EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
ANNOUNCEMENT

Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Defense

How Ethnic Minority Single Mothers Characterize the Influences that have Led Them to Leave the Teaching Profession

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Across the nation, teachers are leaving the profession at high rates (Ingersoll et al, 2019). Salary, support, and workload are factors that have contributed to this phenomenon (Ingersoll et al, 2019). Little research has explored the personal lives and responsibilities of educators, particularly those of single mothers, in an effort to understand and address their needs in an attempt to lower the attrition rate. The few studies available indicate that single mothers who are teachers, spend their days educating and supporting groups of children, often neglecting their own children out of professional responsibilities. This is a critical issue as working single parents, particularly women, lack the time to dedicate to their children and their own personal needs (Bautista Sofis and Lopez, 2015).

The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences of the minority single mothers who have left the teacher workforce in Miami-Dade County Public Schools in order to identify causes for their leaving the teacher profession and potential measures that could be taken to address those causes. With this, the following questions will guide my study: 1) How do minority single mothers characterize the influences that have led them to leave the teaching profession? 2) How have socially constructed understandings of women’s roles/positions in society related to ethnic minority single mothers’-pre-career, in-career, and post-career decisions?

In this qualitative study, the researcher interviewed three ethnic minority single mothers who are former teachers. Participants of the study are ethnic minority women who were teachers and are now in administrative roles or have left the teaching profession altogether. Three semi-structured, open-ended interviews were conducted with each of the participants. The interview questions asked the participants to recall their early life and motivation for becoming teachers, career as a teacher, and their lives after they left the classroom. Participants have also had the opportunity to check the transcripts of those interviews to check the validity of the data collected. The three participants also shared photographs and created timelines to triangulate the data.

The rise of women in the teaching workforce, rise of single parent homes and rise of minority teachers are realities other districts across the country and this study provides insight that is promising and may be helpful to others.

Date: March 31, 2022
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Place: https://dadeschools.zoom.us/j/84484592166?pwd=aGJWaldUTlc1YUVZaGxlUTh2OGhOUT09

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