WHAT WOMEN WANT: AN ANALYSIS OF DISCOURSES SURROUNDING EDUCATION ACCESS FOR UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

by

Heather J. MacCleoud

University of Missouri - Columbia

A Research Proposal

University of Missouri - Columbia

April, 2017
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract ................................................................................................................................. iv

INTRODUCTION ...................................................................................................................... 1

1.1 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1

1.2 Background of the Problem ......................................................................................... 2

1.2.1 UN Goals for Education ....................................................................................... 3

1.2.2 Asherah Foundation Goals for Education ............................................................ 5

1.3 Statement of the Problem ............................................................................................ 6

1.4 Purpose of the Study .................................................................................................... 6

1.5 Research Questions .................................................................................................... 7

1.5 Significance of the Study ............................................................................................. 8

1.5 Definition of Terms ...................................................................................................... 9

1.5.1 Education Levels ................................................................................................. 9

1.5.2 Critical Discourse Analysis ................................................................................. 10

1.5.3 Forcibly Displaced Individual .............................................................................. 10

1.6 Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations .......................................................... 11

1.6.1 Assumptions ....................................................................................................... 11

1.6.2 Limitations .......................................................................................................... 12

1.6.3 Delimitations ........................................................................................................ 13

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ..................................................................................................... 15

2.1 Introduction ................................................................................................................. 15

2.2 Conceptual Framework – An Introduction ............................................................... 15

2.3 Review of Research ................................................................................................... 15

METHODOLOGY ................................................................................................................... 19

3.1 Introduction ............................................................................................................... 19

3.2 Research Design ....................................................................................................... 19

3.2.1 Methodological Considerations ......................................................................... 19

3.3 Research Questions ................................................................................................... 23

3.4 Setting ....................................................................................................................... 24
3.5 Participants .................................................................................................................................................. 24
  3.5.1 Location ................................................................................................................................................. 24
  3.5.2 Area of Study ......................................................................................................................................... 24
  3.5.3 Background .......................................................................................................................................... 25
3.6 Data Collection Procedures .............................................................................................................................. 25
  3.6.1 Global Education Monitoring Report ..................................................................................................... 26
  3.6.2 Scholarship Application Essays .............................................................................................................. 26
3.7 Data Analysis Procedures ................................................................................................................................. 27
  3.7.1 Phase One – Three-dimensional Analytic Framework ............................................................................... 28
  3.7.2 Phase Two - Building Tasks .................................................................................................................... 30
  3.7.3 Phase Three – Critique – What Else Is Possible? ...................................................................................... 31
3.8 Conclusion .................................................................................................................................................... 32
REFERENCES ..................................................................................................................................................... 33
Appendix A: Education Levels (ISCED levels 4-8) ............................................................................................. 37
Appendix B: Scholarship Policy & Application Form ............................................................................................ 38
  Policies and Requirements: ............................................................................................................................... 38
Appendix C: Scholarship Applicants ...................................................................................................................... 49
Appendix D: Gee 42 Building Tasks ..................................................................................................................... 51
Appendix E: Summary of Research Phases .......................................................................................................... 55
Abstract

This research will look at the discourses of underserved women working to access higher education, in comparison to the discourses of formal efforts to provide education access via the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Agenda. It will analyze applications to an international scholarship program alongside an annual report regarding Sustainable Development Goal #4 pertaining to education access. A critical analysis of discourse surrounding (and within) the applications, the annual report, and the scholarship program will provide insight into ways in which efforts to provide access to higher education may be improved.
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In the summer of 2016 two very different organizations sought to improve access to higher education for underserved women around the world. The first was the United Nations’ (UN) preliminary report measuring progress towards ambitious global education targets – the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report, published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The second was the Asherah Foundation’s announcement of scholarships for women around the world who needed a “second chance”. The Asherah Foundation’s scholarship program provided an intimate glimpse into the lived realities of women trying to obtain postsecondary education. The UN’s GEM Report was announced with great fanfare as it symbolized the efforts of millions of people around the world coming together to provide access to education for underserved populations. In contrast, the Asherah Foundation’s scholarship program represented the efforts of a handful of dedicated women reaching out to support a small number of other women around the world. This research seeks to illuminate an area of the UN’s education goals that was left out of the GEM Report by engaging in a critical discourse analysis of the scholarship essays of those who applied for the Asherah Foundation’s Second Chance Scholarship program in 2016. In particular, the focus will be on underserved adult women seeking to access higher education. The GEM Report explicitly states that there is a need for non-governmental organizations to contribute to the collection of data and to provide input as to the ways in which the UN can meet its ambitious education goals. This research seeks to provide such a contribution.
1.2 Background of the Problem

The United Nations (UN) has a history of developing global agendas for education with a focus on economic development. The GEM Report situates itself in a long line of agendas and reports that resulted from discussions in the 1960s and 1970s about the need to include sustainability into development agendas. Education has been a central component of UN development agendas. UNESCO was created in 1945 with 20 member states. In 1948, the organization recommended free, universal and compulsory primary education be introduced into member states. In 1968, UNESCO “organized the first intergovernmental conference aimed at reconciling the environment and development, now known as “sustainable development” (Milestones). In 1990, UNESCO’s inaugural World Conference on Education for All was held in Thailand. UNESCO, and the rest of the UN then re-affirmed commitment to this agenda via the Dakar Framework for Action (2000) with goals to be met by 2015. This Education for All agenda was considered complementary to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Following progress towards the MDGs, a new set of development goals - the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - were ratified by UN members in September 2015 (UNESCO, 2016a).

The 2016 GEM Report Education for people and planet: Creating sustainable futures for all was released in Fall 2016 and is the latest in a series of annual Reports on education-for-development going back to 2002 (UNESCO, 2016a, p. vi). The 2016 Report is designed as “the first of a new 15-year series” (p. 12). Its publication was directly intended “to contribute to the initial building blocks of the sustainable development agenda” (p. 12) as the report highlights the interconnectedness of education with the other SDGs and seeks “to make a timely contribution to the debate on what should be monitored and how” (p. 14). Of particular interest to this proposed
research is UNESCO’s admission that there are many indicators for which appropriate monitoring mechanisms have not yet been identified. Throughout, this report encourages discussion about how to better address gaps in monitoring of progress towards achieving the UN’s education targets.

1.2.1 UN Goals for Education

After several years of deliberation and consultation with millions of scholars, researchers, policymakers, and others, the UN adopted its Sustainable Development Agenda in 2015. This development agenda included 17 aspirational Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets to track progress towards the goals. SDG #4 is to “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” (UNESCO, 2016a, p. 6) and includes ten primary targets. The GEM Report breaks Target 4.3 into three constituent parts: Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Tertiary Education, and Adult Education. Specifically relevant to this study, Target 4.3 states “By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university” (p. 7). This target is to be measured by reporting on “[p]articipation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex” (p. 221).

Important to note for this research is the acknowledgement throughout the report of the gaps in the overall development agenda. The report frequently exhorts readers to engage in dialogue regarding ways to fill these gaps with additional research. For example, the report acknowledges that “[m]any important concepts in the 10 SDG 4 targets are not yet covered by any proposed indicator. Among those that are covered…details remain to be fixed in the
indicators” (p. 170). The report further notes that “many, if not most, major issues in education are context-specific and difficult to generalize or compare” (pp. 175-176) and that “both national and international reporting need to adjust to enable monitoring of the growing diversity in student attendance, programme delivery and private provision patterns, which have implications on inequality in access” (p. 231).

1.2.1.1 Gender and Education

Of interest to this research is the supplementary Gender Review that was released in conjunction with the GEM Report. This supplement focused on the importance of achieving equity in educational attainment for both genders. It noted that “gender disparity is more prevalent in tertiary education than at lower levels” (UNESCO, 2016b, p. 25). This is problematic as data shows that successes in the majority of the 17 goals are tied to the ability of women to access education. Women’s access to education “is important for female empowerment [that leads to] positive outcomes in health, nutrition, sanitation and energy, and between generations” (2016a, p. 13). The report notes that:

[i]n addition to educational opportunities, five other domains help frame the discussion of gender equality in education. These include gender norms, values and attitudes (many of which can be influenced through education); institutions outside the education system; laws and policies in education systems; resource distribution; and teaching and learning practices (Unterhalter, 2015)” (p. 264).

The GEM Report and supplement make it clear throughout that equity in access to education is essential for the achievement of the sustainable development agenda.
1.2.1.2 Forcibly Displaced Populations and Education

Many of the women that this study will analyze belong to another underserved group – forcibly displaced populations. The GEM Report notes that “Forcibly displaced populations are among the most neglected” (bold original, p. 254) and that “forced displacement tends to lead to gross violations of the right to education” (p. 271). The report asks readers to consider ways in which to collect information “that identifies individuals as members of other vulnerable groups such as people…who are forcibly displaced or speak a language other than the language of instruction?” (p. 256) as many of the scholarship applicants are.

1.2.2 Asherah Foundation Goals for Education

The Asherah Foundation is a United States 501(3)c nonprofit organization dedicated to providing “Second Chance Scholarships to Women around the World.” The organization was founded in March 2016 by three international education professionals; including this author. The idea for the organization came in response to reports received of women around the world finding themselves without resources to support their educational aspirations – in large part due to the forced migration of individuals because of violence and civil unrest in their home country.

The organization offered initial scholarships in summer 2016. The response to this initial scholarship program was immediate. Inquiries from around the world testified to the urgent needs of women from a wide variety of situations. Nineteen completed applications were received for the first round of scholarships, and from those applications the Asherah Foundation provided two scholarships in the fall of 2016 – one to a woman in Chile and one to a woman in Palestine. See Appendix B: Scholarship Policy & Application Form. Additional information about the applicants and the relationship of this organization to SDG #4 will be detailed below.
1.3 Statement of the Problem

The GEM Report is straightforward in expressing the need for improved access to higher education. For example, it states that “[i]ncreasing tertiary education in 10 recent EU member states would reduce numbers at risk of poverty by 3.7 million” (p. xv). Furthermore, “[b]y 2020, the world could have 40 million too few workers with tertiary degrees, relative to demand” (p. 51). In addition, the improved access of women (in particular) to education is stated as essential for achieving the other 16 goals throughout.

The initial problem that this study seeks to address is the lack of data in the GEM Report regarding adult women (including migrants, speakers of languages different from those of instruction) accessing higher education opportunities. It is hoped that by analyzing scholarship applications that additional information may be provided to help UNESCO and other interested organizations (such as the Asherah Foundation) better address the needs of this underserved population.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to develop a more complete understanding of the “on-the-ground” situation of underserved women struggling to access tertiary education in order to better inform future efforts to support them (by the UN, by the Asherah Foundation, etc).

This research will look at how discourse is used as a means of persuasion and how discourse reflects the underlying world-view of various actors regarding access to higher education for women. This research will be performed from the perspective of critical discourse analysis as exemplified by Fairclough (1992, 1995, 2001, 2013). This theoretical approach views the discourses of both the UN and of the applicants to the Asherah scholarship program as forms
of social practice that develop and reinforce social constructs that should be critically viewed with an eye towards identifying possible alternative social constructs and practices.

Critical discourse analysis is well-aligned with the principles of voice and empowerment underpinning the Asherah Foundation. It is also well-suited to gleaning information about the unique and context-specific experiences of a population not currently captured in the GEM Report. Critical discourse analysis is useful for amplifying the voices of those who are not usually heard and contrasting it with those that seek to (either explicitly or implicitly) control them. In this case, the proposed study seeks to highlight the voices of the scholarship applicants and contrast their personal, on-the-ground interpretation of the role of education in development with the narrative of the UN Sustainable Development Goal #4.

1.5 Research Questions

The central research question of this proposed study is: What can be learned from applicants to the Asherah Foundation about the nature of their experiences accessing post-secondary education that could then inform the data collected and reported in UNESCO’s Global Education Monitoring Report?

The experiences of these applicants are generally not currently reflected in the GEM Report. Most of the women have left their country of origin and are thus not counted in official national reports (which comprise the majority of data used to develop the GEM Report) due to the transitory nature of their situation (e.g. migrant, refugee). These women also are not typically included in reports due to their age (many are beyond the “traditional” age of those included in

Many of the women already have an initial postsecondary credential and are in the process of re-tooling or upgrading their skills to better cope with the disruptions in their lives such as forced relocation or a change in marital and/or family status.

In light of global efforts to support more sustainable development and increase the education of disenfranchised groups (women in particular), the overarching research question is - how do women in these non-traditional settings (particularly those from developing countries and/or areas of conflict) perceive and access higher education? How can that inform the work of organizations seeking to provide increased access to higher education?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it will contribute to the development of better understanding of the struggles that women face when trying to access higher education. This better understanding will provide a basis for developing improved indicators and methods of measuring (and encouraging) progress towards equitable access to higher education for underserved women (and thus the achievement of the sustainable development agenda). Both the UN and the Asherah Foundation are dedicated to improving the ability of women to access higher education. Both organizations have developed strategies to help women access higher education. The proposed analysis will look closely at the ways in which these strategies have been developed and applied.

---

1 It should be noted that the GEM Report acknowledges that despite these common parameters there actually “is no consensus on which age group to use for reference”.

8
1.5 Definition of Terms

As this research seeks to provide guidance to those involved with the GEM Report, the terminology used here will follow the definitions used by this report where appropriate. Additional terms pertaining to the research methodology (e.g. critical discourse analysis) will be examined in later sections.

1.5.1 Education Levels

Education levels in the GEM Report follow “the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), which is the classification system designed to serve as an instrument for assembling, compiling and presenting comparable indicators and statistics of education both within countries and internationally” (UNESCO, 2016a, p. 493). Much of the discourse relied upon for this research is in reference to tertiary education (levels 5-8 in the GEM Report). It should be noted that the Asherah Foundation uses post-secondary to refer to levels 4-8. To avoid confusion, this paper will refer to ISCED levels 4-8 as “higher education” in general. When discussing specific aspects of the GEM Report or Asherah Foundation policies, tertiary education and post-secondary education will be used as appropriate. For further information distinguishing the various levels of post-secondary and tertiary education, please see Appendix A: Education Levels (ISCED levels 4-8). Throughout this paper, “higher” education will be used to refer to all post-secondary education (levels 4-8). This will be done, in large part, as one of the goals of this research is to inform the dialogue about access for women to tertiary education including post-secondary education opportunities (level 4).
1.5.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

The primary method of analysis will be Critical Discourse Analysis following the criteria set forth by Fairclough (2013, pp. 10-11):

1) It is not just analysis of discourse (or more concretely texts), it is part of some form of systematic transdisciplinary analysis of relations between discourse and other elements of the social practice.

2) It is not just general commentary on discourse, it includes some form of systematic analysis of texts.

3) It is not just descriptive, it is also normative. It addresses social wrongs in their discursive aspects and possible ways of righting or mitigating them.

Additional definitions and description of the methodology will be outlined below.

1.5.3 Forcibly Displaced Individual

The UN provides very distinct definitions for terms such as migrant, refugee and forcibly displaced individual with legal implications for each term. According to the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), “Refugees are persons fleeing armed conflict or persecution.” This is in contrast to migrants who “choose to move not because of a direct threat of persecution or death, but mainly to improve their lives by finding work, or in some cases for education, family reunion, or other reasons” (UNHCR, 2016). The GEM Report does not talk about adult women migrant or refugee access to tertiary education. When referring to applicants who have provided evidence of refugee status, the term “refugee” will be used. When referring to applicants who have simply indicated that they have moved in order to pursue their educational goals, the term “migrant” will be employed. When in doubt, the term migrant or
“forcibly displaced individual” will be used, depending on the reasons provided for their relocation.

1.6 Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

1.6.1 Assumptions

1.6.1.1 Tertiary Education and Skills for Work

The UN separates access to tertiary education and the development of skills for work into two separate sub-goals:

- **Target 4.3:** By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university
- **Target 4.4:** By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship (UNESCO, 2016a, p. 7; see also Chapters 12 and 13).

The GEM Report notes that although traditional formal education has the goal of providing students with appropriate skills for the workforce, it has not always done so (UNESCO, 2016a, pp. 244-253). However, the relationship between the two is considered strong enough that the supplemental Gender Review mentions further education as a possible way to improve the employment outcomes of women (UNESCO, 2016b). It should be noted that the Asherah Foundation simply assumes that access to higher education for its applicants will lead to improved work opportunities. The link between education and work opportunities is seen as causal by the founder (the author of this paper).

---

2 Post-secondary education is included in the discussion, but the majority of the focus in the GEM Report is specifically on tertiary education.
1.6.1.2 Need for Adult Migrants to Access Tertiary Education

As stated earlier, the Asherah Foundation was created in large part as a response to Reported problems of adult women accessing tertiary education after enduring forced migration. The UN includes refugee youth (through secondary school) in Target 4.5 regarding equitable access. However, no mention is made of adult women migrants needing access to education. In fact, no mention is made of refugees or migrants needing access to tertiary education.

1.6.1.3 Honesty of Responses

Both organizations (the UN and the Asherah Foundation) operate on the assumption that responses to requests for information are honest. As such, reported data is accepted as being truthfully reported. The UN assumes that governments and other sources of reported data are providing numbers as accurately as possible. The Asherah Foundation assumes that the applicants to the scholarship program are reporting accurately on their needs and both educational and financial statuses. Although it is accepted that there may be some inaccuracies, both organizations operate as if those providing data are providing the most accurate data available to them.

1.6.1.4 Gender Expression

Both organizations use the gendered term “women” to refer to target populations. Neither organization clarifies (or questions) the relationship of this term to the assigned sex of the individual (at least in terms of goals for education). Expressions of gender beyond the binary women/men are not explicitly considered.

1.6.2 Limitations

1.6.2.1 Language
English was not the first language for any of the Asherah scholarship applicants. Marketing of the scholarship program was done in English, Spanish, and Arabic. Applications were received in English, Spanish, and Arabic with translations into English provided by associates of the organization. Considerations for how this impacts analysis will be included in the discussion about the research methodology.

1.6.2.2 Non-textual Considerations

Inclusion of non-textual aspects of discourse can enrich analysis and provide additional, important context to the textual components of discourse (e.g. Kress, 2010). The GEM Report and supplement are available both in hard copy and electronic formats through an interactive, multi-lingual and socially-connected website. The context within which the Asherah Foundation ran its 2016 scholarship program included a website and multi-lingual outreach across social media. The scholarship applications were submitted in a variety of ways to the Asherah Foundation with each application including a variety of materials. An additional point of analysis will focus on the differences among the overall scholarship packet submissions. This will include photos, artwork, and the presentation of materials (e.g. photocopies, MS Word documents, handwritten notes, translations provided). Considerations for how this impacts analysis will be included in the discussion about the research methodology.

1.6.3 Delimitations

This research will be bounded in multiple ways. As this research seeks to contribute to the conversation around the UN GEM Report, much of the documentation pertaining to the this report will also include official documents made publicly available by relevant UN bodies. As
the research also seeks to give voice to the women applying for the scholarships, their words will be relied upon to provide most of the primary data analyzed.

1.6.3.1 Primary Sources

As noted above, this research will focus on primary sources. The social constructivist lens demands a focus on the realities that are created through social interaction. The official documents pertaining to the GEM Report (including the actual report) are one example. The scholarship essays of the applicants are another example. Highlighting the various “worlds” that are constructed via the GEM Report and the scholarship essays will provide an opportunity to examine both the similarities (the shared world-views) and the differences. It is the differences that will be the most intriguing as this may help us understand “what might exist and what should exist” (Fairclough, 2013, p. 7).

1.6.3.2 Subjects of Analysis

The 19 scholarship applicants will be the primary subjects of analysis. They represent women in 19 different educational programs in multiple countries around the world. Additional information is provided below and in Appendix C: Scholarship Applicants.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

As noted above, most of the literature relied upon will be the primary sources of the GEM Report and the scholarship applications (with a focus on the essays). The majority of the literature discussed in this section seeks simply to situate the focus of analysis. Data regarding the relevance and need for this study; particularly as articulated by the UN via the GEM Report, has been touched upon in earlier sections and will be further outlined below.

2.2 Conceptual Framework – An Introduction

In following Fairclough’s approach to critical discourse analysis, this research will examine the data through the lens of social constructivism. Saarinen (2007) uses “uses “discourse” to refer to dialectical relationship of language as constructed by society and as construing it (Wodak, 2001a; Fairclough, 1992)” (p. 16). Her application of Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis framework to her analysis of policy documents provides a starting-point for the research here. The concept of discourse as constructing (and re-constructing) a social reality will be examined throughout; particularly in the discussion of the proposed research methodologies below.

2.3 Review of Research

This section will be devoted to an exploration of previous research pertaining to the critical analysis of discourse pertaining to international organizations (IOs) (such as the UN) and the persuasive character of the discourse produced.

Saarinen (2007) provides a historical overview of the relationships between the terms “text” and discourse; particularly as conceived in the field of linguistics. She notes that a “text” was originally conceived of as a static product in contrast to the dynamic product that is
discourse (see also Virtanen, 1990; Titscher, Meyer, Wodak & Vetter, 2000; Brown & Yule, 1983). She points out that in more recent “Foucaultian” traditions, the idea of “discourse” referred to “meaning systems, which have historical, social and institutional implications” (p. 15). This Foucaultian perspective (which is important for this particular research) views “discourse as a system of organizing truth and knowledge, and consequently on how power is exercised by some and not others (Martín & Gabilondo, 2006; Ball, 1993)...a field of competition for world views, rather than on the linguistic forms of discourse analysis” (p. 18).

Saarinen’s (2007) analysis of policy texts sought to explain and understand how policies are implemented; including “the (political) views which are embedded in the debates and in understanding how policies are produced (discourse as social practice)” (p. 18). She notes that the creation and implementation of policies simultaneously: describe the world, create and recreate the world, foreground problems (which narrows “the space for alternative views”) and thus “perpetuate some political views of social reality” (p. 18). She notes that this ability to perpetuate a politicized view of reality has effects beyond simply ideological – funding allocation being one example.

International organizations (IOs) such as the United Nations can have enormous impact on the education that is available to people around the world. The influence of IOs takes many forms (Bassett & Maldonado-Maldonado, 2009; Shahjahan, 2012; Shahjahan & Madden, 2014). Funding from institutions such as the World Bank is an obvious example. The more ideological impacts come from the international engagement with various ideas (Spring, 2009; Shahjahan, 2012), the cross-national networks that are created (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010), and the discourses that are created (King, Marginson, & Naidoo, 2011). Shahjahan and Madden (2014), referencing
Robertson (2009) note that IOs have evoked a global discourse around what could be considered “a neoliberal social imaginary of [higher education (HE)], by which a convergent effect is produced in HE policy. IOs achieve this through the mobilization of “crisis talk” and opinion formation” (p. 707). Rizvi and Lingard (2010) and Teferra (2009) discuss ways that IOs have used discourse surrounding the idea of the knowledge economy to their advantage.

Shahjahan and Madden (2014) note that IOs have developed specific discourses around innovation in higher education through specific contributions to the working vocabulary and through “sharing best practices, highlighting innovative policy developments, establishing common definitions, and setting the frameworks through which state actors operate” (p. 708) (see also Wende, 2011; Lebeau & Sall, 2011; King, 2009; and Antunes, 2006). Saarinen’s (2008) research on the “persuasive presuppositions” of IO discourse around higher education is particularly instructive. She notes that “Presuppositions set the assumed common ground, which in turn sets the frame of interpretation of texts” (p. 341).

Shahjahan and Madden (2014) also point out that powerful actors (e.g. client states) often have a hand in shaping the discourses from behind the scenes (see for example, Moutsios, 2009 and Robertson, 2009). Common critiques of previous development agendas (such as the Millennium Development Goals) point out the disproportionate influence developed states had on the creation of the agendas – often at the expense of the “undeveloped” states they were seeking to aid; particularly in the realm of higher education (Naidoo, 2008; Hartmann, 2010; Collins & Rhoads, 2010; Salmi, Hopper, & Bassett, 2009).

Technical reports (such as the GEM Report) have often been “presented as influential forms of expertise that are not at the disposal of certain nation-states. State actors rely on IOs to
provide them with the latest data on trends, current issues/dilemmas, and, more importantly, how to respond to [higher education] crises” (Shahjahan & Madden, 2014; see also Samoff & Carrol, 2003; Lebeau & Sall, 2011).

The GEM Report frequently mentions that previous development agendas were criticized as being created for the benefit of “developed” states at the expense of the undeveloped states that the agendas sought to aid. Much of the GEM Report’s encouragement of dialogue is in reference to this critique. Likewise, Shahjahan and Madden (2015) encourage researchers to consider Non-Western perspectives on IOs. Although not directly referencing the UN, the voices of the women applying for the Asherah Foundation scholarships will provide a “non-Western” perspective on the nature of international higher education.

An important part of the theoretical framework is that documents such as the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM Report) and the Asherah scholarship application essays are inherently persuasive. In addition to co-constructing social realities, these documents also have a more straightforward persuasive component. In the case of the GEM Report, the report is trying to persuade those that engage with it of 1) its relevance and 2) the need for additional conversations around SDG #4. In the case of the Asherah Foundation scholarship application essays, the applicants are trying to persuade a review committee to provide scholarships to support their desired access to education. Saarinen (2008) writes “Persuasion is the property of texts to represent and construe competing views of the world as common sense and self-evident” (p. 344).
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction
The proposed methodology consists of three phases based upon the understanding that discourse is an inherently social act of construction (and re-construction). This section will discuss the overall research design, elaborate on the proposed research questions, describe the data to be analyzed and the proposed methods of analysis.

3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 Methodological Considerations

3.2.1.1 The Act of Analysis
The analysis will borrow from both Norman Fairclough and Richard Gee. It is designed to look at the ways in which discourse is used to persuade and to highlight the various experiences of individual women.

In order to adequately address the primary research questions, this research will be performed from the perspective of critical discourse analysis as suggested by Fairclough (2014). This approach views the discourses of both the UN and of the applicants to the Asherah scholarship program as forms of social practice that develop and reinforce social constructs that should be critically viewed.

The proposed research involves analyzing the applications for scholarships from women around the world. These women come from very different backgrounds; and none of them speak English as a first language. The motivations for seeking these scholarships (and for seeking the postsecondary credential) are as different as the women themselves. In preparing to undertake this analysis, a number of points regarding this proposed research should be taken into account.
The first is that these applications are a form of discourse—the meanings of which will be discussed further in the next section. The second is that the act of analysis is itself a way of socially constructing a discourse.

Both the act of developing discourse (e.g. publishing the GEM Report, writing the scholarship applications essays) and the act of interpreting discourse (i.e. developing educational policies, reviewing applications essays) can have significant ramifications. For as Rogers and Wetzel explain “Discourses play many roles…[t]hey sustain, build, resist, or transform existing narratives and ideologies” (2014, p. 9).

3.2.1.2 Engaging with Multiple Discourses

The women applying for the Asherah scholarships come from different backgrounds where the discourse(s) they regularly engage in might be quite different from that experienced by others in more stable or privileged positions. A lack of understanding of these different discourses could lead to poor reviews of otherwise deserving applicants (and vice versa).

As Gee (2014) notes, “discourse is interactive identity-based communication using language” (p. 24). In this way, discourse is a type of active design - a way of performing identities often for evaluation (and hopefully acceptance) by others. In the case of the scholarship applicants, they are performing the identity of a specific type of student. Through the language on the foundation’s website, the application format, email correspondence, other scholarship programs, English language teachers, and a myriad of other sources, these applicants learn (or try to learn) what identity(ies) are the most accepted in terms of a scholarship applicant for this program. They have learned that they should be proficient at the discourses of post-secondary education. They have learned to emphasize some aspects of their identities over others. For
example, in this program there is an implicit understanding that they should perform an identity of 1) needing a Second Chance and 2) using this scholarship to help others. Scholarship applications that highlight tragedies, poverty, abuse, etc. (e.g. the “need” for a second chance) are much more favorably reviewed than those that highlight a happy upbringing and financial stability. Similarly, scholarship applicants that communicate the applicant’s desire to become wealthy will be rated lower than those that communicate the applicant’s goals for helping fellow women, family members, or disadvantaged others.

3.2.1.3 “Discourse” and “discourse”

In writing their applications, the women are, of course, engaging in “discourse” (as opposed to “Discourse”). As Rogers and Wetzel (2014) point out, “‘discourses’ [small ‘d’] are the language bits that comprise communicative events. This includes the hard and soft structures of language—grammar, morphology, intonation, and so on” (p. 9). These aspects of discourse are often learned through years of both formal and informal instruction. This type of discourse is often very consciously applied (as when an applicant reviews her essay for grammatical errors). However, “Discourses” (upper case ‘D’) are often much more automatic and unconscious.

Discourses—with a capital D—includes the ways of using, being, and representing language. Discourses refer to the systems of meaning that are attached to what we say, or the tools that we use. Discourses draw on and construct larger meta-narratives—narratives about gender, race, and class. (Rogers and Wetzel, 2014, p. 9)

In the applications for the scholarships, the women are drawing on and constructing larger meta-narratives, particularly in regards to gender. Many of the women position themselves as mothers and caretakers for their families and communities. For example, an applicant sharing her goals
for wealth creation would not be rated as highly as one who had assumed responsibility for her impoverished extended family. This plays into larger discourses about the appropriate role of women in society; particularly in regards to education and financial status.

3.2.1.4 Multi-Modality

Additional modes (methods) of creating discourse are also present in the documents under analysis; particularly the scholarship applications. As applicants for a post-secondary scholarship, “professional” ways of communicating are important. This can be anything from the font choice, the presentation of themselves in any photos, the number and type of personal and professional references, and the ways in which they structure their overall application package.

For example, one of the winning applicants provided a (non-required) picture of herself sitting on the floor reading to a large group of preschoolers. This powerful visual image conveyed her “appropriateness” as an applicant who would indeed give back to her community. Applicants who sent in applications with poorly photocopied transcripts or hand-written references were subconsciously taken less seriously than those who presented a uniform application package. However, if it is evident that a woman endured extreme hardship to get her application submitted (e.g. was from rural Yemen with limited access to the internet, printers, computers, and spoke limited English), this could make an applicant seem more deserving of the award than another applicant who had access to the most advanced technology.

As noted earlier, the GEM Report and the Second Chance Scholarship program were both made accessible via various modes of production (e.g. websites, hard copies, multiple languages, and various social media outlets). While not central to the initial, text-based analysis proposed
here, these various modes of production and communication may serve to enhance the third (and
final) phase of this research. Kress’ (2010) models will be employed if it is deemed necessary.

3.3 Research Questions

The central research question of this proposed study is: What can be learned from applicants to
the Asherah Foundation about the nature of their experiences accessing post-secondary
education, and how can that inform the future data collection regarding UN SDG 4 and Target
4.3?

The experiences of the Asherah scholarship applicants are generally not currently
reflected in the GEM Report. As noted above, most of the women have left their country of
origin and are thus not counted in official national reports due to the transitory nature of their
situation (e.g. migrant, refugee), or their age, and may face additional challenges (beyond
financial) due to the stresses of being forcibly displaced, not having fluency in the language of
instruction, etc.

Considering global efforts to support the development and increase the education of
disenfranchised groups (women), the overarching research question is: how do women in these
non-traditional settings (particularly those from developing countries and/or areas of conflict)
perceive and access higher education?

More specifically:

1. How does the UN propose that educational opportunities for women from developing
countries and/or conflict areas be provided? What supports are recommended for
transitory individuals (e.g. refugees) and non-traditional students?
2. How do the women who applied for the scholarships perceive higher education?
3. How do these women describe their access to (or barriers to) education?

4. How can their experience provide guidance to the UN and to the Asherah Foundation about ways to improve their work (e.g., additional data to collect or situations to monitor?)

Suggested changes to scholarship policies and review criteria?

3.4 Setting

While the two organizations in question (the UN and the Asherah Foundation) are based on the East Coast of the United States, the documents under analysis are from all over the world. Additional information pertaining to this will be provided below and elaborated upon through the analysis.

3.5 Participants

The focus of this study will be on the scholarship essays of the 19 applicants to the Asherah Foundation’s 2016 Second Chance Scholarship program. A summary of these applicants may be found in Appendix C: Scholarship Applicants.

3.5.1 Location

Applicants to the first cohort of scholarships were from many countries and had (in most cases) moved to another country as they pursued their education. Many of those in Europe or North America were originally from conflict regions in the Middle East but had transferred to schools in these safer locations. There were no native Europeans or North American applicants.

3.5.2 Area of Study

Applicants were studying a variety of subjects at different levels of tertiary education (i.e., masters, PhD, EdD programs) including:
3.5.3 Background

Applicants reported having had survived war, disease, domestic abuse, child marriage, civil unrest, poverty, and illness. To even be eligible for this scholarship, applicants had to:

1) Have survived (demonstrated a need for a “second chance”);
2) Been accepted and enrolled into an accredited education program leading to a post-secondary credential;
3) Be fluent in English, Spanish, or Arabic;
4) Have access to the internet and a level of digital literacy to enable them to send the application to the organization.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

The data for this research has already been collected through the Asherah Foundation’s 2016 Second Chance Scholarship application process. This process was conducted between May and August of 2016. Applicants were sought through outreach on social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn), posting on Al-Fanar Media’s scholarship database, and through personal outreach conducted by Executive Board Members and Advisory Board Members around the world. Due to the limited personal connections of the board members during this period, applications were primarily received from the Middle East, Latin America, Europe, and North America. In applying for the scholarship, applicants signed statements accepting that their applications could be used for research.

There are two main sets of texts to be analyzed in this research. The first is the publicly available GEM Report (UNESCO, 2016a); including the supplemental Gender Review (2016b).
The second set includes the applications for the Second Chance Scholarships offered by the Asherah Foundation in 2016.

3.6.1 Global Education Monitoring Report

The GEM Report is a 620-page document that was publicly released through a series of high-profile events in the fall of 2016. This document, published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) “provides valuable insight for governments and policymakers to monitor and accelerate progress towards SDG 4, building on the indicators and targets we have, with equity and inclusion as measures of overall success” (2016a, p. i). In 2015, the Incheon Declaration “affirmed the mandate of the GEM Report as the mechanism for monitoring and Reporting the fourth global goal on education as well as on education targets in the other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” (p. 2). It was designed “to support countries and partners as they discuss and determine the best steps forward in achieving SDG 4” (p. 15). In addition, “[b]y drawing attention to gaps and needed actions, the 2016 GEM Report seeks to become a critical reference document as the international community discusses the existing monitoring framework and seeks to improve it” (p. 388).

3.6.2 Scholarship Application Essays

The Asherah Foundation received 19 applications detailing why 19 women from 15 different countries in 19 different fields of study deserved a “Second Chance” scholarship to continue their post-secondary education in fall 2016. These scholarships contained an application form detailing the applicant’s demographic information, educational history, list of dependents, and financial situation. The applications also included a required essay, optional photos, official transcripts, letters of reference, and other supporting documentation.
As noted earlier, none of the applicants spoke English as their first language. Advertising for this program was conducted primarily in English, Spanish and Arabic. Applications were received in English, Spanish and Arabic. In considering the context within which these essays were created, it is important to remember that all of the applicants were engaging in cross-cultural communication. Those who sent applications in English were at very different points of their English language learning. Martin-Beltran (2013) and Rogers and Wetzel (2014) both examine the ways in which dual-language learning impacts discourse.

It will be important to recognize “the interrelatedness of language practices and the coexistence of multiple linguistic identities within a complex linguistic ecology” (Martin-Beltran, 2013, p. 153).

Martin-Beltran (2013) notes “that an individual’s identity and the positions that he or she will enact are ‘constituted and reconstituted through the various discursive practices in which they participate’…These discursive practices fit within story-lines…in which a speaker casts herself and her interlocutors as a set of characters with expected ways of speaking (or learning). With this lens, we analyze discursive practices as generating identity…or identity potentials” (Martin-Beltran, 2013, p. 153).

3.7 Data Analysis Procedures

Analysis is inherently a political act “because language itself is…political” (Gee, 2014, p. 9). As discourse is a way of (re)creating reality through shared ideas of identities, it is important to think about the ways in which discourse is being used. As Gee (2014) points out, analysis can “foreground saying (information), doing (action), or being (identity)” (p. 20).
The data will be analyzed in three phases integrating critical discourse concepts from Fairclough with Gee’s Building Tasks. Saarinen (2007) notes that the raising of new questions can be seen as one test for validation of the project” (p. 68). It is hoped that new questions and new ways of interrogating the data will be raised through each of the three phases.

The first phase will use Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis framework (described below) to examine the “persuasive presuppositions” (Saarinen, 2008) of the GEM Report and the Asherah Foundation’s Second Chance Scholarship Policies. This first phase will help to flesh out the context within which the scholarship applications were submitted.

The second phase will use Gee’s Building Tasks to analyze the 19 application essays (see Appendix D: Gee 42 Building Tasks). The initial focus will be on the identities, relationships, politics, and connections built through the discourse of applying for the scholarship. If, through this analysis, additional building tasks take on additional significance, these will be addressed as well. The third phase will look once again at the two organizations seeking to improve access to education with the goal of articulating “what else might be possible?” A multi-modal analysis may be considered for the third phase. Please see Appendix E: Summary of Research Phases for a concise summary.

3.7.1 Phase One – Three-dimensional Analytic Framework

The first phase will embrace Fairclough’s three-dimensional framework. This framework involves incorporating three distinct (but inter-related) forms of analysis into a comprehensive picture. These include the analysis of language texts, analysis of the processes of text production, and the analysis of the events of discourse as a form of sociocultural practice (Fairclough, 1995, 2001).
Fairclough (2013) notes that “people’s self-identity…is reflexively built up through a process of negotiation” (p. 98). Furthermore, one of the consequences “of the increasingly negotiated nature of relationships is that contemporary social life demands highly developed dialogical capacities” (ibid.). This constant negotiation requiring a high degree of dialogical skill is something to be mindful of when analyzing the discourse of the applicant essays. While attracting applicants from all over the world, those that applied had to be familiar with the discourse of scholarship applications for postsecondary education. Fairclough notes that “The seemingly limitless possibilities of creativity in discursive practices suggested by the concept of interdiscursivity – an endless combination and recombination of genres and discourses – are in practice limited and constrained by the state of hegemonic relations and hegemonic struggle” (p. 95). The relationships of scholarship applicant to scholarship review committee and funders are very specific relationships demanding very specific ways of speaking and representing oneself – of very particular discourses within the larger Discourse of scholarship application processes and the larger Conversation of women in postsecondary education.

To analyze these essays using Fairclough’s definition of critical discourse analysis, it makes sense to follow his three-dimensional analytical framework. He notes that discursive events each have “three dimensions or facets: it is a spoken or written language text, it is an instance of discourse practice involving the production and interpretation of text, and it is a piece of social practice” (italics original, 2013, p. 94). The discourse practice is what mediates the text with the social practice (ibid.)
3.7.1.1 Text

Fairclough sees text as composed of three interdependent aspects: “‘ideational’, ‘interpersonal’ and ‘textual’” (bold mine, p. 94). As the applicants write the essays, they are simultaneously constructing (and reconstructing) a specific view (or idea) of the world. They are negotiating their identity in collaboration with the imagined reader of the essay. The form of the text highlights certain aspects of their worldview and presents certain aspects of their selves while backgrounding certain other aspects.

3.7.1.2 Discourse Practice

Fairclough writes that analysis of this part of a text consists of the “moment-by-moment explication of how participants produce and interpret texts”…and “analysis which focuses upon the relationship of the discursive event to the order of discourse, and upon the question of which discursive practices are being drawn upon and in what combinations” (2013, p. 95). One key to this analysis is the ways in which the particular discourse practice “transforms the past – existing conventions, or prior texts – into the present” (p. 95).

3.7.1.3 Social Practice

The social practice at the center of the discursive practice of writing and submitting essays involves many levels. Fairclough notes that these include “the context of situation, the institutional context, and the wider societal context” (2013, p. 95). Within each of these levels “[q]uestions of power and ideology” should be asked” (ibid).

3.7.2 Phase Two - Building Tasks

Analysis of the scholarship applications can look at what the applicants are saying through looking at their word choices, their transcripts, and the information provided about finances and
status of their references. It can analyze what they are doing (e.g. the classes they have taken, the countries they have escaped from / moved to, the number of children they have and their ages). In addition, it can foreground what identity they are presenting – for example, are they highlighting their academic achievements, their role as a mother or as a survivor. Are they presenting an image of a survivor or of a victim?

Gee (2014) notes that describing “rules” is “part of the way we build and sustain our world, cultures, and institutions” (p. 10). With this scholarship application, one of the explicit rules is that the applicant must have already been accepted into a program of study. One of the implicit rules is that she actually has financial need and is working to help others (and not working simply to become extraordinarily wealthy). In both cases, these rules provide the structures for the interaction of the different discourses. The scholarship applicants try to perform the identity of a student who is academically successful (explicit) but financially needy and (implicitly) using her education to help others.

It will be important to remember the politics that are bound up in the performance of identities through information (language), actions, and the many ways of being in relation to others. The ways in which the discourse of this research interacts with their essays will simultaneously reflect and (re)construct the social worlds in which this scholarship program exists.

3.7.3 Phase Three – Critique – What Else Is Possible?

As noted above, this third phase will include a re-examination of the social context within which the application essays were created. Based upon the results of the second phase, questions
regarding what might and what should exist will be brought to the GEM Report and the Asherah Foundation’s scholarship program.

3.8 Conclusion

This proposed research will contribute to the production of knowledge that the GEM Report was designed to encourage (p. 173, 176). The information gathered from women from “non-Western” parts of the world who have been underserved due to gender, age, forced displacement, language and other ways will help inform the development of data and collection of indicators for future monitoring of progress towards SDG #4. Education “emerged as the top priority among the more than 7 million people who contributed to the United Nations’ MY World survey of 2015” (UNESCO, 2016a, p. 172). It will contribute to the discussion around locally-appropriate responses (p. 9) and provide additional ways to promote equity in educational access. It is also hoped that this research will assist the Asherah Foundation in better tailoring its scholarship program to support women around the world. The GEM Report reminds us that “education is both a fundamental human right and an enabling right, i.e. it enables other human rights; that it is a public good and a shared social endeavor, which implies an inclusive process of public policy formulation and implementation; and that gender equality is inextricably linked to the right to education for all (UNESCO, 2015a)” (p. 8). It is hoped that this research will make a significant contribution to the goal of providing this enabling human right to underserved women around the world.
REFERENCES


Appendix A: Education Levels (ISCED levels 4-8)

Education levels according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), which is the classification system designed to serve as an instrument for assembling, compiling and presenting comparable indicators and statistics of education both within countries and internationally. The system, introduced in 1976, was revised in 1997 and 2011.

- Post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED level 4). It provides learning experiences building on secondary education, preparing for labour market entry as well as tertiary education.
- Tertiary education (ISCED levels 5-8): It builds on secondary education, providing learning activities in specialized fields of education. It aims at learning at a high level of complexity and specialization. It comprises:
  - Level 5: Short-cycle tertiary education, often designed to provide participants with professional knowledge, skills and competencies. It is practically based, occupationally-specific and prepares students to enter the labour market.
  - Level 6: Bachelor’s, often designed to provide participants with intermediate academic and/or professional knowledge, skills and competencies, leading to a first degree or equivalent qualification.
  - Level 7: Master’s or equivalent level, often designed to provide participants with advanced academic and/or professional knowledge, skills and competencies, leading to a second degree or equivalent qualification.
  - Level 8: Doctoral or equivalent level, designed primarily to lead to an advanced research qualification.

Appendix B: Scholarship Policy & Application Form

Second Chance Scholarship

Policies and Requirements:
The Asherah Foundation, a global organization of professional women, has instituted a scholarship program to benefit females who have a high school diploma or equivalent and who desire to begin or continue a postsecondary education or technical training program with the intent of acquiring the skills necessary to enter or advance her status in the workplace.

The recipient shall be a female who will receive benefits under the Scholarship, subject to the terms and conditions set out below.

Recipients shall be chosen by the Foundation based strictly on the following criteria:
- Must be 24 years of age or older.
- Must be committed to the pursuit of postsecondary education and/or training.
- Must demonstrate financial inability to attain further education/training without the Scholarship.
- Must provide a copy of the last two years income tax return (Form 1040).
- Must have high school diploma or equivalent.
- Must provide high school transcript, GED OR current transcript from current school.
- Must demonstrate personal discipline and perseverance.
- Must complete Foundation current essay requirement: “Why This Scholarship will Give Me A Second Chance,” to be no less than 200 words and no more than 400 words.
- Must provide two letters of recommendation.
- Must provide two references with phone numbers included.
- Must have been accepted into an accredited college or university degree program or a vocational or training institution located in the community of the program.
- Must live, work, or attend college in the community of the program.

The Scholarship will include the following:
The monetary dollar amount of this award shall be up to (US) $2,500.00 per semester and may be renewable for the next consecutive semester. This award shall be applied to expenses pertaining to a four-year college degree, associate degree or an accredited vocation/training program, for the payment of costs relating to the recipient’s registration costs, tuition and related expenses for books, lab fees, and other classroom supplies and fees required under the recipient’s school curriculum.

A member of the Foundation shall be a mentor to the student and will be a liaison between the recipient and the Foundation.

All of the foregoing amounts shall be payable to the Financial office of the school chosen by the student or to the training program chosen by the student. The funds shall be disbursed solely for the purposes outlined above.
Each recipient, while receiving Scholarship benefits, shall fulfill the following obligations or will lose eligibility for participation in the Scholarship program:

- Must complete a minimum of 9 hours a semester (16 week period) unless having prior approval of Foundation mentor.
- Must submit any changes in writing from one program to another for prior approval of the Foundation.
- Must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.50 in such postsecondary programs.
- Must report to the Foundation in writing, the status of her educational/training efforts each semester or term.
- Must turn in copy of grades to mentor before receiving funds for the next semester or term.
- Must be committed to the mentor program and be receptive to being contacted.
- Must be free of substance abuse.
- Must have financial status reviewed on a semester basis.
WOMEN’S SECOND CHANCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
STUDENT APPLICATION FORM

I hereby apply for The Asherah Foundation’s Second Chance Scholarship to assist in the payment of my education and/or training expenditures.

THIS APPLICATION MUST BE COMPLETED INCLUDING ALL REQUESTED INFORMATION AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS i.e. TRANSCRIPTS, TAX RETURNS, LETTERS OF REFERENCE AND ESSAY.

COMPLETED APPLICATIONS ARE DUE JULY 1, 2016.

I. PERSONAL INFORMATION

NAME: __________________________________________
  Last          First          MI

HOME ADDRESS: ___________________________________________________

Street Number

City, State/Province Postal (Zip) Code Country

Home Phone: ______ Work Phone: _______ Cell Phone: _______

EMAIL ADDRESS: ___________________________________________________

DATE OF BIRTH: _______ SOCIAL SECURITY #: ________________

Have you been convicted of a felony? Yes ___________ No ___________
NAMES AND AGES OF DEPENDENTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_________________________</td>
<td>______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_________________________</td>
<td>______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_________________________</td>
<td>______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_________________________</td>
<td>______________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. WORK EXPERIENCE

Current Employer_____________________________________________________

Employer’s Address_____________________________________________________

Name of Contact Person_________________________________________________

Employer’s Phone Number_________________________________________________

Average Number of Hours Worked Each Week______________________________

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

TWO LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION FROM NON-RELATIVES ARE REQUIRED TO BE SENT TO THE FOUNDATION AT THE ADDRESS AT THE END OF THIS APPLICATION.

IV. REFERENCES

PLEASE GIVE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF TWO OTHER PERSONS WHO HAVE KNOWN YOU FOR FIVE YEARS OR MORE:

First and Last Name_____________________________________________________

Street Number________________________________________________________

City, State & Zip_______________________________________________________

Phone:_____________ Email:______________ Relationship:______________

First and Last Name_____________________________________________________

Street Number________________________________________________________

City, State & Zip_______________________________________________________

Phone:_____________ Email:______________ Relationship:______________
V. EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

Name of School _____________________________________________ 

Street Number ______________________________________________

City, State & Zip _____________________________________________ 

Year of Completion ___________________________ Degree ________________

Name of School _____________________________________________ 

Street Number ______________________________________________

City, State & Zip _____________________________________________ 

Year of Completion ___________________________ Degree ________________

IMPORTANT NOTE: IT IS THE APPLICANT’S RESPONSIBILITY TO FORWARD TO THE ASHERAH FOUNDATION AN OFFICIAL COPY OF HER MOST RECENT TRANSCRIPT OR GED IF APPLICABLE. INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

VI. EXPENSES AND INCOME

A COPY OF THE LAST TWO INCOME TAX RETURNS (FORM 1040 in United States) MUST BE ATTACHED.

Number of Weeks in Class ________________

Number of Classes in 16 week period __________

EXPENSES
Tuition & Required Fees $____________________

Books & Materials $____________________

Child Care $____________________

Transportation $____________________

Other $____________________
| Total | $______________ |
**INCOME**
Amount you will contribute to your tuition and education expenses   $____________________

Other Scholarships   $____________________
Grants   $____________________
Loans   $____________________
Other Sources   $____________________
Total   $____________________

TOTAL EXPENSES SHOULD EQUAL TOTAL INCOME

Does your employer reimburse all or a portion of your tuition fees? Please explain.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
VII. PLEASE ATTACH AN ESSAY ILLUSTRATING HOW THIS SCHOLARSHIP WILL GIVE YOU A SECOND CHANCE AND HOW IT WILL BENEFIT YOUR COMMUNITY. ESSAY SHALL BE NO LESS THAN 500 WORDS AND NO MORE THAN 1000 WORDS.
VIII. APPLICANT’S CERTIFICATION STATEMENTS

Financial Statement:
I hereby state that I need financial assistance to help pay for my education and that the scholarship will be used for that purpose.

Name of School Attending or Accepted to: ________________________________

Degree being pursued: ___________________ Projected Graduation Date _______

Accuracy:
I hereby state that all information contained in this application and all supporting materials is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Use of Application Materials:
I understand that the attached essay and a photo of myself may be used for promotional and research purposes. I also understand that I may request that my name and other identifying details be changed for all outreach, research, and promotional purposes to protect my identity. However, I understand that the scholarship will be given in my legal name and that all identifying information will be available to those involved in the scholarship selection and awarding process, including the institution to which the scholarship funds will be paid. I waive any right to damages that may result as a consequence of applying for this scholarship.

Obligations of the Scholarship Recipient:
I understand that upon acceptance of this scholarship that I:

- Must complete a minimum of 9 hours a semester (16 week period) unless having prior approval of Foundation mentor.
- Must submit any changes in writing from one program to another for prior approval of the Foundation.
- Must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.50 (on a 4 point scale) in such postsecondary programs.
- Must report to the Foundation in writing, the status of my educational/training efforts each semester or term; including the ways in which this scholarship has been helpful in providing a second chance.
  - Status update #1 will be due December 1, 2016
  - Status update #2 will be due June 1, 2017
- Must turn in copy of grades to mentor before receiving funds for the next semester or term.
- Must be committed to the mentor program and be receptive to being contacted.
- Must be free of substance abuse.
- Must have financial status reviewed on a semester basis.

Applicant’s Signature: _______________________________ Date: ________________
Send completed application before July 1, 2016 to:

Awards@asherahfoundation.org

Heather MacCleoud
Second Chance Scholarships for Women
1400 East-West Highway Ste. 1400
Silver Spring, MD 20910 United States

If you need additional assistance, please contact us at info@asherahfoundation.org

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Before you mail your application, please verify the following items are completed and enclosed.

- Completed and signed application
- Two letters of recommendation (The writer may mail the letter directly to the address above or may be enclosed with your application)
- Official copy of your latest transcript
- Copies of your completed tax return (or comparable information) for the two latest years
- Essay
- Photo (optional)

Thank you and good luck!
Appendix C: Scholarship Applicants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>School Residence</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>DOB</th>
<th>Dependents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amani</td>
<td>Ramallah, Palestine</td>
<td>Jerusalem, Palestine</td>
<td>Master of water and environmental science</td>
<td>28/2/1977</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ameera</td>
<td>Sanaa, Yemen</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Master of Pathology</td>
<td>29/4/1989</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azza</td>
<td>Mansoura, Egypt</td>
<td>NYC, NY (USA)</td>
<td>TESOL, MA</td>
<td>1/1/1988</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlene</td>
<td>Trinidad</td>
<td>NY (USA)</td>
<td>BA, Industrial &amp; Labor Relation</td>
<td>11/10/196</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engy</td>
<td>Cairo, Egypt</td>
<td>Nottingham, UK</td>
<td>MSc, Behavioral Economics</td>
<td>30/9/85</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esra’</td>
<td>East Jerusalem</td>
<td>Norwich, UK</td>
<td>PhD, Physiotherapy</td>
<td>23/04/1983</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatma</td>
<td>Giza, Egypt</td>
<td>Amsterdam, Netherlands</td>
<td>MA, Heritage Studies: Preservation and Presentation of the Moving Image</td>
<td>01/01/1984</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hala</td>
<td>Bethlehem, Jerusalem (West Bank)</td>
<td>Limerick, Ireland</td>
<td>PhD, Arts Practice</td>
<td>14/07/1987</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanadi</td>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessica</td>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>Trainee assistant manager</td>
<td>28/4/1989</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lena</td>
<td>Pembroke, Malta</td>
<td>Hampshire, UK</td>
<td>Masters, Dermatology and Aesthetic Medicine</td>
<td>05/02/1980</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manar</td>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>Oakland, CA</td>
<td>MFA, Book Art &amp; Creative Writing</td>
<td>09/26/85</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>City, Country</td>
<td>City, Country</td>
<td>Course</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palominos</td>
<td>Curacautin, Chile</td>
<td>Santiago, Chile</td>
<td>Preschool Education</td>
<td>20/7/1983</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Sindia&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>Tehran, Iran</td>
<td>Ontario, CN /</td>
<td>Doctor of Psychoanalysis</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boston, MA (US)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rahsa</td>
<td>Khartoum, Sudan</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Master of Simulation Science</td>
<td>05/02/73</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randa</td>
<td>Golan, Israel</td>
<td>Paris, France</td>
<td>Art (level unknown)</td>
<td>22/02/83</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rwan</td>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Dentistry (level unknown)</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Said</td>
<td>Comoros islands</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>BS, Biology</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yosra</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>MBA</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>unsure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhyldyz</td>
<td>Dubai, UAE</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>International Hospitality Management (2 year diploma)</td>
<td>12/05/86</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix D: Gee 42 Building Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building task</th>
<th>Tools of inquiry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situated meaning</strong></td>
<td>How is situated meaning being used to build relevance or significance for things and people in the context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social languages</strong></td>
<td>How are social languages being used to build relevance or significance for things and people in the context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Figured worlds</strong></td>
<td>How are figured worlds being used to build relevance or significance for things and people in the context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intertextuality</strong></td>
<td>How is intertextuality being used to build relevance or significance for things and people in the context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discourses</strong></td>
<td>How are Discourses being used to build relevance or significance for things and people in the context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conversations</strong></td>
<td>How are Conversations being used to build relevance or significance for things and people in the context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practices</strong></td>
<td>How is situated meaning being used to enact a practice (activity) or practices (activities) in context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social languages</strong></td>
<td>How are social languages being used to enact a practice (activity) or practices (activities) in context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Figured worlds</strong></td>
<td>How are figured worlds being used to enact a practice (activity) or practices (activities) in context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intertextuality</strong></td>
<td>How is intertextuality being used to enact a practice (activity) or practices (activities) in context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discourses</strong></td>
<td>How are Discourses being used to enact a practice (activity) or practices (activities) in context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conversations</strong></td>
<td>How are Conversations being used to enact a practice (activity) or practices (activities) in context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identities</strong></td>
<td>How is situated meaning being used to enact and depict identities (“kinds of people”)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social languages</strong></td>
<td>How are Social languages being used to enact and depict identities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Figured worlds</strong></td>
<td>How are figured worlds being used to enact and depict identities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intertextuality</strong></td>
<td>How is intertextuality being used to enact and depict identities (“kinds of people”)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discourses</strong></td>
<td>How are Discourses being used to enact and depict identities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conversations</strong></td>
<td>How are Conversations being used to enact and depict identities (“kinds of people”)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building task</td>
<td>Situated meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(“kinds of people”)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>How is situated meaning being used to build and sustain (or change or destroy) social relationship?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>How is situated meaning being used to create, distribute, or withhold social goods or to construe particular distributions of social goods as “good” or “acceptable” or not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building task</td>
<td>Situated meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connections</strong></td>
<td>How is situated meaning being used to make things and people connected or irrelevant or disconnected from each other?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sign system and knowledge</strong></td>
<td>How is situated meaning being used to privilege or disprivilege different sign systems (language, social languages, other sorts of symbols systems) and a way of knowing?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E: Summary of Research Phases

**Phase One**
Data: Global Education Monitoring Report, Second Chance Scholarship Application Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points of Analysis</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Discourse Practice</th>
<th>Social Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Context of the Situation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Context</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wider Societal Context</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Phase Two**
Data: 19 Scholarship Application Essays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points of Analysis</th>
<th>Building task</th>
<th>Tools of inquiry</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Situated meaning</td>
<td>Social languages</td>
<td>Figured worlds</td>
<td>Intertextuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>How is situated meaning being used to build relevance or significance for things and people in the context?</td>
<td>How are social languages being used to build relevance or significance for things and people in the context?</td>
<td>How are figured worlds being used to build relevance or significance for things and people in the context?</td>
<td>How is intertextuality being used to build relevance or significance for things and people in the context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practices</td>
<td>How is situated meaning being used to enact a practice (activity) or practices (activities) in context?</td>
<td>How are social languages being used to enact a practice (activity) or practices (activities) in context?</td>
<td>How are figured worlds being used to enact a practice (activity) or practices (activities) in context?</td>
<td>How is intertextuality being used to enact a practice (activity) or practices (activities) in context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identities</td>
<td>How is situated</td>
<td>How are Social</td>
<td>How are figured</td>
<td>How is intertextuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building task</td>
<td>Tools of inquiry</td>
<td>Figured worlds</td>
<td>Intertextuality</td>
<td>Discourses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situated meaning</strong></td>
<td>meaning being used to enact and depict identities (“kinds of people”)?</td>
<td>worlds being used to enact and depict identities (“kinds of people”)?</td>
<td>being used to enact and depict identities (“kinds of people”)?</td>
<td>being used to enact and depict identities (“kinds of people”)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationships</strong></td>
<td>How is situated meaning being used to build and sustain (or change or destroy) social relationship?</td>
<td>How are Social languages being used to build and sustain (or change or destroy) social relationship?</td>
<td>How is intertextuality being used to build and sustain (or change or destroy) social relationship?</td>
<td>How are Discourses being used to build and sustain (or change or destroy) social relationship?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Politics</strong></td>
<td>How is situated meaning being used to create, distribute, or withhold social goods or to construe particular distributions of social goods as “good” or “acceptable” or not?</td>
<td>How are Social languages being used to create, distribute, or withhold social goods or to construe particular distributions of social goods as “good” or “acceptable” or not?</td>
<td>How is intertextuality being used to create, distribute, or withhold social goods or to construe particular distributions of social goods as “good” or “acceptable” or not?</td>
<td>How are Discourses being used to create, distribute, or withhold social goods or to construe particular distributions of social goods as “good” or “acceptable” or not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connections</strong></td>
<td>How is situated meaning being used to make things and people connected or relevant or irrelevant to or disconnected from each other?</td>
<td>How are Social languages being used to make things and people connected or relevant or irrelevant to or disconnected from each other?</td>
<td>How is intertextuality being used to make things and people connected or relevant or irrelevant to or disconnected from each other?</td>
<td>How are Discourses being used to make things and people connected or relevant or irrelevant to or disconnected from each other?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building task</td>
<td>Tools of inquiry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Situated meaning</td>
<td>Social languages</td>
<td>Figured worlds</td>
<td>Intertextuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>from each other?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Courtesy of Isabel Montes Gutierrez, 2017

**Phase Three**

Data: Global Education Monitoring Report, Second Chance Scholarship Application Policies

Points of Analysis
- What might exist?
- What should exist?