

# **Gender-Based Violence in Honduras: International Involvement against Impunity**

By  
Dorian Rembecki

Submitted to  
Central European University  
Department of International Relations

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Masters of Arts

Supervisor: Mary Cox

Vienna, Austria  
2022

Word Count: 10,023

## **Acknowledgements**

Thank you to my family, who have always supported and loved me.

Cheers to my friends, new and old, for endless encouragement and joy.

Sincere gratitude to my supervisor who was with me every step.

And to the travels and adventures I've had along the way.

## **Abstract**

Honduras was labeled one of the most dangerous countries in the world in 2012 due to homicide rates, but even as general violence has decreased over the last decade, gender-based violence has not. Drug trafficking and systemic inequality are pillars in high impunity rates that continue to allow elevated gender-based violence across Honduras. Analyzing violence rates by region and supplementing with policy decisions, current events, and international involvement will illustrate the continued danger to women in Honduras. Descriptive statistics result in a strong correlation between impunity rates and gender-based violence in Honduran regions and analysis of International Organization and Non-Governmental Organization involvement shows multifaceted potential for improvement in systemic inequality and structural violence.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1. Honduran Narrative.....	3
1.1 Historical and Political Context of Honduras .....	3
1.2 Impact of Historical Violence on Modern Social Systems .....	7
1.3 Introduction to International Involvement and Treaties.....	10
Chapter 2. Contextualizing Gender-Based Violence in Honduras .....	13
2.1 Gender-Based Violence by Numbers.....	13
2.3 Crime and Corruption.....	16
2.3 Recent Events .....	19
Chapter 3. Literature Review .....	22
3.1 Gender Factors .....	22
3.2 Violence and Corruption .....	24
3.3 NGOs and IOs .....	26
Chapter 4. Empirical Evidence .....	28
4.1 Impunity and GBV .....	28
4.2 NGOs, IOs, and External Involvement .....	37
Conclusion .....	42
Bibliography .....	45

## List of Figures

Figure 1 <i>Number of Femicides in each Honduran Department in 2021</i> .....	29
Figure 2 <i>Judicialization rates by Department, Honduras 2019</i> .....	31
Figure 3 <i>Population of Honduras Departments and Relative Impunity Rates, 2017</i> .....	33
Figure 4 <i>Percent of Total Femicides that occurred in rural Honduras, 2010-2020</i> .....	34
Figure 5 <i>Total Homicides and Femicides in Honduras, 2011-2020</i> .....	35

## INTRODUCTION

Women in Central America have experienced elevated rates of targeted violence, especially in the last three decades. Honduras has been brought into the international spotlight two significant times recently, initially in 2012 when Honduras was labeled the “most dangerous country in the world” due to high intentional homicide rates and again with migration caravans began traveling to the United States between 2016 and 2018.<sup>1</sup> These headlines were situational, with news stories quickly reverting attention back to the global north. Paralleling news attention, many academic works focus on major events in Honduras and overlook systemic social issues. This thesis will answer two questions: in what ways does impunity effect gender-based violence in Honduras and in addition to data production, how can Non-Governmental Organizations and International Organizations impact impunity and gender-based violence in Honduras. The research finds that levels of impunity relate to gender-based violence in Honduras more directly than other factors of violence and external involvement can improve gender awareness, decrease structural violence and corruption, and begin to slow the cycle of inequality in Honduras.

Gender based violence is multi-faceted. In this thesis I will explore Gender based violence (GBV) in Honduras in the following ways: First I will give a contextualized history of GBV in Honduras, with focus on the past 30 years. This will be divided into historical impacts of cultural history that have continued to be detrimental to many women, and the second half an analysis of recent political actions such as the 2009 coup d'état and the 2021 election of Xiomara Castro. In the second chapter of this thesis, I will expand on cultural inequalities to contextualize

---

<sup>1</sup> Charles Ransford et al., “El Modelo Cure Violence: Reducción de La Violencia En San Pedro Sula (Honduras),” *Revista CIDOB d’Afers Internacionals*, no. 116 (September 20, 2017): 179–206, <https://doi.org/10.24241/rcai.2017.116.2.179>. 182.

the issue of gender-based violence through numbers. The following sections will provide explanations of structural corruption and review the effect of significant events in 2020. This will be followed by a discussion and application of sociological definitions regarding gender and structural violence, providing academic basis in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4, I will examine a range of available measurements of GBV against women in Honduras including the following: police reporting and the percentage of judicial action taken when reports are made. Hazards associated with reporting make these statistics low estimates of actual violence against people identifying as women, and rates of femicide across the country. I will use descriptive statistics to connect impunity rates with gender-based violence and identify the effects of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and International Organizations (IOs) involvement in Honduras. Concluding with Chapter 5, I will address the connection between impunity and gender-based violence in Honduras, the significance of NGOs and IOs, and provide questions for further research.

## CHAPTER 1. HONDURAN NARRATIVE

To understand the current role of gender-based violence (GBV) in Honduras, this chapter will include a brief history of the state beginning with colonial rule. Colonial history is an element that connects many Latin American cultures through shared the experience of land and community extortion, assimilation, and political influence. Modern history of Honduras is influenced by world powers, including political manipulation and international treaties for human rights. The second section of this chapter will describe the effects of political instability on social systems due to historical influences. Social issues with historical connections are often entrenched into daily life and accepted as reality, decreasing opportunities for change or improvement of social systems.<sup>2</sup> This chapter on history and social systems will provide the necessary background to holistically analyze the current issue of gender-based violence in Honduras.

### **1.1 Historical and Political Context of Honduras**

Honduras is a Central American mountainous country with an Indigenous history tracing back to the Mayans. Western Honduras held communities of advanced Mayan civilization while other Indigenous communities dotted the rest of the country, with most of the indigenous population eradicated by Spanish colonialism. Colonial rule from Spain began in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and saw to the misuse of Honduran land for cattle and mule production, corresponding to many regions with longstanding infertile land.<sup>3</sup> Spanish conquistadores mined silver in the valley of

---

<sup>2</sup> Cecilia Menjívar and Shannon Drysdale Walsh, "The Architecture of Femicide: The State, Inequalities, and Everyday Gender Violence in Honduras," *Latin American Research Review* 52, no. 2 (2022): 221–40, <https://doi.org/10.25222/larr.73>; Ebru Cayir et al., "Working Against Gender-Based Violence in the American South: An Analysis of Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Sexuality in Advocacy," *Qualitative Health Research* 31, no. 13 (2021): 2454–69, <https://doi.org/10.1177/10497323211041327>.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas M. Leonard, *The History of Honduras*, The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations (Santa Barbara, Calif: Greenwood, 2011). 4



central Honduras for several centuries, followed by international powers from North America, Britain, and France overtaking these mines after independence from Spanish rule in 1821.<sup>4</sup> Tegucigalpa was made the capital in 1880 by reason of major economic enterprises also located in central Honduras. By the 1880s, gold and silver accounted for 75% of Honduras's exports. The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw Honduras maintain exports with cotton, coffee, tobacco, and bananas, each of these industries continuing the Spanish colonial legacy of extorting the land for immediate economic gain.

The governmental history since the first constitution in 1823 is rather concise, leading to the 16<sup>th</sup> constitution in 1982 which included government branches, human rights protections, and government responsibility to protect its citizens.<sup>5</sup> Although these rights and protections for equality are written in the constitution, the state of Honduras has been ruled by elites since colonial times, making the document more ceremonial than enforced. Military elites governed Honduras for most of the late 1900s, maintaining power through coups d'états in 1963, 1972, 1975, and 1978. Following this sequence of instability, the first democratic election in 1980 founded the congressional National Assembly and established a more thorough constitution in 1982.<sup>6</sup> In 2009, a coup d'état overthrew democratically elected President Manuel Zelaya and Honduras has remained heavily militarized since. The militarized government perpetuated societal violence, tolerating high rates of GBV and weakening social systems leading to the Honduras seen today.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Leonard, *The History of Honduras*. 4

<sup>5</sup> Leonard, *The History of Honduras*. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Salomón, Leticia. "Honduras: A history that repeats itself." *NACLA Report on the Americas* 45, no. 1 (2012): 58-61.

<sup>7</sup> Astvaldur Astvaldsson, "Between Short Story and Novel: A Mosaic of Violence and Corruption in Honduras: Waldina Mejía's *La Tía Sofi y Los Otros Cuentos*," *Hispanic Research Journal* 12, no. 4 (August 2011): 343-56, <https://doi.org/10.1179/146827311X13063149337656>. 345.

In addition to government militarization following the 2009 coup d'état, there were direct effects on female representation in the government. The group of progressive women in the National Congress resigned after the 2009 coup, significantly lowering the likelihood of representatives holding the state accountable for corruption, human rights violations, or women's rights protections.<sup>8</sup> Along with the resignations, many other women from state institutions were removed from their positions and a police force created before the coup to investigate femicide was disbanded within a year of regime change.<sup>9</sup> The new government revoked the small amounts of legislative and judicial protections for women and significantly decreased the chance of these provisions returning because of the removal of the female electorates from the National Congress. These discriminatory acts reveal the intentions of the 2009 government and establish a basis of limitations placed on women. This coup ushered in violence, increased corruption, and had immediate effects on the rights and safety of women in Honduras.

In an interesting change from previous right-wing regimes, Xiomara Castro won the Honduran Presidential election in November of 2021 to be sworn in as the first female president of Honduras in January of 2022. Castro's husband, Manuel Zelaya, was President from 2006 until 2009 when the coup permitted the installation of a militarized government. Castro won 51% of the votes, which is the highest in recent history and is a drastic change in majority power from the National Party to the Honduran Libre (Free) Party.<sup>10</sup> Castro has promised decrease in gang activity and corruption, as well as improvements for women's reproductive health, specifically

---

<sup>8</sup> Menjívar and Walsh, "The Architecture of Femicide." *Latin American Research Review*. (2022) 228.

<sup>9</sup> Menjívar and Walsh. "The Architecture of Femicide." 228.

<sup>10</sup> Anatoly Kurmanaev and Joan Suazo, "Honduras Election Front-Runner Vows New Era but Is Tied to Past," *The New York Times*, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/29/world/americas/honduras-election-xiomara-castro.html>; Jared Olson, "How Honduras's Congress Split in Two," 2022, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/02/01/honduras-congress-split-crisis-xiomara-castro-inauguration-corruption-libre-national-party/>.

liberalizing strict abortion laws.<sup>11</sup> These abortion laws are incredibly hard to change, as in 2021 the conservative parties in Congress ratified impediment to restrict future reform. Castro would need 96 out of 128 legislators to vote in favor of changing abortion laws, yet only 27% of seats in the National Congress are held by women, corresponding to 35 of 128 seats.<sup>12</sup> Castro faces an extraordinary battle, with her supporters expecting immediate improvements, while Castro took office in a difficult time with continued obstacles from the COVID-19 pandemic and global inflation in an already economically fragile country. Additionally, major legislative change is unlikely to be seen instantly due to the disproportion in the legislature and the depth of governmental corruption.

The election of Xiomara Castro is a significant factor in potential social change soon. Major voting support for the Libre Party has shifted legislative power to be nearly even, contrary to the conservative hegemony in Congress since the 2009 coup. In addition to Castro's calls against corruption and gang activity, as well as allowing extradition for drug related crimes, having a female president could result in decreasing GBV over time with her promises for equality and decreased violence. As GBV in Honduras has systemic and societal roots, it cannot simply be ended with the election of a woman to presidency but will take years of structural and communal change to reduce violence and other factors tied to its prevalence. Castro's election is a step in the direction of progress, but is currently only a reference topic, as there have been no legislative changes made in Castro's first few months.

---

<sup>11</sup> "‘Cuesta arriba’ han sido los primeros 100 días de Xiomara Castro," *El Tiempo*, May 6, 2022, <https://tiempo.hn/cuesta-arriba-gobierno-xiomara-castro-honduras/>. *El Tiempo*

<sup>12</sup> International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. "Gender Quotas Database- Honduras" (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2022).

## 1.2 Impact of Historical Violence on Modern Social Systems

Systemic violence and cultural discrimination have direct roots in historical events and government transitions in the case of Honduras. In comparison to revolutionary movements and civil wars occurring in neighboring El Salvador (1980-1992), Nicaragua (1985-1990), and Guatemala (1960-1996), Honduras did not experience a direct armed conflict.<sup>13</sup> However, U.S. intervention aided in state dependence on violence, with the Reagan administration funding *contras*, right-wing rebel groups opposing the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, fearing commonalities to the Cuban Revolution.<sup>14</sup> Similar groups had been crossing from Honduras to rebel against Sandinista since 1979, but with advanced logistical support of maps and explosives from the U.S. Department of Defense the armed conflict intensified.<sup>15</sup> Post-Cold War Central America experienced violence and instability as a consequence of anti-communist U.S. security policy. U.S. involvement in Honduras's recent history further expands a complex cultural dynamic with the influence of a global power. Correlations have been drawn to corruption rates, militarization, and general inequalities following the coup, as shifts in data are visible within the timeframe.

Systemic inequalities can be traced back to Spanish Colonialism and US interventions, during and after the Cold War, which established racial discrimination, socioeconomic hierarchy, and gender inequality.<sup>16</sup> For example, there are higher rates of violence against women who have

---

<sup>13</sup> Jennifer L. Burrell and Ellen Moodie, "The Post-Cold War Anthropology of Central America," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 44, no. 1 (2015): 381–400, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-102214-014101>. 381.

<sup>14</sup> Jennifer L. Burrell and Ellen Moodie, "The Post-Cold War Anthropology of Central America," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 44, no. 1 (2015): 381–400, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-102214-014101>. 384.

<sup>15</sup> Mateo Jarquín, "The Nicaraguan Question: Contadora and the Latin American Response to US Intervention Against the Sandinistas, 1982–86," *The Americas* 78, no. 4 (2021): 581–608, <https://doi.org/10.1017/tam.2021.582>.

<sup>16</sup> Lirio Gutiérrez Rivera, *Gender, Race, and the Cycle of Violence of Female Asylum Seekers from Honduras*, vol. 1 (Oxford University Press, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198814887.003.0004>. 44. ; Thomas Dietz et al.,

darker skin tones or are from lower socioeconomic classes, adding fear of assault to economic or racial discrimination. Decreased access to work opportunities, lower quality of healthcare, and limited education are systemic manifestations of discrimination against impoverished or darker skinned people, across the world and in Honduras.<sup>17</sup> These elements are cyclical in nature, continuing factors of discrimination through generations of lower socioeconomic classes, racial minorities, and women who fall into multiple categories of discrimination in a patriarchal society.

Among diverse social struggles, education is often limited based on gender, which has long-term effects on careers and economic status. When girls are forced to leave school early because of expenses, violence, or pregnancy, there are extensive consequences, often limited career opportunities and financial instability.<sup>18</sup> In this way, violence against women and other methods of targeted discrimination are dangerous for women in Honduras who face nearly insurmountable barriers to a safe and stable life. Programs to support anti-violence, education, and career opportunities for women aim for a holistic approach while also attempting to prevent the continuance of the cycle of violence and discrimination.

Just under half of the population lives in isolated rural communities, nearly 5 million people, often lacking infrastructure and access to services like healthcare or education.<sup>19</sup> Many of

---

“Women’s Empowerment in Rural Honduras and Its Determinants: Insights from Coffee Communities in Ocotepeque and Copan,” *Development in Practice* 28, no. 1 (2018): 33–50, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2018.1402862>. 34.

<sup>17</sup> Chunrye Kim et al., “Combating IPV With Community Leaders in Honduras: An Evaluation of an IPV Training Program Among Teachers and Health Professionals,” *Violence Against Women* 28, no. 3–4 (March 2022): 991–1007, <https://doi.org/10.1177/10778012211008995>. 48.

<sup>18</sup> Kim A. Baranowski et al., “Experiences of Gender-Based Violence in Women Asylum Seekers from Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala,” *Torture Journal* 29, no. 3 (2020): 46–58, <https://doi.org/10.7146/torture.v29i3.111970>. 49.

<sup>19</sup> Dietz et al., “Women’s Empowerment in Rural Honduras and Its Determinants.” 34.

these poor rural communities are located along the north coast, brought there for the banana industry throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>20</sup> Amongst these societal factors, government structure and history of violence has created a dangerous and unequal home for Honduran women. One of the major effects of elevated rates of gender-based violence (GBV) in Honduras is the increase in migration to Mexico and the United States. People chose to flee poverty, violence, and discrimination in search of stability. In 2016, there were 40,000 asylum applications from women fleeing violence in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala.<sup>21</sup> These three Central American countries are known as the Northern Triangle (NTCA) and represent countries of similar cultures and high rates of social inequality. Increased emigration has also affected neighboring countries like Mexico, Belize, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Panama, seeing 13 times the number of asylum seekers from 2008 to 2013.<sup>22</sup> Further representing the intensity of this issue is the 66,000 unaccompanied and separated children who migrated to the United States from the Northern Triangle in 2014.<sup>23</sup> This urgent need to escape violence is met with more violence during travels to the border, as gangs and smugglers exploit vulnerability to manipulate women based on power imbalances and financial insecurity.

Impunity and corruption are one of the major pillars in the continuation of high rates of violence in Honduras, as lack of punishment for aggressors and mistrust in government capacity is detrimental to societal function. In addition to distrust from communities, civil servants face

---

<sup>20</sup> Leonard, *The History of Honduras*. 8.

<sup>21</sup> Baranowski et al., "Experiences of Gender-Based Violence in Women Asylum Seekers from Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala." 47.

<sup>22</sup> "Women on the Run: First-Hand Accounts of Refugees Fleeing El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico" (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2015).

<sup>23</sup> UNHCR "Women on the Run."

incredible difficulties due to lack of resources and funding, while being understaffed.<sup>24</sup> Training programs and additional officers to establish consistency is a frequent recommendation to decrease low-level corruption during investigations and reduce the possibility of malignant justice.<sup>25</sup> In addition to the role of officers in governmental impunity, *fiscales* (public prosecutors) face threats from gangs or coercion from public officials during attempts to prosecute criminal charges.<sup>26</sup> Each section in the judicial process is infected with corruption, greed, and violence to maintain a level of impunity for criminals in Honduras. The degree of distrust and disrespect for the judicial system is heightened when the case involves GBV, often dismissed as unimportant. While government funds are used for gang payoffs and other forms of corruption, social structures crumble without support. Lack of access to necessary social systems worsens community capacity to withstand hardships and many individuals fall into criminal activity because they lack support systems and financial stability.

### **1.3 Introduction to International Involvement and Treaties**

Along with other international agreements for the protection of human rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is an international treaty hosted by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHC) to provide protection of women against inequality, economically, physically, or

---

<sup>24</sup> Marna Shorack, Elizabeth G. Kennedy, and Amelia Frank-Vitale, "A State of Mistrust: Questionable Homicide Numbers, a Murky Police Purge, and a Pervasive Distrust of Authorities in Honduras Reveal Deep State Failures That Enable Violence and Impunity.," *NACLA Report on the Americas* 52, no. 4 (October 1, 2020): 404–9, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714839.2021.1840168>. 2020, 404-409.

<sup>25</sup> Shorack, Kennedy, and Frank-Vitale. "A State of Mistrust." 405.; Daniel M. Sabet, "Bidding despite Corruption: Evidence from Honduras," *Journal of Public Procurement* 21, no. 4 (November 30, 2021): 399–417, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOPP-07-2020-0058>. 401.

<sup>26</sup> Shorack, Kennedy, and Frank-Vitale, "A State of Mistrust." 406.; Kai Enno Lehmann, "The Social Conditions of Corruption in Honduras: What They Are, What They Mean, and What Can Be Done About Them," in *Corruption in Latin America*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019), 265–86, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-94057-1\\_11](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-94057-1_11).

legally, which Honduras signed in 1980 and ratified in 1983.<sup>27</sup> In addition to CEDAW and other international agreements, Honduras signed the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) in 2004 and ratified in 2005. This agreement includes many recommendations for anti-corruption methods and maintenance of transparency as a form of equal justice.<sup>28</sup>

International agreements can be useful for the protection of human rights and the surveillance of states' treatment of their citizens because of mechanisms for international oversight and violation reporting. However, international treaties such as CEDAW or UNCAC have not enforced human rights protections in Honduras but established international normative law as a path for future intervention if deemed necessary by extraordinary circumstances.

Despite challenges of corruption and societal complacency, there have been successful programs in Honduras which have lowered violence rates, specifically the Cure Violence model that was started in the United States and adopted in Honduras in 2013. Cure Violence is a public health model that treats violence as a “learned and contagious behavior.”<sup>29</sup> Although the program could not tackle violence by government actors, the model did decrease gun violence by 88% in 2014 in San Pedro Sula, the second largest city in Honduras and the city with record homicide rates.<sup>30</sup> Two of the major goals this program is to stop violence, especially drug related violence, as well as installing community programs to protect at-risk individuals from participating in

---

<sup>27</sup> Secretary-General of the United Nations, “Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women” (UN General Assembly, 1979).(CEDAW); This treaty was adopted in 1979 by the United Nations and requires ratifying states to eliminate discrimination, ensure women’s ability for advancement, and allow the CEDAW committee to supervise and report on state implementation of the treaty.

<sup>28</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, “United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC),” 2004. UNCAC resolution began 2003 and is signed by 140 countries globally.

<sup>29</sup> Ransford et al., “El Modelo Cure Violence.” 198.

<sup>30</sup> Ransford et al., “El Modelo Cure Violence.” 198.



crime.<sup>31</sup> Since programs like Cure Violence have been successfully adapted from a U.S. framework into one that copes with gang violence in addition to generalized violence, then similar programs could be adapted to specifically target GBV while other programs take a judicial approach and focus on impunity. With both of these aspects shifting in Honduras there would be space for sustainable cultural change in addition to decreasing the numbers of femicide, assault, and other forms of GBV. Since GBV is an incredibly complex issue with various roots, it will take many programs with complimentary goals to decrease rates of GBV in Honduras.

---

<sup>31</sup> Nete Sloth Hansen-Nord et al., “Reducing Violence in Poor Urban Areas of Honduras by Building Community Resilience through Community-Based Interventions,” *International Journal of Public Health* 61, no. 8 (2016): 935–43, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00038-016-0854-4>. 936.; “El Modelo Cure Violence.” 184.

## CHAPTER 2. CONTEXTUALIZING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN HONDURAS

This chapter will evaluate the specific issues facing Honduras and demonstrate how each aspect relates to GBV and impunity in the country. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reports that from 2016 to 2018 there were more than 15,000 reports of gender-based violence, with around half being domestic violence.<sup>32</sup> Of these women who reported, only 3,939 received protective measures from the aggressors, meaning in two years, 75% of the women who made reports of domestic violence received no measures to protect them physically against their aggressors and no psychological aid was given. Although there were 15,000 reports, it is certain that other victims of GBV or domestic violence did not report out of fear of their abuser or police mishandling. In a country where physical and sexual harm is a constant threat to women, the combination of danger and an indifferent government can be detrimental.<sup>33</sup>

### 2.1 Gender-Based Violence by Numbers

Gender-based violence has many forms, including gun violence, femicide, sexual assault, and domestic violence, also connected to intimate partner violence (IPV).<sup>34</sup> Each of these forms of GBV also occurs against young girls, especially cases of sexual assault or gang violence.<sup>35</sup> Violence is perpetuated by the state, as law enforcement or judicial process is disregarded when

---

<sup>32</sup> CEDAW, "Concluding Observations on the Combined Seventh and Eighth Periodic Reports of Honduras," 2018. 2018.

<sup>33</sup> Hiram Reyes-Sosa, Sonia Martínez-Cueva, and Nahia Idoiaga Mondragón, "Rape Culture, Revictimization, and Social Representations: Images and Discourses on Sexual and Violent Crimes in the Digital Sphere in Mexico," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 2022, 088626052210847, <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605221084747>. 4.

<sup>34</sup> Kim et al., "Combating IPV With Community Leaders in Honduras." 992.

<sup>35</sup> Rebecca J. Williams and Paige Castellanos, "Youth Perceptions of Violence in Western Honduras," *Third World Quarterly* 41, no. 3 (2020): 397–414, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2019.1672528>. 398.

a crime is reported, with the average rate of impunity 93.5% between 2005 and 2013.<sup>36</sup>

Unfortunately, it is common for police to verbally dismiss or harass women when reporting GBV, reducing reporting numbers and invalidating the experiences of women across the country. Combined with the emotional damage of being disregarded by a security official, the Autonomous University (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras, UNAH) found that 80.3% of interviewees believe that police forces are corrupt and fear to be pursued by gang members after reporting.<sup>37</sup> In addition to the lack of state support for criminalizing GBV, there are many reports of state officials committing violence against women with no consequence, including femicide.<sup>38</sup> State mechanisms are built to protect men and employees of the state from judicial procedures after committing crimes of GBV. Although slowly improving, the unsolved murder rate is around 90% for both men and women, attributed to a distrust of police and the unofficial power gangs have over law enforcement.<sup>39</sup>

Domestic violence is one of the major causes of internally displaced people in Honduras, as well as other Central American countries. Women flee alone or with their children to find safety in other cities but are often met with worse conditions or further instability. GBV is one cause for internal migration and emigration from Honduras in the pursuit of safety. This societal unease carries instability on to neighboring countries who are also facing inequality, economic troubles, and violence. Domestic violence is one of the major forms for GBV seen in Honduras,

---

<sup>36</sup> Feminist Organizations Report, "Status of Violence against Women in Honduras" (Centro de Derechos de Mujeres, Red Nacional de Defensoras de Derechos Humanos de Honduras, Foro de Mujeres por la Vida, JASS-Honduras y Centro de Estudios de la Mujer., 2014). 2.

<sup>37</sup> Ransford et al., "El Modelo Cure Violence." 8.

<sup>38</sup> Menjívar and Walsh, "The Architecture of Femicide." 222.

<sup>39</sup> Cory Smith, "Addressing the Sex and Gender-Based Violence in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador Fueling the U.S. Border Crisis: Corruption, Impunity, and Violence Against Women and Girls" (Pulte Institute for Global Development, 2020). 7.

but the state has limited legal support, justice, or physical protection for victims. If there are children involved, women are less likely to report or leave a domestic abuser. Long-term fear of an unprosecuted aggressor is what leads to many women migrating, either within the country or to another. This often appears to be the best choice, since the legal system is not supportive, and women are rarely given justice. From 2007 to 2013 the average rate of impunity was 93.5%, which left more than 2,000 women without justice, and those are the women who were brave enough to report.<sup>40</sup> Women are stuck in a cycle of fear of reporting crimes because even if justice is sought and won, the jail time is often much lower than the constitution asserts, often short enough for women to fear retribution.<sup>41</sup> The state has failed to establish a safe and protective system for women, who cannot trust the police or judicial authorities to pursue justice.

Femicide is within the terminology of GBV and is one of the more reliable figures to look at for GBV in Honduras, as police are more obligated to report a death and family members are more willing to face danger for justice. The broadest definition of femicide, as it is defined differently between states and international agreements, is “the killing of a woman in unequal power relations based on sex.”<sup>42</sup> Some states include qualifications that the aggressor must be the victim’s partner, but in many Latin American countries the term is used for an autonomous crime, untethered to marital relations. Although it is still subject to corrupt practices of poor police work, femicide can be a more consistent factor of data as there is irrefutable evidence of a crime. The Centro de Estudios de la Mujer (Center for Women’s Studies) reported the causes for

---

<sup>40</sup> Feminist Organizations Report, “Status of Violence against Women in Honduras.” 2.

<sup>41</sup> Menjívar and Walsh, “The Architecture of Femicide.” 232.

<sup>42</sup> Alina Teaca and Denisa Stirbulescu, “Consequences of Gender-Based Violence in the Family Environment and the Solutions Adopted in Latin America and Europe to Combat the Femicide Phenomenon,” *Conferinta Internationala de Drept, Studii Europene Si Relatii Internationale 2021*, 2021, 580–91. 588.

femicide in Honduras in 2019. Half of all femicides in Honduras in 2019 were caused by a firearm, consistent with cause of death percentages in intentional homicides. The other causes of death are a signifier to differentiate femicide from general acts of violence and murder, as the methods are both personal and dehumanizing. In addition to firearms, causes of death to women in 2019 included stoning, suffocation, decapitation, machete, and other gruesome criminal acts. Although the figures have 9 alternative categories for cause of death other than firearms, 18% of 2019 femicides are documented with “no data” listed, potentially pointing to poor police reporting. In comparison to the high rates of gun violence in the country, these percentages of violent crimes against women are likely lower estimates as many murders were left unsolved and exact cause of death unreported. Femicides rates do not inherently include sexual crime, domestic abuse, or general murders of women, but is a useful factor in understanding the degree of GBV present in a state.

### **2.3 Crime and Corruption**

Gang activity, drug cartels, and *maras* (criminal armed groups prevalent to the NTCA) operate in neighborhoods, bringing high levels of insecurity to the homes of women and children across Honduras.<sup>43</sup> Criminal activity is rooted in generations of government corruption and lack of social support or economic opportunities. The drug economy is funded by wealthy individuals in developed countries, but the tangible result of this trade is extremely harmful on communities located along trafficking routes. Government corruption allows the continuation of the drug trade because of the profit and power it provides to officials, creating space for violence and impunity in every region of Honduras.<sup>44</sup> San Pedro Sula is one of the biggest cities in Honduras and was

---

<sup>43</sup> Lehmann, “The Social Conditions of Corruption in Honduras.” 271.

<sup>44</sup> Sabet, “Bidding despite Corruption.” 401.

ranked the most dangerous city in the world consecutively from 2011 until 2014 due to intentional homicide rates, peaking at 171 intentional homicides per 100,000 people in 2014.<sup>45</sup> In the four year frame of San Pedro Sula being ranked first, the Central District of the capital was ranked in the top five as well, pointing to the intense violence in the country during the 2010s. Violence has been widely accepted into Honduran culture, making GBV a continuation of the generations of violence and discrimination allowed by the government.

With many different gangs operating in Honduras, violence is a tool to increase profits from the drug trade. Joined with high rates of poverty and unemployment, it is not only drugs going through the country but Honduran citizens participating in criminal activity as a source of employment and financial security. International drug trafficking is a contributing factor of the fragile social structure in Honduras and one of the financial roots for corruption in government officials and police. Although a majority of the drugs go to the U.S., consistent drug flow through Honduras is maintaining instability.<sup>46</sup> Judicial impunity is one of the major aspects of corruption in Honduras, in relation to violence and drugs. Impunity is the exemption from consequence after a crime and in the case of Honduras impunity is a self-fulfilling cycle of public distrust and inequality in the justice system. Every phase within the justice structure tolerates impunity, effecting the diligence and effort of officers, lawyers, and judges who are accustomed to a system rooted in corruption and excusing guilty parties.<sup>47</sup> Corruption and

---

<sup>45</sup> Seguridad Justicia y Paz. "Ranking Methodology (2021) of the 50 Most Violent Cities in the World," *Seguridad, Justicia y Paz*, 2022.; The ranking is based on intentional homicides, meaning cities in the Middle East are not highly ranked during conflict.

<sup>46</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Annual Drug Seizures," 2019.

<sup>47</sup> Lehmann, "The Social Conditions of Corruption in Honduras."

impunity cause a government to prioritize personal greed or obey extortion instead of protecting its citizens.

High rates of poverty in Honduras are continued by criminal activity and government corruption, limiting access to development resources as well as stunting the capacity for a reliable justice system.<sup>48</sup> Reporting gender-based violence has been low historically but has increased in the last decade. On the unlikely chance that women report assault, then along with other manifestations of corruption, impunity is a major issue of injustice. In an oral interview done by the International Crisis Group, an asylum seeker fleeing Honduras said that “the police and gangs are the same thing. If I go to the police, in minutes I would have a gang member in front of my house.”<sup>49</sup> This is the case for many women, who know that police officials likely have connections to gangs and prioritize their standing with the gangs over the safety of innocent citizens. Even with improved reporting rates, impunity and judicial bias hinders the validity of the Honduran justice system. One of the many elements required in the decrease of GBV and sexual assault in Honduras is through the reporting and justice system, as consistent legal action against perpetrators will lower the frequency of assault and increase accurate reporting.

Human rights defenders have been a main target of state violence since the 2009 coup, with a large percentage of violence directed at journalists. From 2014 to 2018 there were 65 reported murders of human rights defenders and between 2016 and 2017 there were more than 1,000 attacks against human rights defenders, defense organizations, or the families of the

---

<sup>48</sup> K. Ronderos, “Poverty Reduction, Political Violence and Women’s Rights in Honduras,” *Community Development Journal* 46, no. 3 (2011): 315–26, <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsr038>. 317.

<sup>49</sup> Smith, “Addressing the Sex and Gender-Based Violence in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador Fueling the U.S. Border Crisis: Corruption, Impunity, and Violence Against Women and Girls.” 8.

defenders.<sup>50</sup> In addition to journalists, the government canceled the legal status of over 500 non-governmental organizations who had focuses on women's rights, feminist goals, and general human rights organizations.<sup>51</sup> Punishing organizations seeking equality and rights for women and other marginalized communities is one of the major tragedies as a result of the government change and halted human rights development for a decade. The continuation of violence as a method of silencing human rights defenders is gruesome but hasn't halted awareness or the study of government actions against these actors. There are many organizations fighting for the safety of human rights defenders, both the prevention of violence and as legal support for the many that have been falsely imprisoned or killed.

### **2.3 Recent Events**

Hurricanes Eta and Iota in 2020 caused significant damage to Honduran infrastructure, costing billions of dollars in destruction within a twelve-day span. November 6, 2020 is when Eta passed over Honduras with heavy rainfall causing flooding and landslides affecting more than 1.6 million people.<sup>52</sup> In the midst of recovery efforts, Iota hit on November 18, escalating the damage to an already fragile country, and raising the cost of infrastructure repairs. Hundreds of thousands of people were directly affected by these storms, especially rural communities with less established infrastructure that are further isolated from government assistance.<sup>53</sup> In half of the 18 Honduran Departments (districts), health facilities closed due to hurricane damage,

---

<sup>50</sup> Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), "Human Rights Situation in Honduras" (Organization of American States, 2019). 77.

<sup>51</sup> Feminist Organizations Report, "Status of Violence against Women in Honduras." 7.

<sup>52</sup> UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), "Hondurans Lose Critical Health Services after Hurricane Eta Tears through Central America," 2020.

<sup>53</sup> Kendra McSweeney, Oliver T. Coomes, and Anthony J. Bebbington, "Climate-Related Disaster Opens a Window of Opportunity for Rural Poor in Northeastern Honduras," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 108, no. 13 (2011): 5203–8.



disrupting the health of citizens. Recovery efforts strained government funding and many rural areas of Honduras did not begin infrastructure repairs for months following the hurricanes. External strains, like these hurricanes, defer government and international organization's efforts from serial social issues to emergent problems and leave space for the continuation of unreported violence.<sup>54</sup>

These storms came in the same year that the global Coronavirus pandemic shocked communities and the international economy. National healthcare was exhausted by the pandemic and communities across Honduras struggled. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) documented at least 12,000 people staying in shelters after the hurricanes, exposing people to pandemic risks and subjecting women and children to increased chances of violence or extortion.<sup>55</sup> While the pandemic and hurricanes increased economic stress and social instability, there is also a tie to an increase in violence and gang related crime. Following the increase in crime came a spike in GBV, especially in communities suffering more from the strain on infrastructure and social systems. The COVID-19 pandemic increased GBV rates globally and Honduras saw increased intimate partner violence and exploitation. During April of 2020, Honduras was in a nationwide lockdown because of the global pandemic and there were 100,000 reports of physical violence towards women, most of which were never addressed by authorities.<sup>56</sup> With unemployment and attempting to social distance, more time in the home with abusive partners increased intimate partner violence.<sup>57</sup> Yet, sexual crimes reports plummeted

---

<sup>54</sup> McSweeney, Coomes, and Bebbington. "Climate Related Disaster."

<sup>55</sup> United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), "Hondurans Lose Critical Health Services after Hurricane Eta Tears through Central America"; Williams and Castellanos, "Youth Perceptions of Violence in Western Honduras."

<sup>56</sup> PBI Honduras, "Gender-Based Violence: Another Pandemic for Women," *Peace Brigades International Honduras (PBI)*, 2020.

<sup>57</sup> Kim et al., "Combating IPV With Community Leaders in Honduras."

from 288 in the month of February to 86 in April and 95 in May of 2019, trending with the months of lockdown.<sup>58</sup> The dramatic increase in violence at home and the decrease in sexual crimes, often by strangers, aligns with people staying home during a lockdown and experiencing higher violence at home instead of outside of the home, which is typical in Honduras. The UN office on Human Rights recorded reports of GBV to the Honduran emergency system increased in April and May of 2020 in comparison to February and March. Additionally, the National Observatory of Violence of the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH) documented 217 violent deaths of women in Honduras between January and August in 2020.<sup>59</sup> Unprecedented events like these worsen dangerous situations for Honduran women who have little protection from aggressors, legally, judicially, or normatively.

---

<sup>58</sup> infosegura, “Honduras: Violence against Women through the Life Cycle, 2020” (Ministerio Publico, USAID, UNPD, 2020).

<sup>59</sup> Instituto Universitario en Democracia, Paz y Seguridad, UNAH, and Ministerio Publico, “Observatorio de Muertes Violentas de Mujeres y Femicidios,” 2021.

## CHAPTER 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, current academic understandings of gender and structural violence will be discussed to build theoretical groundwork for this thesis. An inclusive definition of gender is necessary for a holistic understanding of GBV and will be applicable for further research into violence and discrimination against the LGBTQIA+ population in Honduras. The following section of the literature review will cover structural violence through cultural normalization. Societal acceptance of violence is one of the factors that permits the continuation of high levels of corruption in Honduras along with community violence caused by gangs and cartels. The final section of this chapter will cover the effectiveness of NGOs and IOs in addition to accurate depictions of the impact of involvement. This thesis uses constructivist foundations to interpret the social factors of impunity and GBV in Honduras as well as the influence of external forces. The theory of constructivism assembles historical, political, and social factors described previously to build a comprehensive study of Honduras. This literature review will provide the academic basis for understanding the effect of impunity on GBV and the role NGOs and IOs have in Honduras.

### **3.1 Gender Factors**

The topic of gender is both academic and colloquial, frequently changing with more accurate and inclusive definitions. For the extent of this thesis, the term gender will be used when referring to gender-based violence, often against female-identifying people but also including gender non-binary people. Gender refers to the spectrum of male, female, non-binary, etc. and does not include the range of sexual attraction that is joined with gender in the holistic composition of human identification. Using the term gender-based violence instead of violence against women includes gender fluidity and does not exclude LGBTQIA+ people from

acts or studies of targeted violence.<sup>60</sup> Buiten and Naidoo detail this dynamic of an inclusive definition that is well-defined for academic application. For a better understanding of gender, the use of sociology is helpful to grasp identity, interaction, and structures which all assemble into the expression of gender and sexuality. When studying gender-based violence it is crucial to see beyond the socially constructed idea that men are violent and women are vulnerable, as there are many more elements than a simplified dichotomy. Additionally, the question of *why* is significant, even more than who is the violent actor and who is the victim of violence. Not exclusively, but often “gender-based violence is violence against women, and much (but not all) violence against women is gender-based.”<sup>61</sup>

Gender socialization is a significant factor in gender-based violence, as it details the conditioning of society to distinguish between genders while often teaching boys that aggression is acceptable and that girls do not require humane treatment because they are less valued in society than men. Powers et al. finds that violence and gender bias experienced during childhood is a highly influential factor in the permissance and expression of violence in adulthood.<sup>62</sup> In addition to the socialization patters of aggression, violence can become gendered when there is a societal masculine conditioning to justify or encourage violence against women. Systemic gender bias can be seen in discriminatory differences in institutions, labor, practices, and personal interactions.<sup>63</sup> This is where sexism is often merged with cultural machismo. Machismo is the

---

<sup>60</sup> Denise Buiten and Kammila Naidoo, “Laying Claim to a Name: Towards a Sociology of ‘Gender-Based Violence,’” *South African Review of Sociology* 51, no. 2 (2020): 61–68, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21528586.2020.1813194>. 63.; LGBTQIA+ refers to sexual attractions other than heterosexual, listed Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and other words of personal identification.

<sup>61</sup> Buiten and Naidoo. “Laying Claim to a Name.” 64.

<sup>62</sup> Ráchael A. Powers et al., “Social Learning Theory, Gender, and Intimate Partner Violent Victimization: A Structural Equations Approach,” *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 35, no. 17–18 (2020): 3554–80, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260517710486>.

<sup>63</sup> Powers et al.

Latin American term for sexism that correlates with gender differences and empowers men to exploit the established power imbalance.<sup>64</sup> Machismo can also be defined as “hegemonic masculinity” and is directly tied to the perception and use of power, socially, systemically, and individually.<sup>65</sup> There are more elements to machismo than power, often including chivalry, breadwinner images, and virility.<sup>66</sup> Since machismo has been accepted into culture and society as a fact of nature, there is an increased difficulty in shifting away from this masculine power framework in a way that is necessary for the safety of women. In addition to gender, there are other factors such as socio-economic and race that can also hold influence over acts of gender-based violence or data patterns. As sexism and violence are socialized patterns, this academic framework of understanding is essential to accurate comprehension of GBV in Honduran culture.

### **3.2 Violence and Corruption**

One of the key components of structural violence is innate power imbalances that allow the continuation of violence against less powerful individuals.<sup>67</sup> Galtung’s description of structural violence is built from an understanding that discriminatory policies are not developed by a singular individual but are produced through the systems of inequality and power imbalances of a culture.<sup>68</sup> The systemic aspect of structural violence is seen because of inequality, power hierarchies, and discrimination all weaved into the fabric of both government and society. Menjivar adds to Galtung’s discussion of structural violence in many works, but specifically “Policing and Violence: The Less Visible Harms of Policing Practices” and written

---

<sup>64</sup> Reyes-Sosa, Martínez-Cueva, and Idoiaga Mondragón, “Rape Culture, Revictimization, and Social Representations.” 14.

<sup>65</sup> Stobbe, Lineke. “Doing Machismo: Legitimizing Speech Acts as a Selection Discourse.” 2005.

<sup>66</sup> Stobbe, Lineke. “Doing Machismo.”

<sup>67</sup> Cecilia Menjivar, “Policing and Violence: The Less Visible Harms of Policing Practices,” *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 27, no. 2 (2021): 49–61. 52.

<sup>68</sup> Johan Galtung, *Transcend and Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work* (Bolder, Colo: Paradigm, 2004).

with Walsh, “The Architecture of Femicide: The State, Inequalities, and Everyday Gender Violence in Honduras.” Menjivar highlights how structural violence is internalized into individuals and society, normalizing violence in each of its facets, typically discriminatory or power based.<sup>69</sup> This article also states how structural violence is joined with police negligence with dangerous results for minority groups, often gender or race based. Menjivar confirms the constructivist process from structural violence to violent discrimination, corresponding to the situation in Honduras.

The 2009 coup and years of military growth funded by the United States had a severe impact on violence against women in Honduras. Menjivar and Walsh present a stark contrast between pre-coup and post-coup government, shifting from weak attempts to prevent violence against women before the coup to complete failure to prevent, protect, or prosecute acts of violence against women. In addition to purposely decreasing protections, the state shut down institutions to help women and the military targeting of women increased in acts of state sponsored violence.<sup>70</sup> Although GBV was not impossible in the pre-coup government, there was a very tangible increase in the number of violent acts that can be tied to the post-coup government. The number of violent deaths of women in Honduras rose by 263.4% from 2005 to 2013.<sup>71</sup> This shift can also be correlated with changes in legislation, as protections for women were decreased while militarized violence was accepted by the government. The regime change further instilled structural violence into Honduras and negatively impacted many social institutions.

---

<sup>69</sup> Menjívar, “Policing and Violence: The Less Visible Harms of Policing Practices.” 52.

<sup>70</sup> Menjívar and Walsh, “The Architecture of Femicide.” 231.

<sup>71</sup> Feminist Organizations Report, “Status of Violence against Women in Honduras.”

### 3.3 NGOs and IOs

Evaluating the effectiveness of Non-Governmental Organizations or International Organizations is extremely difficult based on the subjective nature of the term *effective*, there must be significant indicators and thorough controls. Alternative to statistic-based effectiveness measures, empirical understanding can be built from the goal of organization programs, partnership with other respected organizations, and from the discourse of published reports. However difficult, it is crucial to understand the success rate of programs in order to utilize the best methods of programming, especially when the health and safety of women can be significantly influenced by the success of NGO or IO programs. There is a duality to both types of organizations, as NGOs typically offer more community-based programs while IOs have the funding to promote large scale methods of program building and maintaining successful programs.<sup>72</sup>

Cayir et al. use a constructivist grounded theory to acknowledge the interconnection between historical, cultural, and political contexts and lived experiences of individuals.<sup>73</sup> This theory aims to explain how social processes are rooted in data and apply it to the qualitative reality of individual experiences. The research by Cayir et al. illustrates the composition of non-profit organizations that work against gender-based violence. Although this study takes place in the United States, the findings about diversity of employees could be applicable to international organizations who often hire abroad to work in target countries, like Honduras. In these organizations, a predominantly white workforce utilized token minorities and non-inclusive work dynamics, even when unintentionally. Even though this study cannot be recklessly generalized, it

---

<sup>72</sup> Hansen-Nord et al., "Reducing Violence in Poor Urban Areas of Honduras." 937.

<sup>73</sup> Cayir et al., "Working Against Gender-Based Violence in the American South." 2455.

is a worthy consideration for the involvement of outside organizations in socially complex cultures, like Honduras, and worth the use of constructivist theory. In addition to the internal affairs of organizations, Hindawi suggests a critical decolonial intervention in order to protect the agency of states in the Global South from liberal paternalism of the West.<sup>74</sup> Acknowledging past involvement in the history of Honduras and using a critical framework to monitor the intentions of organizations will protect the autonomy of Honduras. Local agency is essential to providing an enduring base for effective and specific program, especially in cases of complex social inequalities.

---

<sup>74</sup> Coralie Pison Hindawi, "Decolonizing the Responsibility to Protect: On Pervasive Eurocentrism, Southern Agency and Struggles over Universals," *Security Dialogue* 53, no. 1 (February 2022): 38–56, <https://doi.org/10.1177/09670106211027801>.



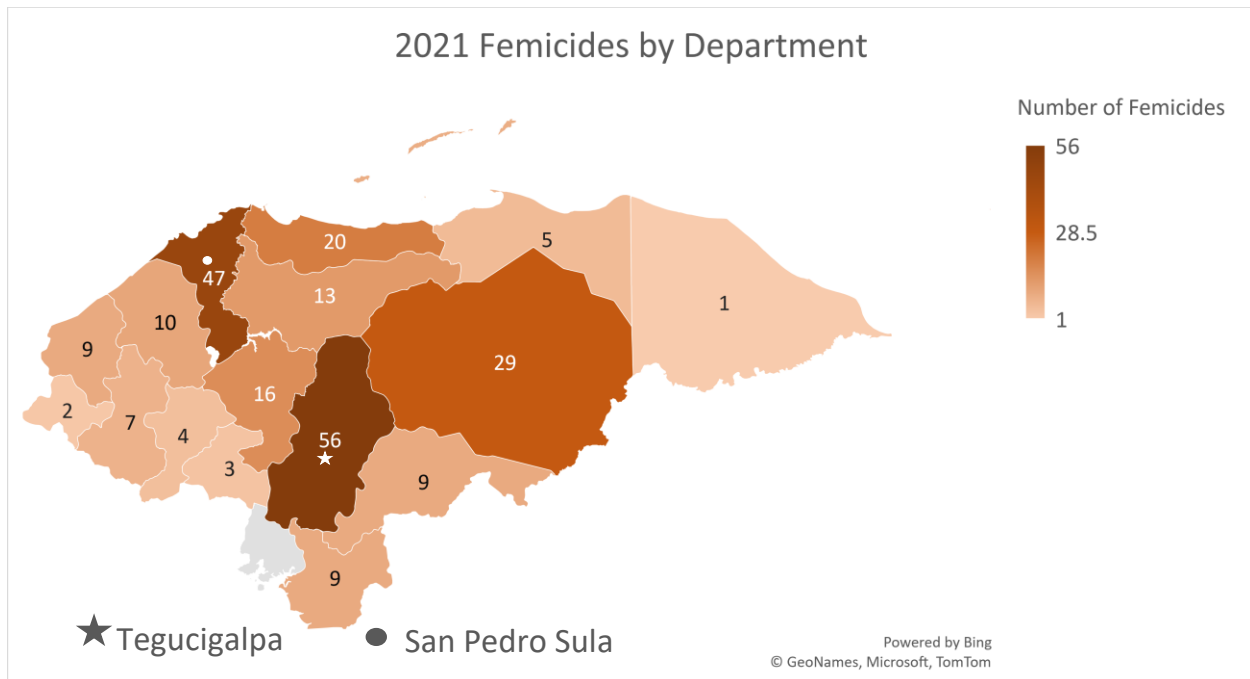
## CHAPTER 4. EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

The methods used in this thesis are quantitative descriptive statistics, comparing factors of corruption and GBV between the years 2003-2021. These figures will be shown through various charts to show trends over time and correlations between different factors, like impunity and femicide rates. Data from Honduras has been limited by the circumstances of reporting as well as the desire for the government to reduce exposure to the extent of GBV. Although this could be seen as a potential limitation, it also provides evidence of the important work NGOs and IOs are doing in Honduras, as they continue to assemble data for the public and have established aid programs to citizens when the government attempts to decrease awareness. NGO research contains crucial data throughout years where some major organizations do not have data specific to Honduran departments but focus on trends on a multitude of social issues. Broad case studies have been done over the whole of Honduras and over the Central America Northern Triangle, but for a complete picture, research must also be done into the regions of Honduras to gain a detailed understanding of the effects of impunity rates on GBV.

### **4.1 Impunity and GBV**

Within the data sets used, definitions and terms for impunity and other elements of the judicial process are used to quantify corruption. Judicialization is a term translated from the Spanish usage and refers to a case which begins the judicial process, meaning it has gone further than a criminal report. The other term, *sentencias condenatorias*, is used for completed judicial processes or convictions, regardless of the verdict. Sentencing rates are a valuable tool to use in comparison to the Honduras crime reports as it can show the rate of convictions after a criminal report, not accounting for the many crimes that are not reported or any police corruption in where the crime is not officially reported.

Previous literature has established the connection between gangs and violence in addition to NGO and IO statements that gangs and drug trafficking have constructed societal tolerance of GBV, directly and through differing factors. Understanding the listed hypotheses will build onto the academic understanding of GBV in Honduras which is necessary for effective involvement. There are fewer data sets directly analyzing GBV or femicide in comparison to conviction status, so descriptive statistics will compare elements of impunity to aspects of GBV. The Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras (IUDPAS) collects and reports many factors of social inequality in Honduras for public information and improvement of international programs and policy.<sup>75</sup> Using an impunity index or judicialization percentages allows analysis of a specific area of corruption that might influence GBV.

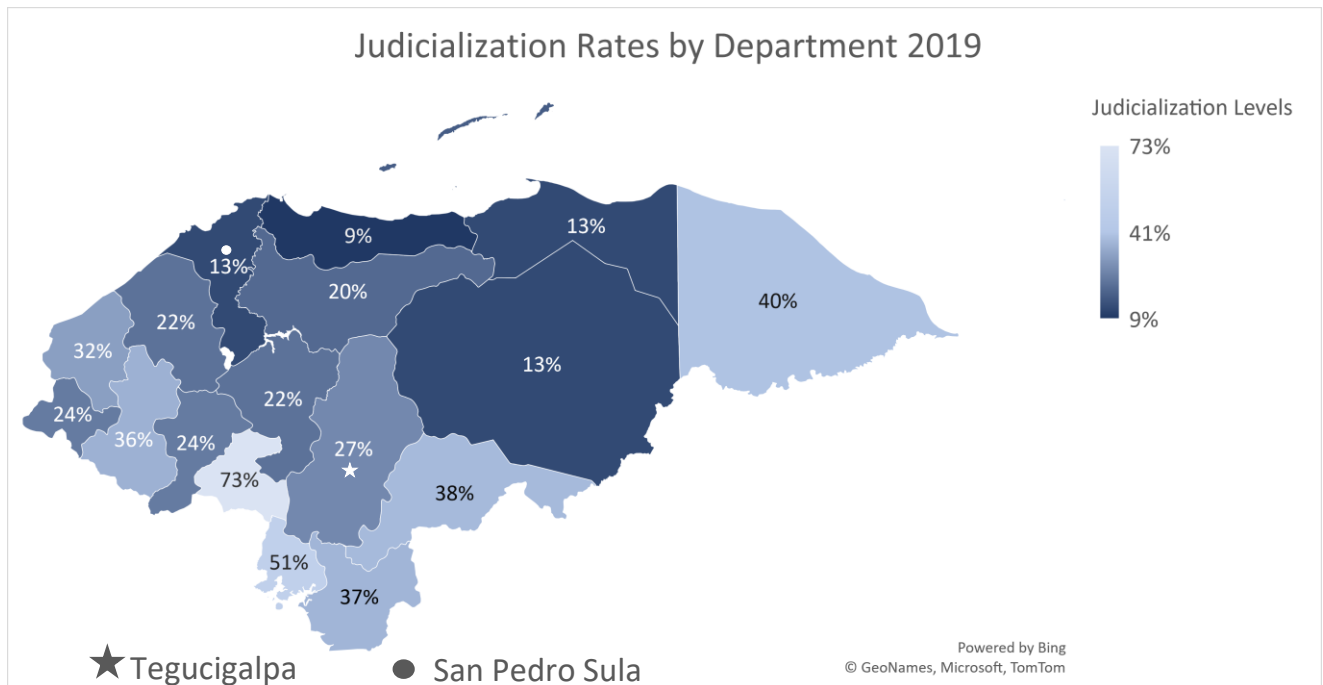


**Figure 1** *Number of Femicides in each Honduran Department in 2021.*<sup>76</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Instituto Universitario en Democracia, Paz y Seguridad (IUDPAS) (UNAH, 2021 2007).

<sup>76</sup> Map created by the author using data collected from: Centro de Estudios de la Mujer- Honduras, “Femicide Monitoring 2021 Data Set,” 2021.

The map above (figure 1) shows the number of femicides in 2021 by Department. Honduran local regions are labeled as *departments*, with the state containing eighteen departments of differing sizes and populations, including islands on the north coast. The department with the largest number of femicides in 2021 is Francisco Morazan, which is the darkest section located Central Honduras. The capital city of Tegucigalpa is in Francisco Morazan and with a current population of over one million, the city converges with political figures, NGO and IO base offices, and criminal activity. The department with the second highest femicide total is Cortés, located in the Northwest of Honduras and home to the city of San Pedro Sula. Both cities have substantial violence rates but have seen improving impunity scores corresponding with the presence of many external organizations. When compared with judicializations rates in figure 2 below, the degree of judicialization parallels the number of homicides. While acknowledging that the femicide totals are two years after the judicialization rates, both data sets have maintained steady trends from prior years and cannot not be misrepresented as skewed anomalies. There is a strong correlation between poor judicialization rates and higher femicide totals in Honduras departments, comparable between figure 1 and figure 2. This parallel in department statistics allows analysis into impunity and GBV, showing correlation beyond violence rates or additional factors of major cities. The connection between judicialization rates and femicides by department has consistent patterns, showing a positive connection between the selected factors of impunity and GBV.



**Figure 2 Judicialization Rates by Department, Honduras 2019** <sup>77</sup>

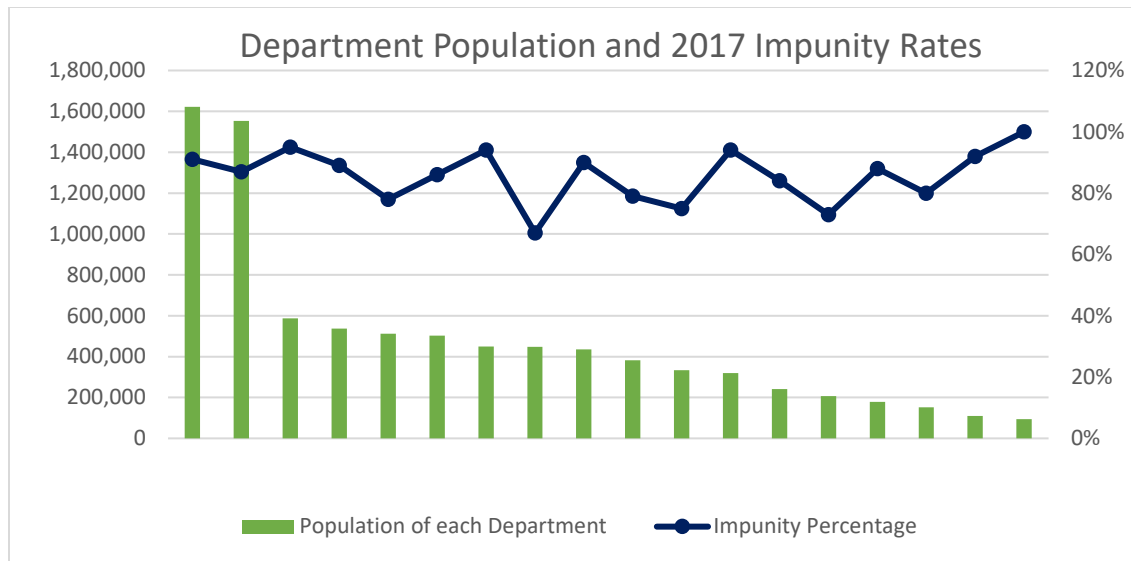
As mentioned previously, impunity is the exemption from justice and is likely dropped cases, unjust verdicts, or punishments unequal to the crime committed, meaning higher impunity rates is higher levels of corruption. Judicialization is a translated term and is a significant research factor for corruption rates because it shows how many criminal reports begin any step of the justice system. Inversely, low judicialization rates represent criminal cases that were reported but were left unprocessed. For example, the Cortés Department had a judicialization rate of 13% in 2019, meaning that 13 out of 100 reported crimes became cases in the judicial system. Although decreasing homicide rates have the potential to skew judicialization rates to appear better, most Honduran departments had worsening judicialization rates between 2017 and 2019, with the average percentage dropping from 33% to 28%.<sup>78</sup> With these considerations, the

<sup>77</sup> Map created by the author using data collected from: Instituto Universitario en Democracia, Paz y Seguridad (IUDPAS).

<sup>78</sup> Association for a More Just Society (ASJ), “Impunity for Homicides in Honduras,” 2019.

data shows that although homicides are decreasing, judicialization levels are not directly correlated to the decrease in violence. Additionally, more than half of the departments had worsening judicialization between 2017 and 2019, leaving more cases unaddressed with corruption or gang activity the likely cause.

Homicide rates and impunity scores elevated after the 2009 coup, which is expected given the installation of a militarized and corrupt government. The largest spike of homicides, gang violence, and GBV rates nationally was in 2012 and has slowly declined until 2019. With slow shifts in the National Congress away from the militarized and nationalist party, crime and homicides have decreased throughout Honduras but are still high for regional standards. Although there were slow improvements nationally for many years, there was a switch in the trend in 2019, the year having the first increase in homicide rates since the 2012 peak. Since this fluctuation is recent and not significantly continued into 2020 or 2021, there is currently no determinative answer for what caused the increase. The effects of this increase can be seen in the spike in IPV in the first half of 2020 due to COVID-19 lockdowns while a decrease in total homicides from 2019 to 2020 could also be related to the significant events of hurricanes and the pandemic. Regardless of the cause, it is important to note that this switch in the trend could have an effect on any short-term changes in impunity indexes or recent femicides rates.

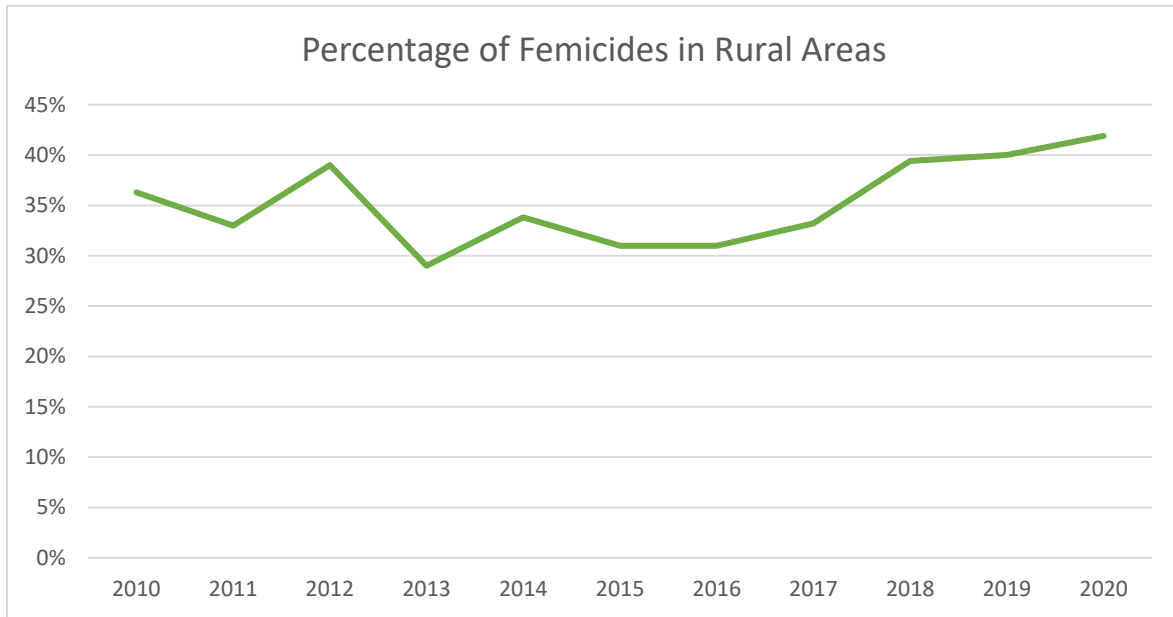


**Figure 3. Population of Honduras Departments and Relative Impunity Rates, 2017 <sup>79</sup>**

Large cities often have high crime and homicide rates in an accurate ratio of people to crime, often less populated areas have lower crime rates. Yet there are other factors involved, like age distribution, unemployment rates, and access to criminal organizations, that increase crime rates in cities. In a similar pattern, higher femicide rates can be tied to higher homicide rates, as the targeted murder of women is included in overall homicides rates. This correlation between department population and crime rates a logical assumption and could be used to explain high rates GBV in major cities like Tegucigalpa or San Pedro Sula. However, as seen in figure 3 above, Honduran department impunity rates do not directly correspond with population size. If impunity were to have direct dependence on department population, there would be a downward trend in the graph showing lower rates of impunity in less populated areas. These figures of large population and do not correspond consistently with departmental judicialization or impunity rates, failing to support population as an exclusive explanation to GBV rates.

<sup>79</sup> Figure 3 created by the author using data from: Instituto Universitario en Democracia, Paz y Seguridad (IUDPAS).

Increased impunity rates represent systemic injustice because criminal charges are not being pursued in necessary cases. High impunity rates across Honduras are not connected to homicide rates or population size but do show connection in effecting femicide rates.



**Figure 4. Percentage of Total Femicides that occurred in Rural Honduras, 2010-2020** <sup>80</sup>

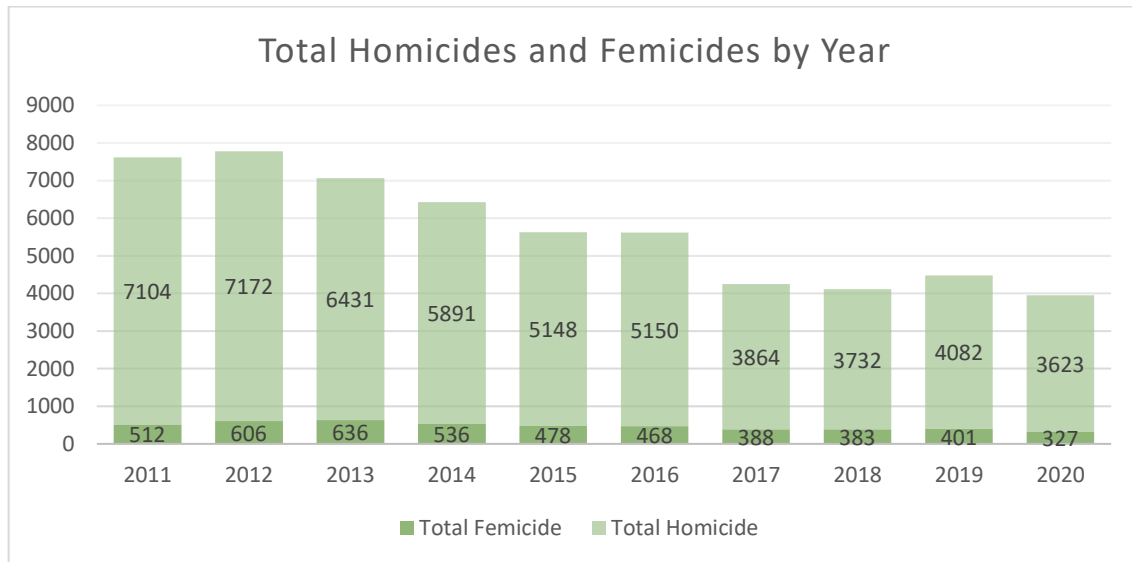
As stated previously, urban areas are often tied with higher crime rates. In an additional factor, the rate of femicides in Honduras are slowly increasing from urban areas to rural with at 10% increase in 5 years. The rates are still higher in urban areas, but as shown in figure 4 above, the percentage of homicides is increasing in rural areas. This discrepancy between the assumption that violence is higher in urban areas and the current trend in Honduras reveals again that a causal hypothesis between urban populations and femicides cannot be substantiated and calls for further research into violence in rural regions of Honduras. Alternative factors of rural socialization and presence of criminal organizations in rural areas could have an impact on the shift in rural femicides, but this cannot be determined within the parameters of this thesis.

---

<sup>80</sup> Figure 4 created by the author using data from: Instituto Universitario en Democracia, Paz y Seguridad (IUDPAS).

An additional connection for crime rates would be poverty levels or unemployment rates, expecting increased poverty to cause increase crime or GBV. In the case of Honduras, poverty rates are high across the country, neither better in urban nor rural areas. Falsely associating violence with poverty, in the specific case of Honduras, neglects the significant elements of influence while ignoring the diffused extension of poverty across departments.

As rates of change across multiple factors of violence and homicide are not consistent with expectations, Honduras requires increased research into the various factors of change.



**Figure 5. Total Homicides and Femicides in Honduras, 2011-2020** <sup>81</sup>

According to the National Autonomous University of Honduras, there were violent deaths of 987 women in 2017, which is 47% less than 2016. Violent deaths of women are not an equivalent classification to femicide, so the total number of women killed yearly is higher than figure 5 shows, as femicides are motivated by gender discrimination. Additionally, these figures cannot account for acts of GBV that do not result in death, meaning there are many more

<sup>81</sup> Figure 5 created by the author using data from: Instituto Universitario en Democracia, Paz y Seguridad (IUDPAS).



affected women than represented by this set of statistics. The yearly femicide total is slowly decreasing, but not by the same rate as the national homicide rate, showing a maintained rate of GBV and femicide in Honduras.<sup>82</sup> As seen in *Figure 5*, the percentage of femicides from the yearly total homicide rate did not significantly decrease in the same ratio that the yearly homicides decreased between 2011 and 2019. Indeed, from 2014 onwards femicide rates increased. With little significant change is the percentage of femicides to the total homicide rate, there are additional factors at hand when considering the assumed correlation of homicides to other factors.

A final qualification on the interpretation and analysis of impunity in Honduras is the role of gangs, cartels, and *maras*. Criminal activity is inconsistently reported in Honduras and the malignant organizations are spread throughout the country. Criminal organizations undoubtedly have an effect on violence, GBV, and corruption levels in Honduras, holding a position in the cycle of weak social systems. This section presented recent data from Honduras in comparison to factors of corruption and elements of GBV. The data did not support correlations between population and violence, consistent urban percentages of violence, or poverty parallels, to name a few of the potential assumptions of causation. Within these elements of inconsistency, the association between impunity and GBV is strengthened. Direct department correlations can be seen, aiding in the hypothesis that increased impunity levels allow higher levels of GBV in Honduran departments.

---

<sup>82</sup> Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), "Human Rights Situation in Honduras." 112.

## **4.2 NGOs, IOs, and External Involvement**

The Organization of American States (OAS) implemented the Mission to Support the Fight against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (MACCIH) as an attempt to supervise the Honduran government after a major embezzlement scandal of social security funds.<sup>83</sup> Although the mission did not have significant prosecutorial power, President Juan Orlando Hernandez refused to renew based on claims of overreach and the mandate expired on January 19, 2020. MACCIH was responsible for passing the Police Career Law in 2017 which incorporated community policing, taught broader gender perspectives, and introduced a law for the protection of human rights, journalists and social communications, and justice officials.<sup>84</sup> Honduras is an especially dangerous country for human rights defenders and journalists, with criminal activity a major source of money for government officials and gang members. By combating corruption from a government level, the security and power of political elites in Honduras were threatened. Supporters of MACCIH believe that there was substantial headway gained against governmental corruption, one of the major factors in the termination of the mission.

The Honduras branch Peace Brigades International (PBI Honduras) focuses on political violence, with an anti-GBV office and many partnerships with local anti-GBV and LGBTQIA+ rights organizations.<sup>85</sup> PBI Honduras is one of the many organizations with international ties, funding, and program coordination. After the MACCIH program was terminated by the Honduran government in 2020, access for international organizations to have direct involvement in human rights in Honduras was reduced, establishing NGOs and non-profit organizations as one of the major coordinators and defenders for various elements of human rights. Another

---

<sup>83</sup> Smith, "Addressing the Sex and Gender-Based Violence in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador." 6.

<sup>84</sup> Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), "Human Rights Situation in Honduras."

<sup>85</sup> PBI-Honduras, "Gender-Based Violence: Another Pandemic for Women."

major organization operating in Honduras is the Association for a More Just Society (ASJ). This organization mainly targets justice and anti-impunity through various partnerships and programs which address government transparency, improve education and healthcare systems, and initiate programs to reform the justice system.<sup>86</sup> Through community programs, these NGOs have an opportunity to enact change on an interpersonal level and build community trust, essential when corruption is lowered, and that trust can be transferred towards the government. Many of the organizations in Honduras operate out of Tegucigalpa or San Pedro Sula, including PBI Honduras and ASJ, as they are the biggest cities with the highest crime rates. The locations of these NGOs could have correlations to improving rates of justice in Honduras, as rates of impunity have not changed much in the last five years in smaller departments.

The United States Agency for International Development's Mission in Honduras (USAID Honduras) undertook research in Western Honduras to get data on specific types of GBV in the region. Although West Honduras has some of the lowest femicide numbers in 2021, there is still a heavy presence of GBV and intimate partner violence (IPV) as well as low judicialization rates, averaging 30% judicialization in 2019. This study done with the Monitoring & Evaluation Support for Collaborative Learning and Adapting (MESCLA) program includes many recommendations for approaching high rates of GBV in Honduras, beginning with child treatment. Child maltreatment is the spark of socialized violence and builds a fundamental base of gender discrimination.<sup>87</sup> Partnering with teachers and parents to use alternative forms of

---

<sup>86</sup> Association for a More Just Society (ASJ), "Impunity for Homicides in Honduras."

<sup>87</sup> Manuel Contreras-Urbina et al., "Monitoring and Evaluation Support for Collaborative Learning and Adapting (MESCLA) Activity: Gender-Based Violence Study in Western Honduras" (United States Agency for International Development, February 5, 2019). ;Beniamino Cislighi et al., "Innovative Methods to Analyse the Impact of Gender Norms on Adolescent Health Using Global Health Survey Data," *Social Science & Medicine* 293 (2022): 114652, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114652>.

corrective means along with providing better mental health services for survivors of violence is one of the main recommendations from MESCLA. Other specific recommendations from this research report includes economic empowerment programs for women and programs for evolving gender norms through multicultural methods. With a constructivist approach to gender socialization, beginning with children is a fundamental step in combating systemic and cultural GBV. Community programs would be beneficial in a holistic method of confronting structural violence and gender discrimination. However, focusing on child socialization or gender awareness alone lacks the acknowledgement to corruption and gang violence that also drives GBV in Honduras, excluding a transnational topic. With multi-faceted social issues in Honduras, further involvement is needed to advance human rights protections and lower violence rates.

The United Nations operates across the world on nearly every issue, including a prominent office for Human Rights. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights' (OHCHR) recent report on violence in Honduras, published March of 2021, focuses on the effects of COVID-19. The OHCHR claims a very active role in evaluating and protecting human rights in Honduras, focusing on human rights defenders during the pandemic, when many were falsely imprisoned and denied fundamental judicial rights. Additionally, the OHCHR trained and financially supported civil society organizations and educational campaigns to raise awareness for GBV rates in Honduras.<sup>88</sup> The OHCHR has an extensive list of reports on human rights violations, often taking a diplomatic approach and listing suggestions, requests, and detailed reporting for the Honduran government. These recommendations would ensure the safety of Honduran citizens and decrease government corruption, but each suggestion from the

---

<sup>88</sup> OHCHR, "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Honduras\*" (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR), 2021).

report is unlikely to pass in the National Congress or be effectively implemented if it did pass. The recent shift in the National Congress might be more influenced by UN normative power than previous governments, as President Xiomara Castro and an increase in left party congressional seats shift the ratio of electorates who fundamentally support international cooperation.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) published a report on August 27, 2019, that covers all current issues in Honduras, including corruption and GBV. The focus of the IACHR on judicial corruption in the Honduran government is incredibly beneficial to the overall research and recommendations for the improvement of Honduras's social systems. Specifically, the IACHR took an active role dealing with the Honduran government after questionable presidential elections in 2017 and objected to the handling of protests with violence after the election. Additionally, the Organization of American States (OAS) Electoral Observation Mission's observation and report of the 2017 election could have influenced the fairness of the 2020 election, where progressive Xiomara Castro won. Observation teams have been shown to increase the fairness and transparency of elections, validating the presence of multiple International Organizations during elections in Honduras.<sup>89</sup>

Between each of these international organizations and non-governmental organizations, there have been programs with diverse goals, all contributing to lowering rates of GBV in Honduras. Approaching the issue from child rearing and gender socialization aids in long term development of acceptance and non-violence. As for the role of NGOs and IOs in Honduras, both categories have provided data that would be hard to access from the government of Honduras. Large IOs have shown to aid in anti-corruption programs, specifically MACCIH's

---

<sup>89</sup> Amanda Murdie and Dursun Peksen, "The Impact of Human Rights INGO Shaming on Humanitarian Interventions," *The Journal of Politics* 76, no. 1 (2014): 215–28, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022381613001242>.

success before expiration and the OHCHR's capacity to fund campaigns for the protection of human rights defenders. NGO involvement in justice maintenance and extending GBV awareness has been effective in communities and is an essential aspect of decreasing GBV rates in Honduras, as impunity rates have been shown to correlate with GBV in Honduran departments. NGOs and IOs, in partnerships or alone, show effectiveness in confronting judicial corruption in Honduras which will have an indirect impact on GBV rates through a slowly improving justice system.<sup>90</sup>

---

<sup>90</sup> Murdie and Peksen; Buiten and Naidoo, "Laying Claim to a Name."

## CONCLUSION

This thesis is built on the academic literature and raw data sources from NGOs, IOs, and government systems. Analyzing and comparing data for impunity and factors of GBV is important for the conceptualization of a holistic Honduras but must also be met with research into the lived experience of women in Honduras or from those who have fled from the violence. The discussion of results in this thesis will draw connections between impunity and GBV and evaluate the impact of NGOs and IOs in Honduras. These considerations do not inhibit the realities of experiencing GBV in Honduras, but aid in further academic understanding of the complex Honduran case as well as call for further research into the issue.

Dual focus organizations or partnerships between organizations that approach different social issues are essential to tackling the GBV issue in Honduras. Specifically, approaches to justice, impunity, and corruption are critical for fundamental progress, as Honduran citizens should be able to trust their government and see tangible differences from previous corruption and fragile social institutions. In order to address the major issues with Honduras in an effective way, it is crucial to understand what causes shifts in violence trends, what regions have the largest rates of impunity, and how corruption is tied to GBV. Building onto a bottom-up approach to ending gender-based violence in Honduras must also include specific methods for rural areas, as there are additional complications rooted in rural culture and resistance to change. NGO involvement must continue to expand into rural areas and encourage financial autonomy for women so they may seek higher levels of equality that will aid in the fight against gender-based violence in the long run.<sup>91</sup> As seen in the empirical section, femicides are shifting

---

<sup>91</sup> Dietz et al., "Women's Empowerment in Rural Honduras and Its Determinants."

proportionally and increasing in rural areas, necessitating immediate research and action into rural impunity and gender discrimination to reduce overall violence rates in both urban and rural areas of Honduras.

Another focus for future research could be into the specific causes that lowered the homicide rate in Honduras from 2012 to now. Understanding what occurred to remove Honduras from the highest ranked countries in the world by homicide rates, to only above average for the region, would clarify what methods to continue to use and what should be evolved for better results. While this analysis of the situation using currently available data suggests that judicial impunity is a causal factor in continually high rates of GBV in Honduras, a robust study that includes qualitative research into Honduran judicial practitioners' view of GBV cases and further data analysis of what types of cases are recorded with worse impunity rates could confirm this or aid in answering these questions.

Further research into Xiomara Castro's effect on GBV and corruption in Honduras must be taken after enough time has passed to study the change in policy and society. This research would clarify the timeframe of impact after a dramatic governmental switch, or the role society can play in demanding structural change. It would be interesting to study specific policies and their effect on targeted issues, whether corruption, gang activity, or gender-based violence, there will be policies enacted to deal with these issues and data samples could be compared in a limited or long-term progress outlook. Research of Castro's impact from within a corrupted system could provide tactics for other nations also dealing with corruption.

This thesis analyzes the correlation between impunity rates and GBV in Honduran departments, specifically using factors of judicialization and femicide. The data shows a stronger correlation between impunity and GBV than other potential factors of violence like population,



urban elements, or poverty levels when attempting to isolate a more significant aspect of influence. Regional situations of trafficking and criminal organizations have an undoubtable effect on violence rates in Central America, including Honduras, requiring research and programs into transnational and internal anti-criminal organization programs in joint effort with anti-impunity campaigns to establish a reliable justice system in Honduras, with aims to provide fair and just criminal trials. Understanding the multifaceted effect impunity has on GBV in Honduras is one of the elements needed to analyze the effectiveness of NGO and IO programs. By identifying and beginning to fill the gap in the research, knowledge for further analysis of Honduras and better program management to reduce the rates of gender-based violence and establish a safe and stable home for Honduras citizens.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Association for a More Just Society (ASJ). “Impunity for Homicides in Honduras,” 2019.
- Astvaldsson, Astvaldur. “Between Short Story and Novel: A Mosaic of Violence and Corruption in Honduras: Waldina Mejía’s *La Tía Sofi y Los Otros Cuentos*.” *Hispanic Research Journal* 12, no. 4 (August 2011): 343–56.  
<https://doi.org/10.1179/146827311X13063149337656>.
- Baranowski, Kim A., Eileen Wang, Megan R. D’Andrea, and Elizabeth K. Singer. “Experiences of Gender-Based Violence in Women Asylum Seekers from Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala.” *Torture Journal* 29, no. 3 (January 20, 2020): 46–58.  
<https://doi.org/10.7146/torture.v29i3.111970>.
- Buiten, Denise, and Kammila Naidoo. “Laying Claim to a Name: Towards a Sociology of ‘Gender-Based Violence.’” *South African Review of Sociology* 51, no. 2 (2020): 61–68.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/21528586.2020.1813194>.
- Burrell, Jennifer L., and Ellen Moodie. “The Post–Cold War Anthropology of Central America.” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 44, no. 1 (2015): 381–400.  
<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-102214-014101>.
- Cayir, Ebru, Mindi Spencer, Deborah Billings, DeAnne K. Hilfinger Messias, and Alyssa Robillard. “Working Against Gender-Based Violence in the American South: An Analysis of Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Sexuality in Advocacy.” *Qualitative Health Research* 31, no. 13 (2021): 2454–69. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10497323211041327>.
- CEDAW. “Concluding Observations on the Combined Seventh and Eighth Periodic Reports of Honduras,” 2018.
- Centro de Estudios de la Mujer- Honduras. “Femicide Monitoring 2021 Data Set,” 2021.
- Cislaghi, Beniamino, Ann M. Weber, Holly B. Shakya, Safa Abdalla, Amiya Bhatia, Benjamin W. Domingue, Iván Mejía-Guevara, et al. “Innovative Methods to Analyse the Impact of Gender Norms on Adolescent Health Using Global Health Survey Data.” *Social Science & Medicine* 293 (2022): 114652. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114652>.
- Contreras-Urbina, Manuel, Margarita Quintanilla, Victor Manuel Morales, Jessica Sanchez, Angela Bourassa, Junior Ovince, and Elizabeth Rojas. “Monitoring and Evaluation Support for Collaborative Learning and Adapting (MESCLA) Activity: Gender-Based Violence Study in Western Honduras.” United States Agency for International Development, February 5, 2019.
- El Tiempo. “‘Cuesta arriba’ han sido los primeros 100 días de Xiomara Castro.” May 6, 2022.  
<https://tiempo.hn/cuesta-arriba-gobierno-xiomara-castro-honduras/>.
- Dietz, Thomas, Andrea Estrella Chong, Paulino Font Gilabert, and Janina Grabs. “Women’s Empowerment in Rural Honduras and Its Determinants: Insights from Coffee Communities in Ocotepeque and Copan.” *Development in Practice* 28, no. 1 (2018): 33–50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2018.1402862>.
- Feminist Organizations Report. “Status of Violence against Women in Honduras.” Centro de Derechos de Mujeres, Red Nacional de Defensoras de Derechos Humanos de Honduras, Foro de Mujeres por la Vida, JASS-Honduras y Centro de Estudios de la Mujer., 2014.
- Galtung, Johan. *Transcend and Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work*. Bolder, Colo: Paradigm, 2004.
- “Gender Quotas Database- Honduras.” International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2022.

- “Gender-Based Violence: Another Pandemic for Women.” *Peace Brigades International Honduras (PBI)*, 2020.
- Hansen-Nord, Nete Sloth, Finn Kjaerulf, Juan Almendarez, Victor Morales Rodas, and Julio Castro. “Reducing Violence in Poor Urban Areas of Honduras by Building Community Resilience through Community-Based Interventions.” *International Journal of Public Health* 61, no. 8 (2016): 935–43. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00038-016-0854-4>.
- infosegura. “Honduras: Violence against Women through the Life Cycle, 2020.” Ministerio Publico, USAID, UNPD, 2020.
- Instituto Universitario en Democracia, Paz y Seguridad (IUDPAS). UNAH, 2021 2007.
- Instituto Universitario en Democracia, Paz y Seguridad, UNAH, and Ministerio Publico. “Observatorio de Muertes Violentas de Mujeres y Femicidios,” 2021.
- Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). “Human Rights Situation in Honduras.” Organization of American States, 2019.
- Jarquín, Mateo. “The Nicaraguan Question: Contadora and the Latin American Response to US Intervention Against the Sandinistas, 1982–86.” *The Americas* 78, no. 4 (2021): 581–608. <https://doi.org/10.1017/tam.2021.6>.
- Kim, Chunrye, Joel A. Capellan, Hung-En Sung, and Eduardo Rafael Orellana. “Combating IPV With Community Leaders in Honduras: An Evaluation of an IPV Training Program Among Teachers and Health Professionals.” *Violence Against Women* 28, no. 3–4 (March 2022): 991–1007. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10778012211008995>.
- Knox, Vickie. “A Web of Violence: Crime, Corruption and Displacement in Honduras.” Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2019.
- Kurmanaev, Anatoly, and Joan Suazo. “Honduras Election Front-Runner Vows New Era but Is Tied to Past.” *The New York Times*. 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/29/world/americas/honduras-election-xiomara-castro.html>.
- Lehmann, Kai Enno. “The Social Conditions of Corruption in Honduras: What They Are, What They Mean, and What Can Be Done About Them.” In *Corruption in Latin America*, edited by Robert I. Rotberg, 265–86. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-94057-1\\_11](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-94057-1_11).
- Leonard, Thomas M. *The History of Honduras*. The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations. Santa Barbara, Calif: Greenwood, 2011.
- McSweeney, Kendra, Oliver T. Coomes, and Anthony J. Bebbington. “Climate-Related Disaster Opens a Window of Opportunity for Rural Poor in Northeastern Honduras.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 108, no. 13 (2011): 5203–8.
- Menjívar, Cecilia. “Policing and Violence: The Less Visible Harms of Policing Practices.” *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 27, no. 2 (2021): 49–61.
- Menjívar, Cecilia, and Shannon Drysdale Walsh. “The Architecture of Femicide: The State, Inequalities, and Everyday Gender Violence in Honduras.” *Latin American Research Review* 52, no. 2 (2022): 221–40. <https://doi.org/10.25222/larr.73>.
- Murdie, Amanda, and Dursun Peksen. “The Impact of Human Rights INGO Shaming on Humanitarian Interventions.” *The Journal of Politics* 76, no. 1 (2014): 215–28. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022381613001242>.

- Obinna, Denise N. "Seeking Sanctuary: Violence Against Women in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala." *Violence Against Women* 27, no. 6–7 (May 2021): 806–27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801220913633>.
- Olson, Jared. "How Honduras's Congress Split in Two." 2022. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/02/01/honduras-congress-split-crisis-xiomara-castro-inauguration-corruption-libre-national-party/>.
- Pison Hindawi, Coralie. "Decolonizing the Responsibility to Protect: On Pervasive Eurocentrism, Southern Agency and Struggles over Universals." *Security Dialogue* 53, no. 1 (February 2022): 38–56. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09670106211027801>.
- Powers, Ráchael A., John K. Cochran, Jon Maskaly, and Christine S. Sellers. "Social Learning Theory, Gender, and Intimate Partner Violent Victimization: A Structural Equations Approach." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 35, no. 17–18 (2020): 3554–80. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260517710486>.
- Seguridad, Justicia y Paz. "Ranking Methodology (2021) of the 50 Most Violent Cities in the World," 2022.
- Ransford, Charles, R. Brent Decker, Guadalupe M. Cruz, Francisco Sánchez, and Gary Slutkin. "El Modelo Cure Violence: Reducción de La Violencia En San Pedro Sula (Honduras)." *Revista CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals*, no. 116 (September 20, 2017): 179–206. <https://doi.org/10.24241/rcai.2017.116.2.179>.
- "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Honduras\*." United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR), 2021.
- Reyes-Sosa, Hiram, Sonia Martínez-Cueva, and Nahia Idoiaga Mondragón. "Rape Culture, Revictimization, and Social Representations: Images and Discourses on Sexual and Violent Crimes in the Digital Sphere in Mexico." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 2022, 088626052210847. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605221084747>.
- Rivera, Lirio Gutiérrez. *Gender, Race, and the Cycle of Violence of Female Asylum Seekers from Honduras*. Vol. 1. Oxford University Press, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198814887.003.0004>.
- Ronderos, K. "Poverty Reduction, Political Violence and Women's Rights in Honduras." *Community Development Journal* 46, no. 3 (2011): 315–26. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsr038>.
- Sabet, Daniel M. "Bidding despite Corruption: Evidence from Honduras." *Journal of Public Procurement* 21, no. 4 (November 30, 2021): 399–417. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOPP-07-2020-0058>.
- Salomón, Leticia. "Honduras: A History That Repeats Itself." *NACLA Report on the Americas* 45, no. 1 (January 2012): 58–61. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714839.2012.11722118>.
- Secretary-General of the United Nations. "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women." UN General Assembly, 1979.
- Shorack, Marna, Elizabeth G. Kennedy, and Amelia Frank-Vitale. "A State of Mistrust: Questionable Homicide Numbers, a Murky Police Purge, and a Pervasive Distrust of Authorities in Honduras Reveal Deep State Failures That Enable Violence and Impunity." *NACLA Report on the Americas* 52, no. 4 (October 1, 2020): 404–9. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714839.2021.1840168>.

- Smith, Cory. "Addressing the Sex and Gender-Based Violence in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador Fueling the U.S. Border Crisis: Corruption, Impunity, and Violence Against Women and Girls." Pulte Institute for Global Development, 2020.
- Stobbe, Lineke. "Doing Machismo: Legitimizing Speech Acts as a Selection Discourse." *Gender, Work and Organization* 12, no. 2 (March 2005): 105–23. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2005.00265.x>.
- Teaca, Alina, and Denisa Stirbulescu. "Consequences of Gender-Based Violence in the Family Environment and the Solutions Adopted in Latin America and Europe to Combat the Femicide Phenomenon." " *Conferinta Internationala de Drept, Studii Europene Si Relatii Internationale 2021*, 2021, 580–91.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "Annual Drug Seizures," 2019. "United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)," 2004.
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). "Hondurans Lose Critical Health Services after Hurricane Eta Tears through Central America," 2020.
- "Unraveling the Crisis, Weaving Futures: Impacts of COVID-19 on the Lives and Struggles of Mesoamerican Women Human Rights Defenders." Iniciativa Mesoamericana Defensoras, n.d.
- Williams, Rebecca J., and Paige Castellanos. "Youth Perceptions of Violence in Western Honduras." *Third World Quarterly* 41, no. 3 (2020): 397–414. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2019.1672528>.
- "Women on the Run: First-Hand Accounts of Refugees Fleeing El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico." United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2015.