013.*

It can be seen in the table that a total of 16.5% students left school to work or directly for economic problems, and also 8.1% of students dropped school for delinquency reasons, which is related to economic issues.

The executive director of Oxfam, Winnie Byanyima (2014), expresses that Latin America produces millionaires at an accelerating rhythm, which accentuates the inequality in the region, the concentration of richness grew by 23% in 2014, which is an 8% more than the global average. With this figures Latin America has the first position as the most unequal region in the world, as there are 169 million habitants living in poverty, and 69 of them live in extreme misery.

Well known institutions as the IMF (International Monetary Fund) have demonstrated that, in a long term, extreme inequality slow down the growth in a region and eliminates the possibility of ending the cycle of poverty of the more vulnerable habitants.

According to Oxfam (2014) investigations, tax evasion is one of the reasons that explains the disproportionate richness concentration, and in some cases these money ends in tax havens, as it has been demonstrated with the leak of the bank HSBC Switzerland secret account's information. In this list, it was discovered that the owners of Latin America companies have hidden 52,000 million of dollars in just one bank. This amount is equivalent to the 24% governmental health investment in the whole continent. In the case of El Salvador, there was discovered that between 1988 and 2006, there were 54 accounts owned by Salvadorians, the total amount of money managed by them was of 88, 2 million of dollars.

In a recent inform (2014) from El Salvador's Ministry of Finance, it was stated that the 0.12% of debtors owe the 25% of the total tributary debt and the total debt is of 372,639 million of dollars. As it can be seen with the figures provided before, the inequality in El Salvador is overwhelming and it is crucial for the country to focus on new regulations to stop the tax evasion. Furthermore, it will be necessary

to impulse better salaries and increase the social protection. Thus, all the factors are related, but the lack of money affect the investment in key areas, like education. The improvement in education, however, is a long term investment that in the future will help to stop the cycle of poverty.

### 2.2.3 Social Factors involving Education

Given the economic inequality that exists in El Salvador, there are many social factors that have to be taken into account in order to understand the environment in which the students assist to school.

To understand the factors, first, it is important to clarify that El Salvador has two independent educational systems, there is a private and a public educational system. The public system is the one lead by the government, is free of charge and only people involved in the Ministry of Education have the possibilities to make changes and propose improvements, also it is compulsory for the directors and the professors to follow the program given by the government and to accept every candidate who wants to enter to the school.

In the case of the private system, is not free of charge, candidates have to compete to win a place in the school desired and the educational programs are proposed by the school board, parents, students and international consultants and change every year. They follow the general programs given by the government as it is compulsory to follow them, but they study in depth the programs proposed and extend them according to their proposals, also including extracurricular activities and international programs.

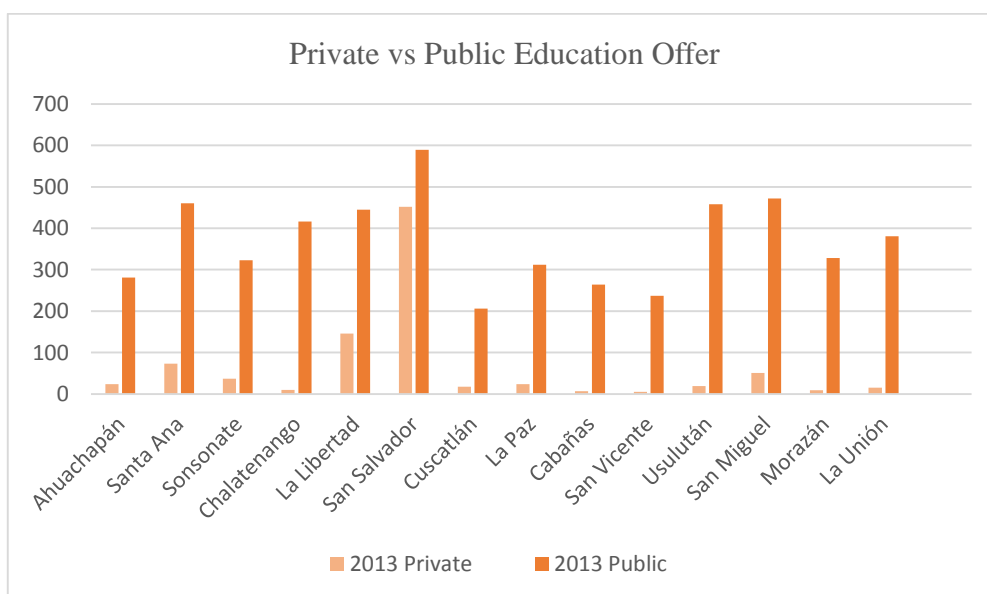
The possibilities of study in a private school are limited, as not every Salvadorian has the possibilities to pay enrollment and monthly fees, that in most of the cases represent more than the half of the country's minimum wage. Hence the offer of private and public education varies depending of the country regions. In general

the country can be divided in two biggest categories, there are urban and rural areas. The last ones are not industrialized, and most of the population live working in agriculture. Also the majority of the habitants in this areas have none or little education. On the other side, urban areas are industrialized and depending on zone of the region, the population has degrees or at least have finished high school education, but also in this region there are marginalized sectors.

El Salvador is divided in fourteen regions, known as departamentos, from those fourteen regions only two are considered completely urban regions, which are San Salvador and La Libertad. From the rest, only four more are considered medium urban; they are: Santa Ana, Sonsonate, San Miguel and, recently, La Union has also been considered as urban as well, but the remain regions of the country are considered rural.

In the graphic below, it is shown that the private education offer is higher in urban areas and in rural areas is extremely low and, in some cases, practically inexistent

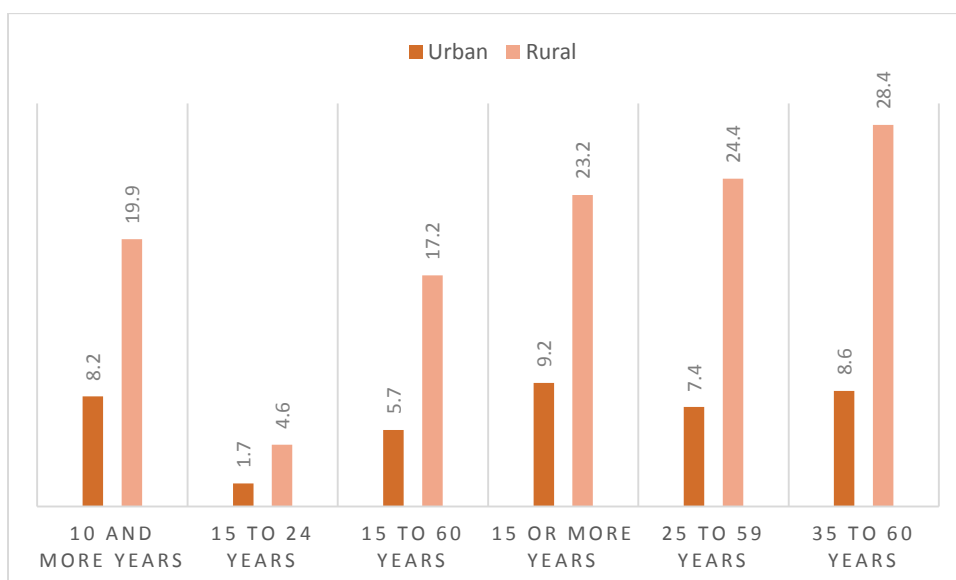
Figure 3 Private vs. Public Offer



Source: Ministerio de Educación de El Salvador. Estadísticas 2009-2013.

The difference in number between private and public school offer would not be relevant if it was not that the level of illiteracy dramatically change between rural and urban areas, as it is showed in the next graphic. The percentage of illiteracy in rural areas almost doubles the number in urban areas, which is curious as the public offer is higher in rural areas. This is a red light that the cycle of inequality continues its path to be critical, as the areas are not experimenting the same development. This is happening in the same country, but it is not a simple coincidence as it will be explained in the next paragraphs.

Figure 4 Illiteracy Comparison between Urban and Rural Areas (2012)



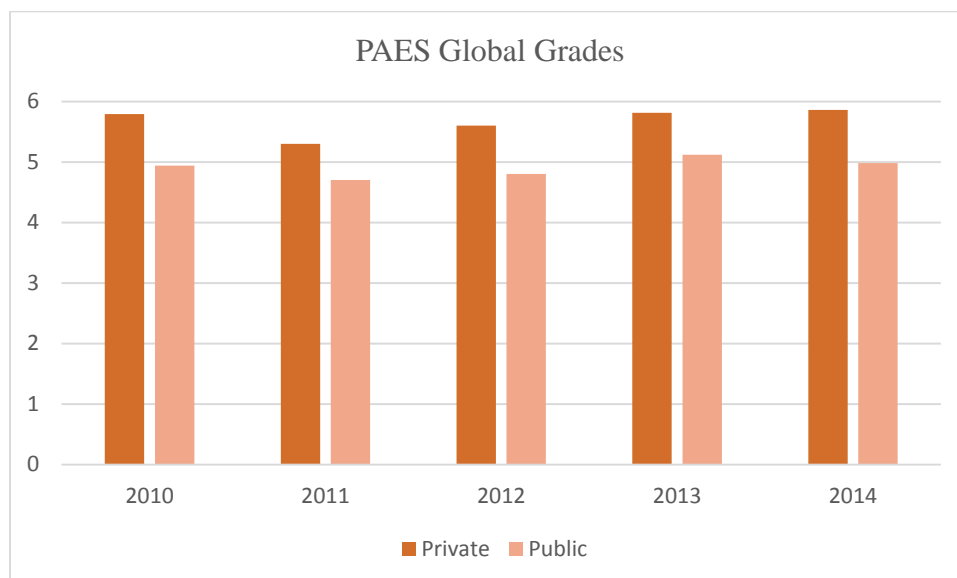
Source: *Ministerio de Educación de El Salvador. Estadísticas 2009-2013.*

The contrast shown in the graphic could be considered less relevant if it is not reinforced with other data, in order to give a better view. PAES is the learning and skills tests for graduates of secondary education, it is compulsory to obtain at least a global five in order to earn the degree of Bachiller. It is done at the end of the year, and all the students enrolled in the private or public system have to do it. Every year the results of the PAES are compared, and, while the results of private schools make improvements, the results of the public systems have been stuck between the same range without any visible improvement.



The next graphic shows the global results in the PAES comparing the results of private and public schools:

Figure 5 PAES 2014 Average Global Results Private vs. Public



Source: *Ministerio de Educación de El Salvador. Estadísticas 2009-2013*

Each year the private schools have better results than the public, although the gap between their results may seem not to large. It is important to mention that the students from private school only represented the 24.88% of the total of students evaluated that year, and the public school's students were the 75.12%. Seen globally, their results are extremely disappointing as they represent the majority of the student population in the country.

In the country's global school PAES ranking results, even when there are public schools that have goods results compared to the global average, there is also a considerable difference between the results of the best grades by school between the private and public sector. As it can be seen in the next table, the best average global grade from a public school is lower than the last in the ranking of private schools results; the best private school is getting closer to a global grade of nine, the best public school is barely reaching the eight.

Table 4 Ranking Best Global Results Private and Public Schools

PRIVATE SCHOOL PAES RANKING 2014		
Name	Location	Average Grade
Colegio Champagnat	La Libertad	8.84
Escuela Cristiana Oasis El Salvador	San Salvador	8.73
Colegio Salvadoreño Inglés	San Salvador	8.69
Colegio Español Padre Arrupe	San Salvador	8.66
Colegio Guadalupano	San Salvador	8.57
Colegio García Flamenco	San Salvador	8.55
Escuela Alemana	La Libertad	8.54
Instituto Católico de Oriente	San Miguel	8.54
Liceo San Luis	Santa Ana	8.51
Colegio Externado de San José	San Salvador	8.42
PUBLIC SCHOOL PAES RANKING 2014		
Complejo Educativo Profesor Vidal Umanzor	La Unión	8.02
Instituto Nacional de Mercedes Umaña	Usulután	7.96
Instituto Nacional de Uluzuapa	San Miguel	7.95
Instituto Nacional Profesor Francisco Ventura	La Unión	7.83
Centro Escolar Católico Alberto Masferrer	La Libertad	7.82
Instituto Nacional de Suchitoto	Cuscatlán	7.67
Instituto Nacional de Chapeltique	San Miguel	7.65
Instituto Nacional de Yamabel	Morazán	7.63
Instituto Nacional El Sauce	La Unión	7.61
Instituto Nacional Anamorós	La Unión	7.6

Source: Ministerio de Educación de El Salvador. Resultados PAES 2014.

The difference between private and public education in El Salvador is remarkable, but not necessarily all the private schools are good and, in the same way, not all the public schools are bad. But as the public schools are the ones that the majority of the population has access to, the deficiencies are easily generalized, as well the improvements.

What is important to see is that, in the country, the social status of a person limits the possibilities of receiving a good education, the students with less economic status are excluded as not all of them are learning with quality because the public education is they only one they have access and is weak.

Urban and Rural areas in the country live in different realities, but not only in the access to quality education.

In accordance to the United Nations report (2014), Latin America is the most violent region in the world, it has the highest rate of criminal violence in all the world. Excluding the countries in war, El Salvador is in the top of the most violent countries in the world. The most recent homicide rate registered in the country was May 2015, with 635 murders in a month. This amount has been the worst in the recent history of the country, since the civil war ended in 1992. From the total amount of murders, El Salvador's police director Mauricio Ramirez said that 60% victims were criminals killed by other criminals. To criminals he referred to the gangs (Mara Salvatrucha and Barrio 18), where the active members of these gangs are mostly young Salvadorians officially in the range from 13 to 35 years, but recently it has been reported that children at early of 10 years are joining this gangs.

Gangs, in general, are not a new and exclusive problem in El Salvador. For years they have existed in different countries, like USA, Brazil, and Colombia. However, in El Salvador the phenomenon has increased in the last fifteen years, as well in

Guatemala and Honduras, and also the level of violence attributed to their actions has considerably increased.

In general there is not a single concept to understand the term gang (mostly known as maras in the country), some called them as a group of antisocial and degenerate young that commit criminal acts; and others define them as group associations of people that live in poverty and are marginalized, that have found in gangs a social group that offers an identity alternative that elevate their self-esteem.

Also there is not a general accordance on how the maras appeared even when has been studied by different disciplines. Some disciplines declared that gangs are the result of social exclusion and a structural violence (Anderson 1998, Spergel 1995, Virgil 2002). This structural violence creates a reactive violence (criminal or political) by whom are excluded. Also the conditions of misery, frustration and desperation are potential for the birth of conflicts, violent acts and criminal incidents (Briceño-León & Zubillaga, 2002). The social-ecological focus suggests that the gangs are the product of the disorganization in urban zones and in some cases the structure practically replaces the social institutions, like the family.

It is important to say that El Salvador and Central America, in general, have a history of violence: from the times of conquering, the establishment of a nation, and recently the armed conflicts in the seventies and eighties. El Salvador was in a civil war for twelve years, this historic war was characterized by the intense conflicts of power between two political ideologies, socialism and capitalism. The fight for resources, control inequality, discrimination confronted the government against the socialists and socialists' supporters, both bands used the violence as a way of imposing their ideas.

This context had an accumulated negative impact over the children, teenagers and youth, in the country the maras members were known as the children of the conflict, as the violence and economic crisis caused by it, forced the immigration

of many family members to United States of America, most of this families established themselves in poor suburbs where they faced a difficult situation

In the beginning of 1996, the USA government initiated a strategy to massively deport young Salvadorians for their participation in maras and any other gangs. Most of the deported have lived in the USA their whole life and when they returned to their country of origin, they found an environment completely different from which they were used to: Central America was initiating a process of reconstruction after the violence, poverty and unemployment were extended and the democracy was weak.

The USA government did not give any support to the Central American countries to attend them. The problem of maras has been increasing in the last years: in El Salvador there is not an official number but is believed that there are 70,000 gang members (known as mareros) in the country, from this number 10,000 are in jailed.

In past five years, Salvadorian authorities have been observing the evolution of maras, as the children of the war growth and are young adults. The older gang members are visiting public schools to recruit new members and, in most the cases, they coerce the young students to be part of their gangs. This also happens in the margin urban areas, where the contrasts of capitalism are part of the panorama,

Nowadays, the majority of young students in the public schools, besides their responsibility of attending school and learning, in the recent years are confronted to another reality, the harassment of gang members and the pressure to decide which gang they will support, adding to this, the disintegrated families and the lack of opportunities are part of their everyday.

As it was recently stated in a newspaper there are two El Salvador, both of them are violent, but only in one of them is crazy to go outside at night, it is impossible to choose in which school enroll the children and forget taking into account that if it is located in a location of Mara Salvatrucha or Barrio 18, or where people live

under the menace of ‘see, hear and shut up’, only in that country people have to lie to get a job or have to be careful of the police and soldiers that protect the areas.

In the other El Salvador, people can go to the cinema, can buy pizza, pay internet without a problem. Violence, also touches this El Salvador but is not even the half of what the other El Salvador suffer, which is where they suffer the more and better know the painful expressions of violence. (El Faro, 2015)

Sadly because of these realities, not all the Salvadorians can understand the situation of the other reality that suffers the most, and see the news of the countries as a foreigners, the realities of the countries are so contrasting that probably it cannot be understood until the violence appears in their life.

The social contexts in which the majority of the Salvadorians youth study is so complex, that every inclusive initiative has to take into account that the reality of the country is extremely different and that the programs have to be customized in order to make them adaptable to the circumstances.

The inequality in El Salvador is a critical problem that has many consequences in the society, especially in the most vulnerable population, poor people feels excluded in a system where the better opportunities are for the ones that have the financial possibility to pay for it. Every year, private educational systems make headlines because of their improvements and international competences, in contrast to the public system that make headlines because of their deficiency. The difference between the systems is unfair, as every Salvadorian has the right to have access to quality education in order to be prepared and to easily include to the workforce. It is possible to see that there is a lack of inclusiveness because of the social status, but, as it was shown, there were public schools with better results than others, which means that is not impossible to improve the public system. Clearly these schools are doing something extra or better than the others, because success is not serendipity in a country where the governments force their educational systems to follow the programs.

## **Chapter 3 Relation between education – development overview & globalization**

In the last chapter was given an overview of the educational status in El Salvador and the environment of it, in this it was shown that the country has had a underperformance and lack of sustainable efforts in terms of education but also in terms of inclusiveness in every aspect. This has guide to a track that the economic well-being of a population is related to education. Because of this, in this chapter it will be presented an analysis that shows how the level of education of a country is related with the development of it. Given that El Salvador has always been considered a country under or in development since its existence as a democracy, it is clear that something in the country's educational policies fails. To clarify this and to give a better judgment to improvement, in the next pages also it will be presented a summary of Costa Rican and Chile educational systems, considered two of the best in Latin America and how Latin America take position among the other systems. To end the chapter, as the world is more connected nowadays, there will be also a view on how globalization is reshaping the education and what aspects the governments have to give importance to be at the level of the world exigencies. But, as not only the government and professors are responsible of the student population fate, it will be also included the role that the students and parents should have to succeed. With this, it is intended to see the facts that are involved and the actions done in other countries that led them to succeed in terms of education, including different aspects that have a role in education and at the end give economic and social balance and development to the countries.

### **3.1 Relation between education and country development**

Education is closely related with the development of a country, according to the UNESCO (2013): 'Education is one of the most powerful instruments for reducing poverty and inequality and lays a foundation for sustained economic growth'.

Among different reasons to support this, one of the main is that education give people the skills to be independent as they are able to work and create opportunities by themselves, which in time lead them to abandon the conditions of poverty and succeed.

Education is necessary to reach an economic growth and to increase wages in a nation, the population in many countries in development is considered attractive by the only reason that their minimum wage is really low, in general they are considered as a cheap workforce. This happens, among other reasons, because the percentage of population that have superior studies is low and the rest of the population without degrees need to work to subsist even when the payment is not enough to cover their basic needs. To change this and stop the inequality cycle, education is needed.

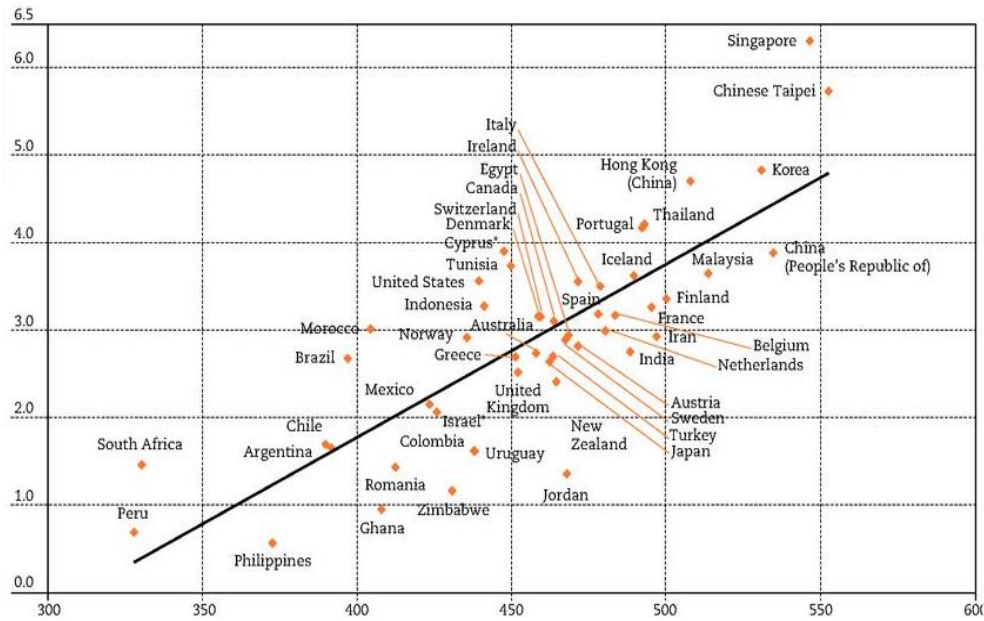
Education can also support to the democracy and political stability in a country as society learns their rights and develop skills and knowledge to demand them but also know and exercise their responsibilities as well, one of the best weapons against the abuses of politics is education, the ignorance in a country is power for disloyal politics, where people in charge take advantage of the lack of knowledge, as we all have heard knowledge is power, and knowledge obtain through education can change the panorama of disrupted societies like El Salvador.

Recently the Organization for Economic and Cooperation Development (OECD) published a report that contained a worldwide relationship graphic representing the conditional interrelation of economic long run growth and knowledge-skills of the population based on different studies.

The figure is shown next;



Figure 6 Knowledge Capital and Economic Growth across countries 2015



Source: OECD (2015)

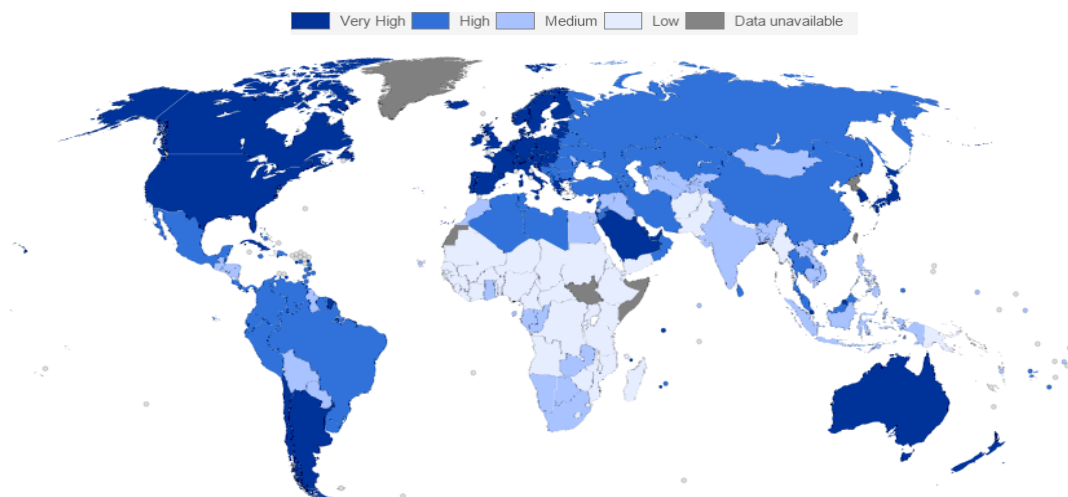
The figure shows in the vertical axis the economic annual growth based in the GDP between 1960 and 2000 (in percentage). And in the horizontal axis the tests scores on international mathematics and science tests.

The countries in the middle of the figure align closely to the regression line, indicating there is a positive relation between the economic growth and the knowledge capital. This indicates that in a long term the knowledge of the population positively influence in the economic growth in a country. When knowledge increase the economic growth is higher.

There are many indicators to measure the development in a country that take into account education as a factor, among those it is the United Nations Human Development Index. This index is composed by the measure of life expectancy, literacy, education, standards of living and quality of life. It is used to rank countries in four different categories indicated with different shades of blue, from dark to light. Countries represented with dark blue are considered as human

developed nations, while the ones in lightest blue are considered low in human development. The worldwide graphic with colors is shown in the figure below:

Figure 7 Human Development Index 2014 by Country (UN)



*Source: United Nations. Human Development Report 2014*

In general the top ten countries with highest Human Development Index are: Norway, Australia, Switzerland, Netherlands, United States, Germany, New Zealand, Canada, Singapore and Denmark.

In the case of Latin America the top countries are: Chile, Cuba, Argentina, Uruguay, Panama, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Mexico, Brazil, and Peru.

Chile is the best rated country in Latin America, is 41 out of 187 countries.

El Salvador is in the position sixth of the lowest Human Development Index in Latin America, it is considered in the medium human development category, while one of its almost neighbor, Costa Rica, is in the top ten considered as Very High Human Developed nation. This lead to the interrogatory on how is possible that countries with similar conditions are in such different situation in terms of

development. To understand it better, we explain how Costa Rica plus Chile, which is the leading country in Latin America, have been managing their education.

### 3.2. Description of Costa Rica's & Chile's Educational Systems.

#### **Costa Rica.**

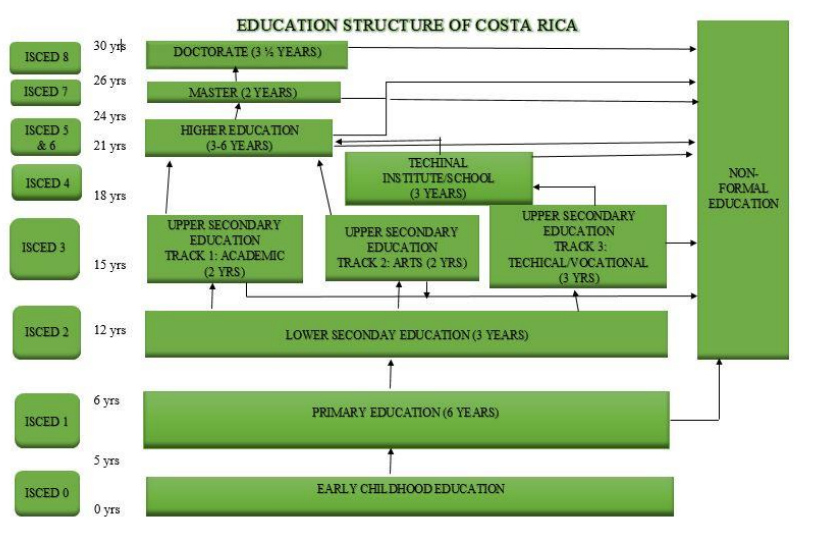
There is a popular saying in Central America, that Costa Rica wagered on education which is true. In Costa Rica education is free and compulsory since 1869, when the income of coffee was high and the government got the financial support to invest in educate their population. As most part of the habitants did not have the resources to pay for it, the government stated by law that it was a right and, as the majority of the presidents they had in those years were professors, the initiative did not find any obstacles to the vision of the benefits from this investment could provide in the future. In 1948, furthermore, the government made a major decision: eliminating their army and the financial resources that once were designated to buy arms and pay militaries were redirected to education. Recently, it was ordered that annually the government has to allocate a minimum 8% of the GDP to education. This explains why today Costa Rica is one of the most advanced educational systems in Latin America that have given them positive results, such as having one of the highest rates of literacy in Latin America, it is almost 95%, This has helped to the improvement of the social status levels in the country.

In recent years, education in Costa Rica has improved a lot, around one quarter of the national budget is invested in education, with the goal of increasing the coverage of schools in the country, and also, as a long term commitment of the Costa Rica's government, the goal of ensure that every school has the technology and educational tools needed. In order to support this, the Ministry of Education has created their own programs to guarantee that their youth and workforce reach international standards. There is a program for computer sciences and other for

English as a second language, and these programs are accessible and compulsory for students in public and private schools.

Below it, is a representation of the actual educational system structure in Costa Rica. The system is linear and as, it was said before, it is compulsory in the primary lower and upper secondary stage. In this, they have option to choose between arts, technical and arts, adapting to their future interests.

Figure 8 Education Structure in Costa Rica 2014



Source: UNESCO-IBE, 2010. Created by Anessa Escobar.

Costa Rica decision of giving priority to education and include all the population without prior any specific social status to have access to quality education, has greatly influence the human development of the country in present, and it sustainability will reassure the future. Something totally in contrast with their neighbors like Honduras and Nicaragua. Moreover, Costa Rica is one of the most attractive countries in the region for external investment and tourism.

## Chile

Education in Chile was ordered compulsory from ages 6 to 13 in 1965. The education system in Chile has its own characteristics than make it different from

the rest of the region. The structure is divided in preschool, primary school, middle school (secondary) and superior school (tertiary-university). Preschool education is not compulsory but is free. After preschool is primary school that lasts eight years. Then middle school lasts four years, in this stage students have different options to study related to their preferences: scientific-humanist, vocational, technical- professional and artistic.

In the case of primary schools, they are directed and owned by the municipality where they are located, education in this stage is completely free; on the other side, at the beginning of middle school, many schools, public or private charge fees to the parents. In Chile, education is compulsory up to 18 years. With this, 12 years of education are completely compulsory to the Chileans.

In Chile, the educational investment in relation with the GDP, increased 1% from 2000 to 2012 in the country. The last data registered by the World Bank (2015) is 4.6% for 2012 educational expense, these amount was considered low in comparison to OECD members. But, in a recent report: Education at a Glance - OECD (2015), it is informed that the expense in education represented the 6.9% of the GDP for 2014. Which is above the regional average of 5.3% and above the average of OECD members 6.1%. With such a high investment, it is clear that for Chile, education is important and is taking measure to improve it.

The educational system in Chile, consists on providing subsidy to the schools. To guarantee the access to education, the government gives the financial support directly to the schools, but at the same time, parents can choose the school for their children according to their preferences. The subsidy is equally provided to all registered and legally in order schools (private and public), that fulfill certain requirements, and the amount of money given is calculated taking in consideration: the level and method of teaching, and the number of students that assist to the school. In the case where schools consider that the subsidy is not enough to cover the expenses, the government allow them to charge complementary fees to the

parents. For years, this type of system benefit people with low-income but at the same time caused segregation and inequality, as private and public schools had access to subventions, parents with a better economic situation preferred to pay extra fees to send their children to private school to receive better education with classmates according to their socio-economic status. With the extras fees, schools were receiving double resources, as a consequence, private education acquired higher quality level in comparison to public schools. In order to stop this issue, in January 2015, it was approved a law to stop and revert segregation and inequality. This law will take effect from March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and with it, extra fees will be forbidden and none schools is allow to ask for economic and scholar records to students. This law seeks to assure inclusiveness by guaranteeing the access to quality education no matter the economic background.

Another important fact to mention, is that since 2013, parents can ask for tax deduction for educational expenses. This means that every year, parents can ask for a reduction from the tax income statement, for the educational expenses they make for their children's education.

Through the years, Chile has been doing many efforts to guarantee access and quality education to all the population, as a result of it, the country is always ranking as one of the countries with best education in Latin America, also with one of highest rate of literacy 96%. This indicates that to give importance and invest in education can completely change the future of a country.

Costa Rica and Chile educational systems are not equal, but in both cases they give importance to equality and inclusiveness. These countries early understood that education is the key to reach economic growth. Both of them are examples of countries with good results in comparison to the rest of the region, but when these countries are compared worldwide their results may be really different of what is expected. Anyway, they are the most similar cases to El Salvador.

### 3.3. Index to Rank Best Education Systems in the World

Access to education and literacy is important, but also it is the quality of education received. There are some international indexes to rank the education systems in the world, but according to the Center on International Education Benchmarking (2015) and The Economist (2015) two highly prestigious are The Learning Curve by Pearson and PISA.

#### **PISA**

PISA is the Programme for International Student Assessment, a comparative study to evaluate the results of different educational systems. It is coordinated by OCDE (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development).

The program is based in the analysis of the student's performance in several exams taken every three years in different countries, with the aim of measuring the results internationally. The evaluations are done by 15 years old students, the program in general is quantitative as it only takes into account the results by numbers.

PISA is different from other programs as the exams are in charge of each country's government and done in different schools. It examines three different areas: mathematics, science and reading. The programme does not revise the national educational programs, instead they look for the knowledge, aptitudes and competences relevant to the personal, social and economic well-being. The education knowledge is not measure by itself, what is search is the capacity of the students to understand and solve authentic problems in real situations, applying their knowledge. Also, in each year the exam revises different relevant facts related to education. The last exam done was in 2012 and participated 34 OECD members plus 31 partner countries and regions.

In these results some Asian Pacific countries (Singapore, Korea, Japan, Hong Kong-China), various European countries, Australia, Canada and USA, performed

better in comparison to the other countries, in each subject and also in general problem life solving.

In the case of Latin America, the countries participating results were in the final third of the rank. Next is shown a table with the results:

Table 5 PISA results in problem solving general 2012

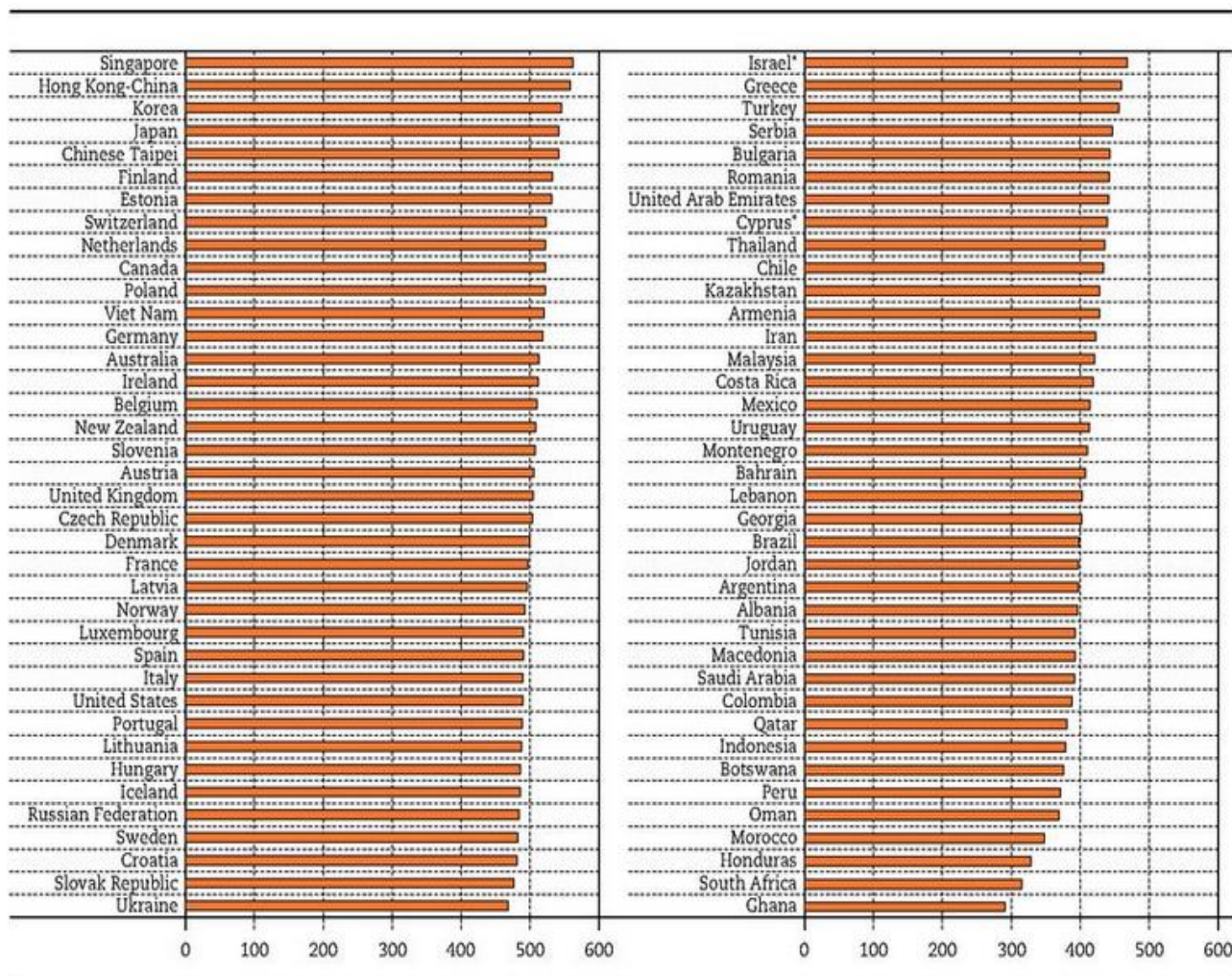
	<b>Score PISA 2012</b>
<b>OECD average</b>	<b>500</b>
Singapore	562
Korea	561
Japan	552
Macao - China	540
Hong Kong- China	540
Shanghai- China	536
Chinese Taipei	534
Canada	526
Australia	523
Finland	523
England(United Kingdom)	517
Estonia	515
France	511
Netherlands	511
Italy	510
Czech Republic	509
Germany	509
United States	508
Belgium	508
Austria	506
Norway	503
Ireland	498
Denmark	497
Portugal	494
Sweden	491
Russian Federation	489
Slovak Republic	483
Poland	481
Spain	477
Slovenia	476
Serbia	473
Croatia	466
Hungary	459
Turkey	454
Israel	454
Chile	448
Cyprus	445
Brazil	428
Malaysia	422
United Arab Emirates	411
Montenegro	407
Uruguay	403
Bulgaria	402
Colombia	399

*Source: OECD (2015) - PISA Results 2012.*



In April 2015, OECD published an analysis report based on different PISA indexes done in the previous years to show the average performance taking account all the data. The general results did not change even when there were included more countries in the evaluation, in total they were 76 countries and included more countries located in Latin America. Again this region was in the lowest positions of the rank, as we can see in the next graphic.

Table 6 Average Performance in International Achievement Tests



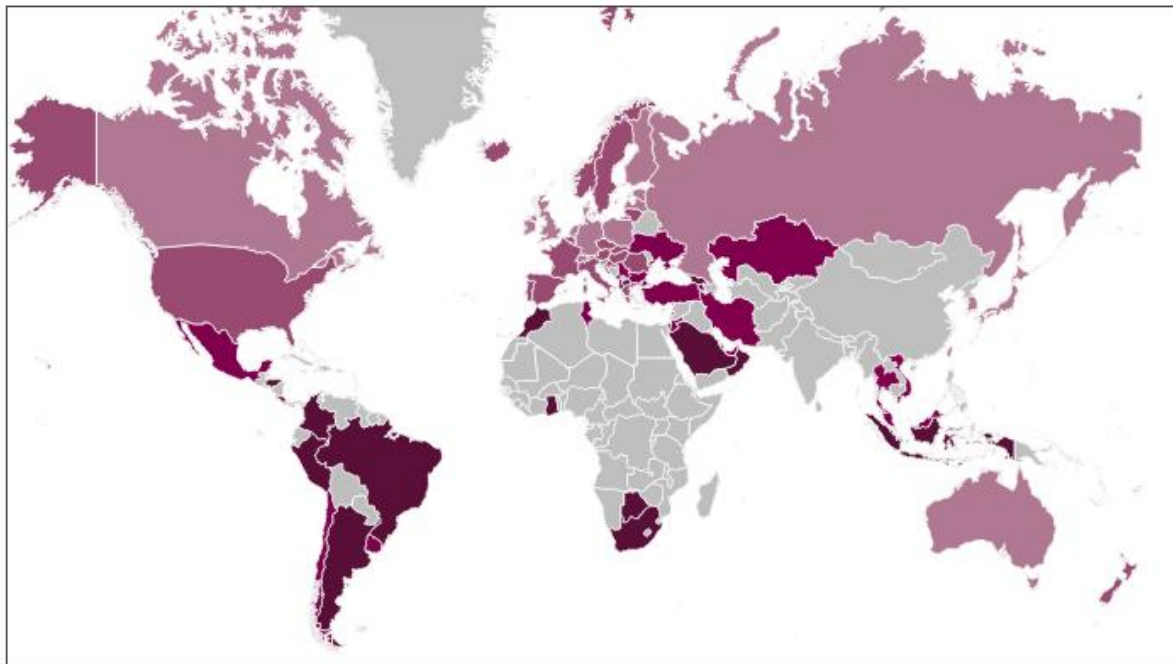
Source: OECD (2015) - PISA Results 2012.

In the OECD report (2015) it is expressed that students in Latin America learn less than the Asian students. Latinos assist to school for many years but learn less than the other countries. As general conclusion, the reports stated that if Latin America want to reach growth and subsist in the future, the first step is to reach a basic level

of mathematics and science to begin a path to better learning and interacting practice of ideas and concepts in real life.

Below there is a graphic showing a projection of the potential growth (GDP) of Latin America and other countries if the population of all the fifteen years old in year 2095 reaches the basic level of mathematics and science, countries with darker shade of purple represent a major growth, and continues to the lightest shade, grey means no data.

Figure 9 GDP growth potential by reaching PISA basic knowledge standards in mathematics and science



*Source: OECD (2015) - PISA Results 2012.*

In general, the report expresses that Latin America has to focus in the quality of education received by their workforce if they want to reach economic growth and been worldwide competitive nations. As the world is more integrated there is not alternative than improve in education or the region will be left behind.

## **The Learning Curve by Pearson**

The learning curve report was created to analyze the performance in education from different countries. To measure this performance, data from different international data sources is used among others are: PISA(Programme for International Student Assessment), TIMSS (The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study ) and PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study), scores in reading, maths and science, also literacy and graduation rates data are taken into account. Besides, the report gives information about educational inputs, outputs and socioeconomic indicators from different countries. In terms of education, the major index considered in the report is the Global Index of Cognitive Skills and Attainment, that ranks the countries by updated data of January 2014. Despite its novelty, it is recognized as a high prestigious index, as Pearson is historically related to education research.

There are 39 countries plus Hong Kong taking into account to create the rank, they are chosen by their overall development performance and availability of information. Countries considered as relevant in terms of education are the only ones considered.

The learning curve report shows that Pacific Asian countries lead the rank along some European countries and Canada. In the case of Latin America, Chile is considered as the best system in the region in the position 32 out of 39 countries, but it is in the lowest quarter of the whole rank. The closest Latin America country to Chile is Colombia, that is in position 36. In general Latin America has the worst performance of the developed and developing countries.

To observe the complete results, next there is a figure showing the overall results.

Table 7 Pearson Index 2014 Rank

Country	Rank
South Korea	1
Japan	2
Singapore	3
Hong Kong-China	4
Finland	5
United Kingdom	6
Canada	7
Netherlands	8
Ireland	9
Poland	10
Denmark	11
Germany	12
Russia	13
United States	14
Australia	15
New Zealand	16
Israel	17
Belgium	18
Czech Republic	19
Switzerland	20
Norway	21
Hungary	22
France	23
Sweden	24
Italy	25
Austria	26
Slovakia	27
Portugal	28
Spain	29
Bulgaria	30
Romania	31
Chile	32
Greece	33
Turkey	34
Thailand	35
Colombia	36
Argentina	37
Brazil	38
Mexico	39
Indonesia	40

*Source: Pearson 2015-The Learning Curve Report 2014.*

The index can give a better picture of the relation between the economic growth and the education, as countries in the first stages are largely known for their performance in overall development ranks.

The Learning Curve Report and PISA report are made to rank the results of different educational systems in the world. Despite, the reports are made with

different methods and data, in both of them the results are the same: Latin America is still under the average performance, as the countries of the region are always in the last quarter of the total ranks. Beside many efforts are made by these nations, they are not enough and the region needs to double efforts and revise their systems to reach worldwide development and to be at the level that globalization requires.

### 3.4 Globalization in Education

Globalization increases the communication processes and establish an interdependency between different countries looking for the unification in multiple dimensions like markets, society, culture, education, politics, technology, and create trends that reform these dimensions.

In the case of education, as it was mentioned before, it is directly related with economic growth, hence education must adapt and reshape to adapt to the changes, the biggest changes that globalization brought are the access to information, technology and communication. In the next part it will be explain the influences and changes that must be done to adapt to this new environment.

#### 3.4.1 Influences and Changes for Globalization in Latin America Education

Latin America, in the recent years, have made efforts to improve the education, however, at the moment, the region continues to fail in international evaluations and inequality is increasing instead of decreasing. The region has many pending homework to reach the economic growth desired, and is to adapt their education systems to globalization. In general, there are some factors that should be considered towards globalization educational environment, they are explained below according to UNESCO (2015):

- **Access to information and knowledge:**

Information, nowadays, is available with different technologies, the challenge is to give access to that information to people who haven't economic possibilities to reach it. At the same time, students must learn how to learn, select, evaluate, analyze, classify and use the information, as there is so much available. Students have to develop capabilities to overcome the excess of information, to avoid just learning basic competences. Students must develop their creativity and capabilities to adapt to the changing knowledge environment.

- **Workforce market:**

Certain professions are requiring a higher level of education and this is compensated with higher salaries. Students, besides learning about their future careers, have to learn how to adapt to new products, technologies and organization methods, the use of technology and symbols, autonomy and responsibility, team working, and internationalization. These capabilities should be developed from early ages in schools in order to be beneficial in the future.

- **Information Technology Advantage:**

With new technology schools have new ways to teach students, and also collaboration resources to create nets to enrich their curricula and practices. The competitive barriers between schools in the same country should be avoid and information technologies must be used to enrich the educational system.

- **Way of Living:**

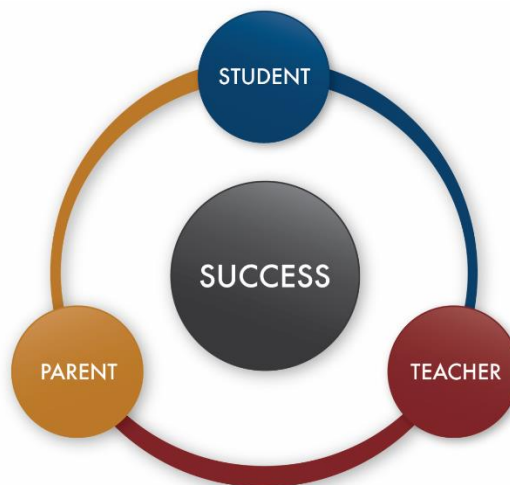
Students have to learn how to adapt to the new culture and the changes it brings. More than just learn what is told in the books or internet, they have to develop their capabilities and learn how to solve real life problems.

In general, education in Latin America has two big challenges: on one side, there are many pending debts from the 20<sup>th</sup> century such as pre-school, primary, secondary access to all the population, inclusiveness of all their habitants no matter

their social and economic status, improve the quality and the results of the basic competencies in all the sectors, technology use, superior education for everybody, and, on the other side, for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, education has to adapt to new trends from which depend the economic growth, social equality, and cultural integration, adapting the structures, processes, results, policies to the transformation that globalization has done in the context of information, knowledge, workforce, technology and culture where is developed teaching and learning. These challenges require many efforts and investment but, at the end, adapt the education to the globalization is necessary to reach development.

### 3.5 The Role of Students & Parents in Education

Figure 10 Important figures to success in Education



*Source: North Central University Education Blog 2015.*

Learning starts at home, in many countries in development there is a wrong general belief that parents have nothing to do in the learning process of their children. However, children start the learning process at home, and it needs to be supported continuously there. Parents already know so much more than their children, and they transmit information that gives children new elements and tools. The help of parents in their children homework support the idea that learning is important as their parents take time and support them to succeed in it.

Children learn better by example, especially if the examples are from their parents. Is the same with values and manners, parents shouldn't expect that the school will solve what they haven't done at home.

Parents should understand that professors are the allies towards their children success, they are not simple workers. And this is the same in the case of students, if they don't do their part, they won't succeed. It is extremely common to see in the poor sectors of El Salvador how students complain about the bad conditions of their classrooms or school if is too far, some of them stop attending school because of these conditions, while other still assist, hence the future of these groups of students is completely different.

It is clear that the success of an educational system does not rely on it, is the role of their elements that define it.



## Chapter 4 Analysis of education inclusiveness in El Salvador's education public system

After observing that inclusiveness has a major incidence in education success, it is important to investigate El Salvador's inclusiveness educational status and to sum up and analyze the model that was proposed by the government in a new program called 'Escuela Inclusiva de Tiempo Pleno'. As it has been recently proposed (2011) and statistics of the program development are not available, we have performed some interviews in order to get the comments and opinions on the stronger points of the model, by some professors who are part of the model. The aim of this primary data recompilation is to find weak points for seeking improvements.

Below are the details of the interviews:

Table 8 El Salvador Interviews Details

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Date</b>
Informant 1	School Principal	Sonsonate, El Salvador	06/14/2015
Informant 2	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Professor	Quezaltepeque, El Salvador	06/24/2015
Informant 3	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Professor	San Salvador, El Salvador	06/29/2015
Informant 4	School Principal	San Salvador, El Salvador	07/05/2015

*Source: Edited by Writer*

#### 4.1 Inclusiveness & Inclusive School Model in El Salvador

Inclusiveness in El Salvador educational system is relatively new, the first time that this term has been included in a formal educational plan was between 2009-2010 with the posterior official launch of the school model 'Escuela Inclusiva de Tiempo Pleno (EITP)' in 2011, under the government of president Mauricio Funes.

The EITP model pursues the major strategic objective of contributing to the gradual and effective transformation of the educational system. This objective is defined in four action areas: Policies, culture, pedagogic practices and strategic investments to guarantee the compliance of the right of education to everyone. These areas must be transform in order to reach Inclusive Education.

The objective of the program is to improve the national educational system, allowing the access of it to all the population and the complete development of the aspirations and individual competences of all the students that present individual and social differences, because the diversity in the classrooms must be respected, as it is a fundamental human right. The environment in the school has to be flexible.

Each action area is related to a specific objective that corresponds to the major strategic objective mentioned before; each of them is focus on improve the educational system in El Salvador, with the purpose that everyone has the opportunity to access to a school and is able to be in the best conditions to reach learning, no matter their religion, social status, culture and educational special needs.

The first action area is related to management, administration, and evaluation of the quality, the second area refers to curricula, teaching practices and extracurricular support. The third area is the participation of family, parents, professors and community and, finally, the last area focus on the infrastructure and

access to information technology, material resources and educational communication.

Below there is a schema of the action areas with its objectives.

Table 9 Objectives by Action Areas EITP

Action Areas	Objectives
1- Management Policies and Norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gradually transform the institution's management towards an inclusive education focus.</li> <li>▪ Create individual norms for the school's management.</li> </ul>
2- Pedagogic Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop a pedagogic environment that promotes inclusive practices in the school.</li> </ul>
3- Education Culture and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote permanently in the families, community and school, values, attitudes and commitment that benefit the Inclusive Education Culture.</li> </ul>
4- Educational Environment and Strategic Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eliminate gradually the physical barriers that limit the access to the school and to essential resources for inclusive education</li> </ul>

*Source: Ministerio de Educación de El Salvador. EITP 2011*

Each of the objectives is focused on improving the educational system offering the same opportunities to the whole population, no exceptions, plus the implementation of methodologies concentrated in a social constructive

environment, including new technologies to optimize the time in school contributing to the individualization and learning processes. Also to include new curricular activities like art, culture, education, business, life education, foreign languages, sports, among others. Promote the parents involving in the school activities. Link with the location with formal and not formal activities; with the purpose to obtain better results by including all the people that is part of the student's learning process.

El Salvador's inclusive education model seeks to strengthen to basic elements in education: first, the quality and, second, universalization of the educational service: that everyone has access to education. To sum up, the EITP aim to ensure to every Salvadorian the access and stay in the educational system in every level, also improve the learning levels and academic results of the students in general.

An important element in EITP program is the emphasis in the rights of children and young from different social, family and educational areas; students with special physical necessities are officially included in El Salvador's educational model, it is intended to stop the exclusion of these population and to integrate them with the other students.

The EITP is not only focused on the physical special necessities of the students. There is a complete category of special needs considered, for example cerebral paralysis, visual problems, deaf, mental, retardation, language problems, indiscipline, autism, Down syndrome, emotional problems, etc. But, Informant 1 explains that in her school "there are many students with special needs, and professors are making an effort to help them, but the only tool they have to support them is their desire to help, because the school has not the adequate infrastructure to treat them and also as professors they don't have a special trainee and methodological guidelines to develop the class to the need of their student;, there is not even a special classroom to develop activities".

The lack of adequate educational infrastructure expressed by the Informant 1, is also mentioned in the report of the Fundación Salvadoreña para el Desarrollo Económico y Social (2014), in it, is expressed that between 2009 – 2014 the planned investment on educational infrastructure was \$140.3 million, but the real investment have been \$102.1 million, a difference of \$38.2 million.

The model of ‘Escuela Inclusiva de Tiempo Pleno’ is a model included as a plan inside the reform system ‘Vamos a la Escuela’. The new school model started in 2011 as a pilot project with 22 schools, mainly middle schools, located in San Salvador. In 2013 the program was operating in 145 middle schools and in the last known statics, in 2014, the model was in 2,285 middle schools. This model is supported by different occasional donors like: United States Agency for International Development (USAID), World Bank, Italian Cooperation, and International Labor Organization. Beside this, the Minister of Education has planned extra funds designated to the model but is not clear yet of how it will managed as the actual funds for education in El Salvador are insufficient.

The schools that started in the pilot project started by doing significant changes through the implementation of the new model, the students were able to improve their learning process, cognitive and physical development. However, just at the beginning of the project, it was detected a failure that could affect the development and success of it, which is that the economic resources designated to the project were insufficient. Susana Joma, reporter of El Salvador newspaper ‘El Diario de Hoy’ (2012) expressed that “the project started with a loan of \$60 million to the World Bank to develop the EITP model in 60 schools, but the loan was insufficient and didn’t guarantee to reach the quality in education that was intended.”.

Mr. Israel Montano, General Secretary of ‘Asociación Nacional de Educadores Salvadoreños’ (2012), expressed his support to the project as he saw a “long term solution to the student violence in the country”, but, “also recognized that the amount of money was not enough to reach all the schools”.

Informant 2, explains that “our school by itself doesn’t have the money to implement what is proposed in the model, and as professors we don’t have the trainee needed in terms of adequate teaching to diversity”, later he/she expresses that “the school receives the money months later than established and, if it wasn’t from external donation or funds from the school obtained from different activities, the school were in decline regarding the workshops of the extracurricular activities, because each workshop requires investment for materials without mentioning that the professors that work in the EITP model do it because they love they job because their salary is paid when donations are received or when the Minister of Education gives a bonus that is designated to these activities, something that it is received really late.”. The late payments and the insufficient funds were also reported by the newspaper El Diario de Hoy (2014), in the news, it was expressed that some schools hadn’t received money to pay salaries and buy school supplies for two months. Which, slows down the educational process.

The model proposed by the government it was a good base to start, it has it flaws but it has good principles to start with. However, it seems that the results, even when they have not officially been measured and published, won’t be what was pursued in the beginning of the project. As it has been mentioned in the previous chapter of this work, in order to improve the quality of education and assure inclusiveness, it is necessary to invest in education. The funds designated by El Salvador government to education have always been insufficient, thus the objectives of the programs have not been reached. In the case of EITP, the problem repeats, as from the beginning, the funds designated to the program have not been enough. If the country never guarantees the funds planned to the proper functioning of the programs, the success of them is not possible.

#### 4.1.1 Details of El Salvador Inclusive School Model: Analysis & Problems.

There are presented the basic facts that were considered in El Salvador's inclusive school model structure by different professors' comments, now that the model has been operating in some schools for three years and a half:

- **Formation and Functionality of Nets (Students- Professors -Family-Community)**

Students learn based in the curricula but also their specific needs, interests and problems are taken into account. Professors organize their work to maximize the time and resources available, and plans the hours so students can deeply learn through projects development and experimentation.

Family and community participate with promoting programs, such as expositions, shows and participate with cultural competitions, conventions. The model seeks that every actor in the education process participates and be involved in the teaching process. The idea is to fortify the overall system with the participation of the people that have an influence in the students learning process, but is not something easy to do in the reality. Informant 2 from a school that is located in a problematic city in El Salvador, Quezaltepeque, thinks that “ what was proposed in the program some years ago was good, but it doesn't reflect and shows have to adapt or teach in accordance to the reality of the community where the schools are located, “ we have students that are gang members, they are 13 years old but are so fearless of life that, as professors, we are not able to even put a bad grade, their older brothers, or even that little child, threats us to be careful or we will later know the consequences, they simply don't want to learn, their parents don't care about their children and most of the time they go to school just to recruit other members for their gangs. As professors we don't even get paid fair enough for all the risks

we take, a program can promise many things, but does the same, some students needs extremely special treatment and there are not options to properly approach to them. Somehow they need rehabilitation not just a cooking lesson, so once again the programs exclude them and later the government requires good results, but we don't even have the tools to execute the programs properly''. What this professor says is nothing new, a professor from another School, Informant 3, expresses the same ''The responsibility of the parents to pressure their child has been lost, professors have the perception that parents leave their children alone and without orientation, and they don't want to pay five cents for an exam sheet but have money to buy a new cellphone. Parents of the most problematic children doesn't even assist to the school's reunions''.

For many professors, to make it even worst, laws protect the irresponsible attitude and lack of interest of some children. In El Salvador there is a law named Lepina which indicates that under any circumstance a professor can penalize a student. Professors let the students do whatever they want, in many classrooms there are graffiti of different gangs, but professors in order to avoid problems, ignore them, which at the same time affect the perception of other students that really want to learn.

To support what was expressed by the professors about scholar violence, it is important to mention that according to the 'Intergremial de Trabajadores de Maestros del Ministerio de Educación de El Salvador' (2014), in the scholar year, thirty eight students, at least ten professors were killed in different violent acts and ten thousand professors were victim of extortion.

In El Salvador, in general, there is not awareness of the importance of education in life in the popular sectors, because of that a very low number of students have education as a major objective in their life, so even when the participation is proposed and required from different sectors there is no motivation and tools to pursuit this.



- **Good Education Practices**

The idea of the inclusive school model is to form the students according to their specific individuality, hence potentiating the diversity in the system. The director of a public school in San Salvador, Informant 4, expresses that “the 80% of the students in the schools are from broken families and, in other cases, there are under menace of gang’s members and go to school as salvation. The specific background of the majority of students is extremely problematic and to respect and dedicate to each complicated individual case is a difficult task”, “ we need more human resources, more specialize professors, psychologists, psychiatrists to attend each case, but of course, there is not money for education”. The challenge for the professors is big and as Informant 2 says “the government gives all the responsibility to the professors but we can’t do everything”.

According to ‘Sistema de Información de Tendencias Educativas en América Latina’ (2014), the teaching force in El Salvador has a deficiency of knowledge: only 13.7% of 45,370 professors that work in public schools has a Bachelor in Education from the university. The majority, 73%, has some teaching studies (three years of university). And, only 1.5% of the professors has assisted to pedagogy courses before enrolling in the education system and 0.2% of the professors has a Master Degree or Doctorate. The absence of training plans, deficiency of knowledge and training methods in the professors has been accepted in Ministerio de Educación Noticias (2014) by the Minister of Education, Carlos Canjura. Therefore, they were preparing some training plans to implement in the future.

In the environment of El Salvador's schools, first the majority of students need to heal and overcome their specific problems to fully concentrate themselves in learning. In order to respect their individuality, it is necessary to understand and adapt the teaching capability of the professors to different realities, but for this, training must be done, and the support of experts from different disciplines it is necessary.

- **Project based learning, Information Technology and Communication, Rooms and Adequate use of Spaces**

Children at the age of seven years have to elaborate their own technology projects motivated and promoted by nets formed by family, professors, students and community, with this is expected that children develop technical competencies and personal growth.

Also the rooms in the schools must be used to maximize the resources available, besides the magisterial classrooms there has to be rooms for music, history, cooking, painting, technology, multimedia library, all these type of activities are created with the aim of helping the children to develop their own interests and with this extra integral activities they can stay in the school the whole afternoon in a healthy environment away from violence.

Professors and Students must take advantage of Information Technology and Communication to learn more in a more accessible and globalized world and tools.

For the director, Informant 1, “ the idea of having the students more time in the school is good, as children in general don't like to do homework and don't have help in their homes to do it”. Stay more in school is a way to facilitate the learning as children who attend his/her school are usually problematic and need supervision and extracurricular activities to clarify their minds and keep away from violence problems, but despite she considerates the proposal is good, she regrets that “not

all the professors agree with her because they have to dedicate more time with the same salary”, another point is that “not all the schools have the same offer of extracurricular activities, and this complicates the functioning because sometimes schools are too far one from the other, and not all the students have to possibility to transport themselves to other school”.

In the case of the developing of technological projects since a young age, Informant 2, thinks “that is unrealistic to propose that, because they haven’t received any training in technical areas” ... “how could we assist a kid in a project if not even ourselves can understand it? We need better training and professors training programs in the universities have to change or have to be directly supervised by the government”. The professor remarks something that has been forgotten, “the training of professors in El Salvador is in charge of the universities, each university proposes and teaches their programs guide by their philosophy and there is not a specific organism that continuously follows and supervises the training of professors; with this, even with having the material resources, the project would never be completely beneficial if not all the professors are well trained and most of them don’t know how to make children learn, this is something more technical that has been left behind and affects all the public system”. The last time that El Salvador government was in charge of a training project for professors was in year 1980. When the last Normal School was closed. Since that date, all the training plans have ended only in attempts. Something that has negatively affected the quality of teaching of the professors. (La Prensa Gráfica, 2015)

- **Effectiveness and Libraries for work.**

Classes have to include practices, there has to be a balance between theory and practices, so children learn how to develop their conscience on what has to be done, know, being and live.

The idea of libraries is to produce and diversify knowledge. This include virtual and physic libraries, technology equipment, newspapers and periodical libraries.

For Informant 4, at the moment “schools still don’t count with enough tools to develop their jobs effectively”, this is also confirmed by Informant 1 and Informant 2, they mention that the lack of resources limits the methodology in the class to the traditional model: dictation, chalkboard and professors’ explanation. Informant 2 explains that “there are not resources to apply innovative pedagogies and professors are using the traditional methods as, in some cases they don’t even have chalk. This creates a lack of interest in the students as there are other technologies available to make the classes funnier”. Professors are proposed to make an effort and make classes funnier and more attractive by using social networks like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, but, in many cases, the professors don’t count with a computer to prepare their classes, is like a vicious circle, things are proposed but not the tools and the ways, which is extremely disappointing. The model works with the external funds and donors and these schools have to survive by themselves after the inauguration of the program, because the Ministry of Education in El Salvador doesn’t have a structured plan to economically support the project.

- **Physical Activities**

Activities are proposed to keep students away from the violence circle and help them to immerse in the society and develop their physical skills. Some activities proposed are: swimming, gymnastics, track, soccer, softball, fencing, and chess, among others.

Informant 1 comments that “physical activities has been the most successful proposition of all that were proposed in the Inclusive School model. Children are motivated and like to participate, but in many cases they are unbalanced motivated

as they go to school only to play and do not care about the learning'' . For Informant 2, the situation is the same.

As it can be seen the country is in a delicate and special stage to reach the guarantee of the integral and equal development of the Salvadorian population, then it is important to guarantee the continuity of the different programs proposed with the EITP model as a key method to ensure the inclusion of the traditionally excluded sectors of the population. But, to ensure this, it is necessary to find more ways to have funds to develop it them and not only rely on the external funds. For this it is necessary to make some changes that could help.

## **Chapter 5 Education in El Salvador: goals, problems and improvement proposals to a better model.**

### 5.1 Summary of Goals in terms of Education in El Salvador

With the political transition that the country started to experiment in 2009, education in the country has been refocused with the biggest reform ‘Vamos a la Escuela’ as a major actor in this new perspective.

The main objective of the reform is to include the whole population in the educational system of the country by facilitating their assistance to the school giving the basic elements considered in the country, like uniforms, shoes, notebooks, pencils and alimentation. Subsequently, the inclusive school model was introduced to reassure the commit of the reform but going further by presenting that inclusiveness will have the major role in the education. The biggest objective of the model is to assure the education as a basic human right by respecting the diversity of the population, giving them special tools to reach their personal and life development, no matter their difficulties to learn.

It is clear that the major goal of El Salvador’s educational system is the inclusive education, and some changes have been done to achieve it, but, as it has been shown, El Salvador’s model has some flaws and problems that are reducing the impact desired and also there are other aspects that should be considered.

### 5.2 Problems Detected in El Salvador’s Educational Inclusive Model & Improvement Proposals for Further Development.

El Salvador has been doing many efforts to improve the inclusiveness and quality of the educational system. Despite this, the country hasn’t reach the development desired and the results of the programs in almost all the cases do not meet the expectations and objectives. There are some problems detected that are important

to correct in order to have an improved model of inclusive school education in the country.

## **PROBLEM 1: FINANCIAL FUNDING OF EDUCATION AND PROGRAMS IN EL SALVADOR**

El Salvador has one of the lowest rates of investment in education in Latin American region. The percentage measured by the GDP of the country, as it was mentioned at the beginning of the work, has never surpassed the 3.47% (the last figure achieved in year 2014). Something that contrast the average of 5.3% in the region and is not even the half of a successful system like Costa Rica. It is true that many developed countries do not invest a high amount of their national's budget in education, but as it was said before these are already developed countries, in the past they made efforts to improve their educational systems, and now that their systems are established and well-adjusted.

In the country the tax recollection is extremely low as the tax evasion is high, so even when a percentage is designated to education, the amount of money that at the end implies it is lower. For the first time in the country the Ministry of Finance, in May 2015, published a list of companies and people that were not paying their taxes, 63% of them are big private companies.

- Improvement Proposal 1: Increasing the Investment in Education

The country needs a higher investment in education, as it was said by the UN (2014). El Salvador has to invest at least 7.5% of its GDP to improve the educational system in 10 years.

- Improvement Proposal 2: Unit to Supervise the Use of Funds by the Ministry of Education

El Salvador needs a special unit that its major objective has to be the supervision of the correct use of the educational funds. There is not a special unit in charge of this and, as a result, there could be leaks of money haven't be detected. As not high amounts of money are available for education, and not every people has enough knowledge on how to use and supervise the use of the budget, a unit with people prepared in charge of is a good point to start.

- Improvement Proposal 3: Tax Evasion Laws

The country tax evasion laws are weak, year after year big companies do not pay taxes, as there are not real consequences of not paying the taxes. The country clearly needs to collect more money and stop the corruption like tax evasions could be a measure to collect more money in the meantime.

- Improvement Proposal 4: External Support from Private Companies and Organizations for Programs

In the country there are so many urgent and important matters, but being education a key factor to the economic growth of the country, the search of financing alternatives is imperative. The funds for the EITP model have to be guarantee, for this, a program where medium to big size private companies commit themselves to support schools inside the radio of their location could be a good option, in return, companies could get tax reductions and reputation as an attractive company to work with.

Also there are companies in the country and around the world that distribute and produce computers and many technology tools that schools need. An approach to



these companies to seek for donations or investment is necessary, so schools are equipped with the technology needed by professors.

The creation of supporting programs specially designed to involve public and private companies in the improvement of the public scholar systems. Companies could encourage employees to involve in social work programs. Which, at the same time would increase the awareness of the importance of the education and the participation of the society.

It is important to not forget that there are also non-governmental international and national organizations that economically cannot give all the support needed to fully develop the EITP model. But, they can support according to their experience in social work by creating workshop medium-long term volunteering programs directed to Salvadorians or foreigners that have had the opportunity to access to a better education or are formed in music, arts, drawing etc.

If the country really wants to overcome the lack of money, it has to give a step forward and seek for alternatives. The government no matter the political tendency, has to commit with education.

## **PROBLEM 2: LACK OF COMMITMENT FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY**

In the country there has been over the years a general disinterest in education. It has been the debt of all the governments. At the moment, with a new political tendency, there have been some improvements with the proposition of new programs like EITP. But, the implementation has been weak, as in their majority, the funds designated to the programs are insufficient. The commit from the leaders in terms of education is fragile and this is transmitted to the major part of the population.

In the country, usually, education is not a priority for his habitants. Most of them consider that study is a waste of time, as they need to satisfy urgent priorities: food, health, etc. As benefits of education are seen in a long term, it is easily displaced as a secondary issue. And the cycle of inequality continuous, because people don't understand and don't see the relation between education and a better future for their generation.

To the EITP model succeed the atmosphere of education in the country has to change.

- Improvement Proposal 1: New Leaders and Ideas

There is a need to give priority to education, and none government leader has done it in many years. A modernization in the political field has to occur. Leaders with new perspective and commit with education are needed.

At the moment, the polarization in the country is too high. There is not a center tendency political party option strong enough. Hence people has a radical right or radical left tendency, and support their political parties above society's well-being decisions. A new leader or political party is needed to balance and to unify the country.

- Improvement Proposal 2: Media Awareness Campaigns

The availability of new technology facilitates to reach different sectors of the population. Campaigns directed to aware the population about the importance of education for their well-being are necessary. Create an educational environment would be beneficial for the country. The advertisements must include examples of successful Salvadorians that were poor and found success through education. People, especially those with economic problems need to understand that education can help them to have a better future.

The campaigns can show the society in general how education can influence their life and the future of the country. In order to improve the education of the country is needed the participation of all the society, as it is the major agent of change.

- Improvement Proposal 3: Stimulation of The Education

The government can stimulate the interest on education by joining education with benefit programs. For example, people in the poorest area that send their children to the school can receive economical bonus or basic food supplies. The agriculture incentive programs can be tied with the participation of the children of the community in the school.

In the case of students, the students with better grades could be rewarded with exchanges with other national or if it is possible international schools. Also can be offered foreign language scholarships or different workshops. The children that grew in difficult environments need to believe that education will save them, and to believe, they need to see what they can win if they focus in education. Association with private schools and private companies can help the government to achieve this goal.

### **PROBLEM 3: THE SALARY OF THE PROFESSORS IS LOW AND NEED TRAINING TO ATTEND THE DIVERSITY IN THE SCHOOL.**

In the last chapter, it was expressed by the informants, that their salary is really low, and they don't feel any motivation when they see that they don't have the tools to implement the programs that the government proposes, and they are not trained for that. As professors are key actors in the educational systems, they have to be motivated and happy with their jobs. Because they are the ones that are in contact with the student. And the lack of motivation and bad feelings are

transmitted to the students. If the professors don't have the methodology to include the children, the EITP program will never have success.

- Improvement Proposal 1: Government Has To Be in Charge of The Professors' Training

In the last decades, universities have been in charge of the professor's academic career programs. This has result in a diversity of teaching methods. Professors that are trained in better universities, usually work in private schools and the rest in public schools. This support the inequality in the country and produces differences results from programs that are imparted in public and private schools. To avoid this, the government has to recover the training of the professors. The ideal would be that they were form in schools designed for the training of professors, and directed by the government. But this requires a high investment and would take time. This could be a long term project, but as a start, the government can begin by universalizing the teaching education programs in all the universities, and supervision boards have to be created to follow and supervise how the training is done in the universities, hence anticipating to flaws and introducing improvements.

- Improvement Proposal 2: Trainee in Inclusiveness Techniques and Methodologies

As many professors express that, they don't know how to approach to different students and how to support the EITP model. Training programs have to be designed and implement. This ideally has to be done at the beginning of the projects and complementary training can be done continuously. But as the EITP project is already working in many schools. The training has to be done as fast as possible, because if it is not done, it can really slow down the success of the program.

- Improvement Proposal 3: Recover The Prestige of The Professor's Career

In El Salvador, public school professors' salaries are low and many times, they receive it late. This contributes to the image that being a professor is not an important job. To increase the salaries may not be easy and is a decision that cannot be taken and done in a couple of months. But, a readjust in the national budget can be done to reclaim what professors deserve. For example, salaries of the members of the parliament could be reduced, as they earn more than nine times the minimum wage of the country. The amount of money obtained in this reduction can be redirected to professors. And the profession can recover some of the prestige that should have.

#### **PROBLEM 4: FOCUS ONLY IN TO GIVE ACCESS AND SET ASIDE THE QUALITY AND GLOBALIZATION TRENDS**

The country is doing efforts towards inclusiveness. Despite that in the EITP model was mentioned the importance of quality in education. Changes in the curricula were not proposed. Just the addition of extracurricular activities, like sports, arts, etc.

The access to education has to be guaranteed, but at the same time, the population has the right to access to a quality education. If the country only focuses in educating people and not the quality of it. A problem will appear later, because globalization requires professionals well prepared and highly competitive.

- Improvement Proposal 1: Focus in Learning English, Science and Technology, and Development of Personal Strengths

The country needs to develop a workforce based on knowledge. In order to attract investors that could provide better salaries and working conditions, it is necessary to offer workers with developed knowledge. As for the majority of students, it is difficult to keep excellence in all subjects; the country can opt to focus some schools in science and technology. This not implies that other subjects has to be

forgotten, but a focus in what is important in the global trends for the future, can create a working force that is attractive to international companies.

Also, as not every student is able to outperform in all the subjects or in school. Education could be focused in teaching how to develop the personal abilities, and manage them in real life. Also, teaching of a second language, especially English, will give students a tool needed in the globalized world.

The country needs to meet what globalization requires and give a good base to start to the population. Hence, have a main focus, can be a guideline to the general improvement.

- Improvement Proposal 2: Association with National Private Schools and Partnership with International Educational Systems

In El Salvador, people that assist to the best private schools, receive better education. Most of the private schools, are directed by foreign boards and international associations. The curricula proposed by them is different and includes a deeper teaching of subjects, foreign languages, technology use, etc. The government can take advantage of the presence of these schools and make alliances with the private school associations. These, to update the contents of the programs and get improvement ideas.

To do partnership, with other countries that have successful educational systems is recommendable. The government can ask for support in education. International experts could help in the trainee of the professors, specialized experts could be at the disposition to support the development of the EITP model and propose improvements too.

## **PROBLEM 5: VIOLENT ENVIRONMENT SURROUNDING THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.**

The violence is in every aspect of the society, and the educational system is a favorite target for the gangs. Children, in many cases are forced to join gangs by their own classmates. In other cases, professors and principals, receive menaces from gang's members, because they assist to work to schools that are located in the territory of the enemy gang.

Violence is infecting the whole educational system and if the tendency rises, the EITP model would not even have a chance to reach its objective. At the moment, the government has not proposed systematic measures to change the situation. And if it doesn't change, the whole educational system could collapse. And the dropping out of the school will be enormous.

- Improvement Proposal 1: Strengthen the Laws against Gangs and Non-Adult Delinquents and Gang's Members

Laws have to strengthen against criminals. Any association and belonging to criminal gangs have to consider illicit. The existence and use of the gang's signs has to be prohibited.

In the case of non-adult delinquents, their participation in criminal gangs and acts has to be punished. And the protection behind special laws for children has to be studied in serious cases, like homicides.

The attendance to school of gang's members or associates, have to be prohibited. Instead, obligatory reinsertion schools must be created to attend students implicated in criminal or illicit acts.

- Improvement Proposal 2: Security Perimeters Surrounding the Public Schools Located in Problematic Areas

The government can organize security perimeters to protect the schools and people that assist to it. There is a budget designated to military forces and as the country is not in war, the functions of some military members could be temporally modify.

El Salvador has a long way to make the EITP model a success. But, if the country and society desires a change. All of them have to get involved, and improvements must be done.



## Chapter 6 Conclusions

In this chapter it will be exposed what has been concluded by the findings and analysis through this work. Next the managerial implications, and finally the limitation of the research will be reported.

### 6.1 Conclusions

- In the literature review of inclusiveness there has not been a universal concept that sums up the opinion of all the authors that have studied it. However, there is a universal agreement that the benefits of it are crucial to the development and success of the educational system in a country.
- Reviewing the origins and the evolution of the education in El Salvador (reforms and programs), shows that historically the country has failed in giving education the importance that it deserves. There has not been a continuous program or policies through the years that has prevail among the interests of the political parties in the government.
- Statics proves that El Salvador in the recent years has been doing some changes to improve the education, by investing more on it. From an average expense per student of \$264.8 in 2005. The country in 2011 reported an investment of \$400.59 per student. This represents that there is a will improve education. However, these changes have not been enough in terms of quality because the general results in the country general superior exam (PAES) are lower every year.
- The difference between the PAES results of best private and best public schools proves that the inequality in the society also affects the education. While 8.42 is the lowest point in the PAES private top ten schools the

highest result in the public schools top ten is 8.02. In terms of education the cycle of inequality gets stronger as the access to have a better knowledge is by paying it.

- The lack of work opportunities and the bad salaries for people that hasn't study is a continuous problem that affects the development of the country. Because as the statics presented in 2013, at least 96,824 students reported that were working to help their parents to survive or to live. Something that affected their performance in the school.
- Inequality – Education – Violence are related in El Salvador. The extreme inequality in access to quality education, supports the lack of the same opportunities for all the population. Hence, people with less opportunities sees delinquency and violence as an option.
- There is a strong relation between the development of a country and education. All the countries included in the top rank of the United Nations Human Development Index, are also in the first places of PISA and the Learning Curve by Pearson results.
- The review of the best educational systems in the Latin American region, shows that there is not a magic formula to make an educational system succeed. Instead, each country understood that education was the way to reach development in the country and gave importance to it. But also adapted their systems and programs to the special conditions of their society and environment. However, they departed from the basic right that all the population has the right to access to a quality education no matter their economic, social or physical conditions, which means inclusiveness.
- The insufficient financial funds in El Salvador's educational programs slow down the results and negatively influence the implementation of them. The

country needs to search alternative options to sustain their programs in a long term and assure it to all the country.

- Inclusiveness in El Salvador is recent and the EITP model proposed has some flaws. However, the project is on time to improve and to achieve the objectives that were planned. If the country works on it, the inclusiveness goal will be reached in a long term.

## 6.2 Leaders and Environment Implications

To improve the EITP model and the education system in general. There has to be a change from the country's leaders. No change will ever give results, if the people in the government is not really involved and committed with education. Also, it is important to adapt and understand El Salvador's special characteristics. It is imperative to do and implement the changes according to its environment. If these two variables are not taken into account, it will be difficult to see a success, not even in a long term.

## 6.3 Limitation of the Research

It is important to mention that worldwide statistics in terms of inclusiveness and indexes of it are nonexistent at the moment. The research has been done with the concepts introduced by different authors implicated in the educational environment.

In the case of El Salvador, official governmental statistics and information available about the educational history, programs, reforms, trends and recent plans is poor and in most of the cases is not updated. The data has been obtained with reports of different international organizations that work in El Salvador. For the EITP program there is not any statistic or figures available yet by any national or international organism.

In the improvement proposals they are presented for further development as they implicate many changes in different aspects that maybe not always be viable.

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