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

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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

HOW ETHNIC MINORITY SINGLE MOTHERS CHARACTERIZE THE INFLUENCES
THAT HAVE LED THEM TO LEAVE THE TEACHING PROFESSION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR of EDUCATION

in

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

by

Janelle Bravo-San Pedro

2022

To: Dean Michael Heithaus
College of Arts, Sciences and Education

This dissertation, written by Janell Bravo-San Pedro, and entitled How Ethnic Minority Single Mothers Characterize the Influences that Have Led Them to Leave the Teaching Profession, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this dissertation and recommend that it be approved.

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Kristen Wilcox, Major Professor

Date of Defense: March 31, 2022

The dissertation of Janelle Bravo-San Pedro is approved.

Dean Michael Heithaus
College of Arts, Sciences and Education

Andrés G. Gil
Vice President for Research and Economic Development
and Dean of the University Graduate School

Florida International University, 2022

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my son, Tristan Xavier, who has unknowingly given me every hope and who is everything good in this world. I am also dedicating my work to my niece, Jacquelyn, and my goddaughter, Madison, who have allowed me to love them as my own; may my work be an example of what strong minority women can accomplish and a reminder to always grab a seat at the table. And to my husband, Erick- my greatest supporter and our home team captain- grateful doesn't begin to describe it. This body of work is also dedicated to my siblings, Jessica, Jason, and Jacquelyn, who have been there through the good and the bad. My work is also dedicated to my mother, Lourdes, my first recollection of the struggles ethnic minority single mothers face and who left the classroom to pursue other work in an attempt to better situate her family. I am indebted to her. To my stepdad, Robert, and my extended family of cousins, tios, tias, abuelos, but especially my AnaTia, who I modeled my early teaching career after and who is still available to discuss this world of education that we love- thank you. To my lifelong sisterhood of friends, thank you for being great examples of strong ethnic minority women, mothers, and professionals- real super heroines in every sense of the term.

I would also like to dedicate this work to the women who have shared their stories with me in hopes of creating a better understanding of what is needed to support mothers in education. I am honored to share your stories.

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This study would not have been possible without the three women who gave up their time and shared their stories with me, Ana, Maria, and Maddie. As a Hispanic female educator, I am grateful for your respective stories, and I am grateful for your insight and support.

I would also like to thank my colleagues, my classmates, and my friends for their support.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION
HOW ETHNIC MINORITY SINGLE MOTHERS CHARACTERIZE THE
INFLUENCES THAT HAVE LED THEM TO LEAVE THE TEACHING
PROFESSION

by

Janelle Bravo-San Pedro

Florida International University, 2021

Miami, Florida

Professor Kristen Wilcox, Major Professor

Teachers are leaving the profession at high rates. Salary, support, and workload are factors that have contributed to this phenomenon. Teachers who are single mothers and are the sole providers of their households in all aspects, including financial, emotional, and physical find themselves questioning their career choice and the constant inner struggle of being an effective teacher and super mom. Little research has explored the personal lives and responsibilities of educators, particularly those of single mothers, to understand and address their needs and reasons for leaving the teaching profession. This research holds implications for policy, practice, and future scholarship on teacher retention.

This study is framed by feminist theory which posits that the patriarchal system in place forges women's career paths and daily lives, creating a deep impact on single mothers who are working full-time as classroom teachers. Feminist theory also frames this study by giving the participants the opportunity to share their experiences, which can

lead to discourse and change. Gender identification and marital status shape individuals' experiences but so too do other characteristics such as ethnicity. This study is complemented by an intersectional lens, a lens through which power is seen to derive from various aspects of an individual's position in society. This view can help reveal the ways an educator's gender, marital and child-rearing status, and ethnicity relate to her experiences.

Large diverse urban districts across the United States have sought to hire and retain teachers of color yet face a variety of challenges. The site of this study, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS), is one of the largest and most diverse urban districts in the nation. MDCPS's workforce is 81% ethnic minority and 74% of these educators are women.

The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences of ethnic minority single mothers who have left the teacher workforce in MDCPS and to identify causes for their leaving. The goal is to identify potential measures that could be taken to retain ethnic minority single mothers who are teachers in the future. This study uses a narrative inquiry approach with a sample of three participants who were interviewed using three- in depth interviews to explore their lived experiences in teaching. Through the approach of narrative inquiry, I afforded a space for ethnic minority single mothers who have left the teaching profession through several interviews to share their stories and experiences. The participants' stories have been organized by: Biographical Information and Cultural Context; Experiences Before, During and After the Classroom; Perceived Influences; and Understanding Her Story. After several phases of coding, I identified patterns and unique

findings across the participants' stories. The cross-cutting analysis has merged their stories with the available research concerning ethnic minority teachers, single mothers, and teacher attrition.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Setting	2
Problem and Aim	2
Teaching Minority Status.....	4
Purpose of the Study	5
Research Questions	6
Delimitations.....	6
Statement of Significance	7
Definitions of Terms	7
Researcher Positioning.....	8
Summary	9
Chapter 2: Literature Review	10
Introduction.....	10
Personal and Home Lives of Working Single Mothers	10
Leaving Teaching for Leadership Roles	14
The Intersectionality of Ethnic Minority Single Mothers Who Leave the Classroom	15
Lack of Preparation and Support at Work, Workload, and Financial Stress for Teachers	17
Theoretical Framework.....	25
Summary	32
Chapter 3: Methods.....	33
Introduction.....	33
Methods.....	34
Seidman’s Three-Interview Series	35
Using Photos and Timelines	37
Sampling	38
Data Sources	38
Data Collection	40
Data Analysis	42
Data Integrity	44
Subjectivity	45
Data Security.....	46
Chapter 4: Results	47
Introduction.....	47
The Voice of Ana.....	48
Perceived Influences and Support.....	56

Understanding Her Story	59
The Voice of Maria	61
Biographical Information and Cultural Influences	62
Before, During, and After Teaching Experiences	63
Perceived Influences and Support	65
Understanding Her Story	67
The Voice of Madeleine	69
Biographical Information and Cultural Influences	70
Before, During, and After Teaching Experiences	71
Understanding Her Story	78
Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications	80
Statement of the Problem	81
Purpose of the Study	81
Research Questions	82
Summary of the Study	82
Summary and Interpretation of Research Findings	82
Themes	83
Theory	
Implications of this Study	87
Implications and Recommendations for Future Scholarship	90
Limitations	90
Life as a Single Mother and the COVID-19 Pandemic	90
REFERENCES	92
APPENDIX	97
VITA	104

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
1. Participant Demographics.....	40
2. Research Question Data.....	41

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
1. Interview Duration	37
2. Data Analysis	44
3. Data Integrity	45
4. Ana Photo 1.....	49
5. Ana Photo 2.....	51
6. Ana Photo 3.....	54
7. Ana Timeline	56
8. Ana Story Elements	59
9. Ana Photo 4.....	61
10. Maria Photo 1.....	62
11. Maria Photo 2.....	63
12. Maria Photo 3.....	65
13. Maria Timeline.....	67
14. Maria Story Elements	67
14. Maria Photo 4.....	69
16. Maddie Photo 1	71
17. Maddie Photo 2.....	73
18. Maddie Photo 3	74
19. Maddie Timeline.....	76
20. Maddie Story Elements.....	78

21. Maddie Photo 4	79
22. Themes	86
23. Theory	87

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Federal Bureau of Investigation	FBI
Instructional Performance Evaluation and Growth System	IPEGS
Metro Miami Action Plan	MMAP
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	M-DCPS
National Education Association	NEA
Students at Risk Program	SARP

Chapter 1: Introduction

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). Few researchers have explored the personal lives and responsibilities of educators, particularly those of single mothers, to understand and address their needs in an attempt to lower the attrition rate. The few studies available indicated 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 Solis & Lopez, 2015).

In the state of Florida alone, the Department of Education estimated that roughly 40% of teachers leave their classrooms before completing their fifth year of service. The state is also considered to be one of the highest in teacher attrition rates, estimated at about 20% higher than the national average (National Center for Educational Schools and Staffing Survey).

Teachers who are single mothers and are the sole providers of their households in all aspects, including financial, emotional, and physical, find themselves questioning their career choice and the constant inner struggle of being an effective teacher and super mom (Bautista Solis & Lopez, 2015). Too often, they face two choices, leave the teaching profession or study to become an administrator in order to enhance their financial situation. Schlehofer (2011) stated, “Despite the contributions of feminist theory and

practice to improve workplace conditions in various sectors of business and industry, academic workplaces largely remain structured around a traditionally hierarchical, male workplace model and culture, which can inhibit women's career advancement" (p. 4).

Along with the identifiers of gender and marital status, teacher ethnicity is another factor to consider. The workforce of Miami-Dade County Public Schools is 81% minority and 74% female (Miami-Dade County Public Schools, 2019). Combining gender, marital status, and ethnicity can provide valuable information about teacher attrition in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Setting

The setting of this study was Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), the fourth largest school district in the United States. M-DCPS is classified as an urban school district and is an A-rated school district with no F schools, meaning that all schools meet the state-mandated requirements in tested areas and grades, including math and reading proficiency. The district is comprised of 476 schools, which open their doors to 350,040 students each year. The student population for M-DCPS is 20% Black, 71.5% Hispanic, and 1.8% Multiracial and other minority categories (M-DCPS, 2019). The district workforce includes 17,798 teachers, which is comprised of teachers who are 53.7% Hispanic, 25.3% Black Non-Hispanic, and 2.0% Multiracial and other minority categories. Of the teacher workforce in M-DCPS, 74% are women (M-DCPS, 2019).

Problem and Aim

Women make up an increasingly large percentage of the overall labor force. According to the National Women's Law Center (2017), the percentage of mothers who

are in the labor force has risen significantly over the past 40 years. In 1975, less than half (47.4%) of mothers with children under age 18, 54.9% of women with children ages 6 to 17, and 39.0% of women with children under age 6 were in the labor force (National Women's Law Center, 2017). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor, in 2018, married mothers remained less likely to participate in the labor force, at 69%, than mothers with other marital statuses, at 76.7% (other marital status includes persons who are never married, widowed, divorced, separate, married, spouse absent, and persons in same-sex marriages; US Department of Labor, 2019).

Regarding marital status, researchers have estimated that 40-50% of first marriages- and about 60% of remarriages end in divorce in the United States (Bramlett & Mosher, 2002; Popenoe & Whitehead, 2007). According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2017), the percentage of single-parent households in Miami-Dade County is 39.5%, with a significant portion of those single parents being mothers. These sources also indicated that adults and children in single-parent households are at a higher risk for adverse health conditions and emotional and behavioral problems, compared to their peers in two-parent homes (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2017). Recent reports indicated the women are the primary or co-breadwinners in nearly two-thirds (64.4%) of families with children under age 18, including 42.0% of families in which the mother is the sole or primary breadwinner and 22.4% of families in which the mother earns 25 to 49% of the household income (National Women's Law Center, 2017, p. 3).

Aside from these statistics, the National Women’s Law Center (2017) also explained that single mothers, in particular, confront a number of unique challenges. For instance, it is typical for a single mother to need to earn a living to feed, clothe, house, and otherwise sustain herself and her children as the average amount of child support received, for custodial parents who receive it, is only \$3,950 annually. In 47.7% of cases, custodial mothers do not have a child support award, and 25.9% of custodial parents owed child support receive nothing (National Women’s Law Center, 2017). Another concern facing single mothers is the issue of childcare and finding good-quality care for their children that also meets their work schedules. Families headed by single mothers who work outside the home are more likely to escape poverty than if they do not work outside the home. Nearly seven in 10 (68.6%) families headed by single mothers who have children under age 18 and who do not work outside the home live in poverty, while 13.4% of families headed by single women who have children under age 18 and who work full time, year-round live in poverty. Similarly, more than three-quarters (76.6%) of families headed by single mothers who have children under age 6 and who do not work outside the home live below the poverty line, while one out of five (19.6%) families headed by single women who have children under age 6 and who work full-time, live-in poverty (National Women’s Law Center, 2017). This indicates a correlation between financial stress and the impact it has on the lives of working single mothers.

Teaching Minority Status

According to The Metropolitan Center’s 2007 report, The Metro Miami Action Plan (MMAP), an increasing number of African American children in Miami-Dade

County are being raised by single mothers or by their grandparents. The MMAP also reported that the M-DCPS is a major source of employment for African American professionals with African Americans making up about one-fourth of instructional positions district-wide. Of the total 20,619 teachers in Miami-Dade County 25.6% are African American and 49.4% are Hispanic.

Ethnic minority single mothers, who work as teachers, are a part of the teacher retention crisis and have been under-researched. The aim of this study was to investigate former teachers who are minority single mothers to gain insight into why they left the teaching profession. I examined minority single mother teachers who have left M-DCPS, a large, ethnically diverse, urban school district that is also concerned with retaining highly qualified teachers. The study will shed light on the teacher workforce that is 74% female. My study will add to the research literature on teacher retention and provide practical insights to district and school-site leaders about the lives of these working mothers and how to better support them in hopes of retaining them as classroom teachers.

Purpose of the Study

Ingersoll and Smith (2003) found that 42% of former teachers indicated a variety of personal reasons for leaving the profession. Family, health, and psychological reasons contributed to teachers' decision to leave the profession, as well as, a variety of stressors teachers face, such as psychological burnout, and the lack of a work-life balance. Research, as reviewed in the literature of this study, on teacher retention has focused on particular aspects as to why teachers leave the profession- pay, support, self-efficacy, but very little has been written or researched in terms of bridging their work and personal

lives and the struggles teachers face when trying to juggle both alone. The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of the ethnic minority single mothers who have left the teacher workforce in M-DCPS in order to identify causes for their leaving the teacher profession and potential measures that could be taken to address those causes.

Research Questions

The following questions guided my study:

1. How do ethnic minority single mothers characterize the influences that have led them to leave the teaching profession?
2. How do ethnic minority single mothers' view women's roles/positions in society related to their pre-career, in-career, and post-career decisions?

Delimitations

One delimitation of this study is that it focused on a single gender, females, who have left teaching. Another is that the individuals were single mothers, making the subgroup even more specific to consider their marital status. This study also highlighted the narratives of a small set of women, so the findings are not intended to be generalizable to all minority single mothers who have left the teaching profession. Finally, because M-DCPS is a particularly large, urban district and largely represented by both African American and Hispanic ethnic minority groups, findings are not intended to address ethnic minority single mothers' experiences in different contexts. M-DCPS is the nation's fourth largest school district; it is imperative to note that the school district does not have a solid procedure in place for surveying teachers who are leaving the profession. In order to resign, a teacher can do one of two things: log into their employee portal and

complete the resignation application or simply write an email or letter to his or her principal. There is no system in place to understand the person's experience or needs. There is also no system in place to collect this information in a database or platform, so there is no way to fully know how many teachers leave on a yearly basis or why they choose to leave.

Statement of Significance

The rise of women in the teaching workforce, the rise of single parent homes, and the rise of ethnic minority teachers are realities other districts across the country are facing and this study has promising insights that may be helpful to other school leaders around the country who share the same demographics of their teacher workforce.

Definitions of Terms

Teacher: A professional with a state certification who has met all the necessary requirements to teach in a kindergarten through 12th grade classroom setting.

Highly effective: Defined by the M-DCPS performance measurement tool, IPEGS.

Single mother: A female head of household is responsible for all aspects of the home and is the primary financial source and caregiver.

Ethnic minority: A group of people who differ in race or color or in national, religious, or cultural origin from the dominant group, often the majority population, of the country in which they live.

Give voice: An opportunity and the space for a person to share her experiences, cultural influences, and story.

Researcher Positioning

I am the daughter of an ethnic minority single mother who left the classroom due to a variety of reasons. The decision to leave teaching, a profession my mother loved, came down to being available for her children when she needed to be at a parent meeting or activity and the pay.

I am also an instructional leader at a large public high school in Miami-Dade County. I have 8 years of experience as a teacher in both middle and high school, and 6 years of experience as a school site administrator. The teachers in the schools that I have worked at over the course of my 14-year career are predominantly ethnic minority women, and quite a few of them are single mothers. I have also worked alongside leaders in our public schools who are ethnic minority women and also single mothers. In thinking of my own experiences and my mother and of the women I have encountered throughout my career, I began to reflect on their life stories and the knowledge they could impart with others as to how to retain teachers who make up this demographic.

As I began to research this subgroup of teachers, I came up very short. There is plenty of research on teacher retention, ethnic minority teachers and the struggles they face, and single mothers, but there is nothing on all three- ethnic minority single mothers who are teachers or single mothers who left the classroom and the reasons why. The teacher shortage crisis is happening across the nation, and M-DCPS is no exception to this problem. Understanding the different subgroups that make up those who leave teaching would help solve this crisis.

Summary

Few researchers have explored the personal lives and responsibilities of educators, particularly those of minority single mothers, and why they leave the teaching profession. Single mothers who are teachers spend their days educating and supporting groups of children, often neglecting their own children out of professional responsibilities. The setting of this study was M-DCPS. The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of the minority single mothers who have left the teacher workforce in M-DCPS in order to identify causes for their leaving the teacher profession and potential measures that could be taken to address those causes.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of ethnic minority single mothers who have left the teacher workforce in Miami-Dade County Public Schools in order to identify causes for their leaving and potential measures that could be taken to address those causes. This study is a narrative inquiry with three participants who were interviewed using in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Through the approach of narrative inquiry, I have afforded a space for ethnic minority single mothers who have left the teaching profession through several interviews to share their stories and experiences. What follows is a review of the literature related to the research problem.

Personal and Home Lives of Working Single Mothers

Freeman (2012) explored the bond between a mother and child who were living in a low-income situation. Freeman found that “In 2012, 23% of children in the United States resided in a household headed by a single mother” (p.675). Freeman also stated, “They may adopt an intensive mothering ideology, typically associated with middle- and high-income parents, in which children come first and require significant amounts of time and money” (p. 675). The pressure for mothers to live up to the intensive mothering ideal has been shown to extend across racial and class lines (Freeman, 2017, p. 675). Freeman also stated that the need for extended daycare, babysitting, or after-school programs is often a concern for single mothers. Family identity is shaped by cultural norms and practices (Chapman et al., 2016; Naples, 2001; Nelson, 2006), and how single mothers “do” family is of particular importance because this family form is often portrayed as the

source of social problems (Freeman, 2017, p. 677). Minority single mothers are a part of this rhetoric, which can add to their experiences and make them different from others.

Galloway (2019) stated, “The single mother has long been characterized by society as a financial burden (p. 1). Galloway continued by stating, “Historically, in England, the able-bodied have been expected to work. Those who were able to work but could not find work would be sent to the workhouse” (p.1). Within this system, a single mother and her children would become a burden on the parish and there was therefore an incentive within the community to ascertain the father of the child so that he, not the community, would be responsible for their welfare (Galloway, 2019).

The expected challenges of parenting a young child can be magnified when a mother does not have a partner with whom to share parenting responsibilities. West et al. (2016) stated, “Parenting young children is a challenge for all mothers due to the rapid developmental changes that take place during early childhood” (p. 379). They also stated that in addition to higher levels of stress, it appears that single mothers are more likely to experience stress that is “chronic, severe, and long term” (p. 380). Factors that contribute to chronic stress and mental health issues among single mothers are numerous and include a lack of financial resources, challenges with job stability, issues with health insurance, stress in the home, and increased instances of experiencing or witnessing domestic violence (Broussard, 2010). The results of my study determined if these findings are also shared by minority single mother teachers.

Single parents are faced with stresses that they cannot run away from because of their families. Bautista Solis and Lopez (2015) found that “the life of a single parent can

be very busy. In addition to parenting and taking care of home, some may be working or going to school” (p.1). Other times, the juggle of caring for their child, expenses, shortage of quality time with children, balance work and home duties, and economic struggles are among the seemingly endless problems these families must solve (Bautista Solis & Lopez, 2015). While minority single mother who are teachers in the kindergarten through 12th grade setting are under-researched, the experience of a university professor can be used as a comparison. Schlehofer (2011) stated the following.

As a single mother, I have "natural" barriers" to the time I can put into my career. Because of the structure of childcare, I am limited to putting 40 hours of time in the office each week: I cannot make 8:00 am meetings and must leave campus by 4:30 pm. Unfortunately, faculty are expected to engage in many work-related tasks, such as research, in their "off" hours; additionally, faculty positions often include work obligations that fall outside the traditional Monday through Friday work week (e.g., Saturday graduations and campus open houses); therefore, I am often faced with the dilemma of either hiring a babysitter and bailing out on valuable family time or bailing out on work obligations expected of all faculty. I usually make the work commitment but feel considerable guilt for doing so.

Schlehofer (2011) stated that as a single mother in higher education, she was concerned with her own inner dialogue of turmoil trying to balance motherhood and her career.

I decided that my “expectant mother” side didn’t want, nor was willing to accept, an academic career that minimized the importance of raising a family. I also did

not want to give up the things that I valued in pursuit of an academic career: teaching and mentoring students, forming supportive friendships with colleagues, and service work to better the various communities of which I am a part.

She continued to recall, “This conflict between my inner values and my internalized expectations of what academic life was about created significant cognitive dissonance for me and reinforced the sense of ‘other-ness’ I was feeling” (Schlehofer, 2011). Although Schlehofer made a compelling case in her own autobiographical account of what life is like as a working single mother in higher education, there is very little research conducted about this topic at large.

Another concern Schlehofer (2011) discussed is that of the impression made by single mothers. Schlehofer (2011) stated, “Women are judged as less competent than men in traditionally masculine work environments, such as academia, and advance more slowly in the academy,” which supports the notion that women who are single mother teachers and work towards promotions in the school district are often seen as less capable.

In her personal essay, Morey (2017) described the shame associated with being a single mother and the stigma that is attached to it. Morey also explained how her single motherhood allowed her to have a better understanding of her students and their families. One of the biggest take aways of her essay is her realization of how she feels about not being able to partake in before and after school meetings.

Since becoming a single mom, I can no longer stay a few minutes late at work. I drop off my kids at exactly 7:30 am every morning and I have to be at the bus

stop at 3:52 pm in order to pick them up. As such, there are many activities, committees, etc. that I just have to say no to doing. While sometimes I feel great guilt for my inability to be a part of committees and conversations in our school, practicing being intentional about creating boundaries is extremely important for educators, but the nature of our profession doesn't always support this need for self-preservation and boundaries. I have clear priorities which dictate my time and I make my time at school productive and efficient.

Schlehofer (2011) and Morey (2017) both described in their own words, the “natural barriers” women have due to being the primary caretaker for children. Add to that the weight of single motherhood, and there is an incredible number of stressors that add to this issue- time constraints, childcare options, financial burdens to name a few.

Working full time as a single mother creates barriers and stressors that impede on women's daily lives. Adding to those stressors the role and responsibilities a classroom teacher faces daily only augments the daily struggle due to a variety of factors, which include classroom responsibilities of lesson planning and meeting the needs of all learners, parents, administration, and high-stakes testing. When you also add the ethnic minority factor, single mothers who are teachers must take on the role of primary caretaker at home.

Leaving Teaching for Leadership Roles

Moving up the administrative ladder in education starts with taking a step to move out of the classroom. Sherman (2005) stated that “although it is apparent that a greater number of aspiring administrators are reached in the district than if no program existed,

the various needs of a diverse population of aspiring administrators have not been effectively met.” Sherman continued by stating, “Women, although they clearly seek leadership positions, have been constrained by traditional norms surrounding educational administration in the district, indicating that problems are much larger in scope than that which can be ‘cured’ by district-led ‘grow your own’ leadership programs.” The intent of leaving the teaching profession altogether is the result of not having equal access for movement into administrative roles in order to increase their salaries. Sherman stated that those in authority, like principals and superintendents, are essentially gatekeepers to programs. It is they who hold the key to success for those who want to succeed as administrators. Sherman found that demographic factors such as age, sex, and race played a role in job progression. Even when some women became a principal, most positions were in elementary rather than secondary school settings. Women and minorities were underrepresented in the program district leadership positions.

The Intersectionality of Ethnic Minority Single Mothers Who Leave the Classroom

Ethnic minority women who are single mothers who leave the classroom have intersectional attributes. Macias and Stephens (2019) defined intersectionality as the crossroad where women’s issues of race, gender, and other factors meet to be able to understand how women of color can suffer different types of oppression. The authors stated that although the teaching profession is predominantly female, there are still areas of gender bias when it comes to promotions and perceptions of women leaders.

Historically, teaching has been perceived as a female profession, but only came to be due to the fact that hiring women teachers cost less than their male counterparts. Macias and

Stephens (2019) described that race has always been an issue in education, especially within the teacher workforce.

In terms of women in educational leadership, men are promoted quicker than their female counterparts who have the same education and experience (Macias & Stephens, 2019). Women leaders are also held to a different standard of manager, they are expected to be less task-oriented than their male counterparts and more understanding and social. Women who are in the classroom teaching are perceived and praised for being nurturing, while women who move into leadership roles and exhibit competitive traits to excel are given negative labels and experience negative work relationships with other women (Macias & Stephens, 2019).

Not only do women in education experience gender issues in the workplace, but if the woman is also an ethnic minority, the person will experience additional issues. Systematic racism disregards people of color and does not allow for easy movement upward. There is also a pay gap that ethnic minorities face in many professions. Combining the gender wage gap with the minority pay gap decreases the annual income of an ethnic minority woman. On the higher end of the pay scale, in different types of professions, people of color make 71% of a White man's median income (Macias & Stephens, 2019). When you add gender to this wage gap, it only worsens. The data in recent studies suggest that Hispanic women earn the least of all subgroups (Macias & Stephens, 2019).

Ethnic minorities in education also experience intersectional issues. In 2016, the U.S. Department of Education reported that nationwide 82% of educators are White. This

has created a discrepancy in demographics of school age children and their teachers. In 2014, Maxwell reported that minority students made up over 50% of public school population, which is not represented in the teacher workforce. For instance, Hispanic children make up over 54% of the students enrolled in California public schools, but only 16% of the teacher workforce is Hispanic (Macias & Stephens, 2019).

The intersectional issues of ethnic minority women who are single mothers and have left the classroom face are important to understand, considering the teacher attrition crisis, the high divorce rate, and the race and gender issues that persist today. Creating a space for ethnic minority women who have left the classroom to share their experiences to better understand their reasons for the career change can support the move towards teacher retention.

Lack of Preparation and Support at Work, Workload, and Financial Stress for Teachers

Teacher preparation is a costly process (Barnes et al., 2007; Levy et al., 2012). Training new teachers to abide by school and district policies costs are high and vary by district and can range from \$4,000 per teacher in small rural districts to \$18,000 per teacher in large urban districts (Barnes et al., 2007). These costs are the most damaging in high poverty districts where teacher turnover is highest and where resources for social and academic support are often unavailable (Vagi et al., 2019). Districts' funds are allocated to specific areas including student needs, facilities, and staffing of personnel; so, the monies set aside for teacher preparation is often not sufficient.

According to the literature, at the school site, lack of support plays a pivotal role in teacher retention. Glazer (2018) stated that an administration that was aggressive and confrontational was a large reason why most teachers left the profession. Another aspect of support comes with teachers who do not get along and work independently as referenced by the term *faculty working in silos* (Glazer, 2018). Teachers also stated that issues with discipline and working conditions affected their decision in leaving (Glazer, 2018).

Carlson (2013) studied the link between teacher attrition of beginning teachers and the support of the administration at their school site. Carlson examined the role of the principal in teacher retention to provide current and aspiring principals with insight into their responsibilities as school leaders.

The National Center for Education Statistics, part of the U.S. Department of Education, created the School and Staffing Survey (SASS) and collected data every three years from 1987 to 2008. About 40,000 teachers each administration of the survey. Once the surveys were completed, they were entered into a data system. This study selected questions from the 2007-2008 SASS and the 2008-2009 Teacher Follow-Up Survey. Participants of the 2007-2008 SASS were asked to indicate a level of agreement to the following five statements:

1. “In this school, staff members are recognized for a job well done.”
2. “My principal enforces school rules for student conduct and backs me up when I need it.”

3. “The principal knows what kind of school he or she wants and has communicated it to the staff.”
4. “The school administration’s behavior toward the staff is supportive and encouraging.”
5. “I am generally satisfied with being a teacher at this school.”

Throughout the survey, teachers were asked to rate their experiences. About 34% teachers indicated that they were recognized for their good work. Also, 56% strongly agreed that the principal supports them. This indicates that almost half of the teachers surveyed felt they were not supported by the principal at their school sites.

Carlson (2018) stated, “These results indicate that strong leadership from the principal of the school has a direct connection to the job satisfaction of the teachers in the school” (p. 5). The following year (2008-2009) the participants completed the Teacher Follow-Up Study. Ninety percent of the teachers who stayed for the following academic school year reported that they felt supported by their principal, and 88% stated that the principal communicated his/her vision and mission for the school. The results showed that there is a relationship between teacher retention and the role of the principal.

Hughes and O’Reilly (2015) studied the relationship between principal support and teacher retention in hard-to-staff schools. The data used for this study included a survey conducted in 20 school sites in a western state in the United States. A nonexperimental, correlational design was used for understanding the responses. The surveys were confidential and the responses from individual participants were not shared with anyone. The survey used was the Administrative Support Survey by Balfour (2001).

This instrument was designed to measure support from administration received by special education teachers who were new to the profession. The findings of this study concluded that teachers with the highest rating of administrative support were inclined to stay another year. The type of support these teachers rated as most important were environmental and emotional. Another finding is the notion that support is needed in all grade levels and is held just as important throughout K-12 classrooms. The study also found that the perceptions teachers and principals have about support are very different. Principals responded to supporting teachers at a higher rate than that perceived by the teachers.

Korte and Simonsen (2018) discussed the importance of support from the administration at a school site and how it correlates with teachers' career commitment. The researchers also state that "perceived support" is a major reason as to why people stay in their chosen field, however, stressors such as workload, job demands, and lack of autonomy all contribute to reasons why people leave. Autonomy in the classroom is an important aspect for teachers, and not having it creates barriers for teacher retention. Support from administrators at a school site relieves the stressors that come with being a teacher, especially with parents and student behavior (Korte & Simonsen, 2018). Korte and Simonsen also discussed the 2016 Executive Summary from the National Agricultural Education Supply and Demand Study in which 44.5% of the respondents who left teaching either pursued other realms of work, transitioned into an administrative position or other area outside the classroom, or chose to stay home as a caregiver (Korte & Simonsen, 2018).

Another aspect of support that teachers said they did not have is mentoring opportunities. The notion that teachers who are new to the profession or are new to the grade level or content area need mentors and support in the capacity of teacher-to-teacher is key in teacher retention (Glazer, 2018). Along with this, professional development is also a reason why teachers chose to leave. The professional development opportunities afforded to teachers was considered meaningless due to the scope of their own individual work and students (Glazer, 2018). A lack of support from parents was also among the reasons why teachers left the profession. Working on their own, with no administrative support, teachers felt as though they could not support the students without parent involvement (Glazer, 2018).

School districts employ different methods in the attempt to retain new hires. Mentoring, coaching, and self-mentoring are examples of these methods that when implemented effectively can reduce teacher turnover. Early career teachers struggle with various issues, including classroom management, lack of resources, and effective lesson planning. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching designates the beginning years of teaching as the “make or break” period, with teachers leaving within the first 3 years of their careers (Carr, 2017). Carr (2017) described the three methods of support and how each can assist in supporting new teachers.

Carr et al. (2017) went on to explain the different mechanisms employed by school districts and the research behind each mechanism’s effectiveness. Carr et al. described mentoring as an experienced teacher assigned to support a new teacher with all aspects of the job. Some districts assign the same experienced teacher for 3 years as part

of a district-wide mentoring program, while other districts choose to change the mentor teacher over the course of the 3 years. Mentor teachers can be very influential to new teachers and can form relationships based on trust. On the other hand, if the mentor teacher and new teacher are not compatible, the pairing can have a negative effect. If a school does not have a suitable group of mentor teachers to choose from, then this form of support is not an effective option.

The second method of support Carr et al. (2017) described is coaching. Although coaching is often referred to in the sports world, a coach in the educational realm is someone who can assist with planning, discussing concerns, gives explicit instruction, and constructive feedback. An academic coach assists a new teacher with one-on-one classroom support using the coaching cycle to enhance the new teacher's lesson plans and classroom management. The new teacher reflects on the areas she has concerns with and the coach supports her by working side-by-side with her.

The last method of support is Carr et al. (2017) described is self-mentoring. Self-mentoring can be effective if there is protocol in place. Grounded in the self-leadership theory, self-mentoring focuses on internal mechanisms individuals have to guide themselves to become better practitioners. Self-reflection and self-awareness are key pieces to this method. Although the name- self-mentoring- insinuates that the new teacher is working alone, this method asks for the new teacher to communicate with other stakeholders to support their individual growth.

Overall, Carr et al. (2017) stated that a plan must be created with a vested interest in truly understanding the needs of the new hires and current faculty. Once the

administrative personnel have knowledge of what is needed to effectively support new teachers, then they can create a plan of support that is conducive to taking steps towards building capacity and retention.

Suriano et al. (2018) studied a school site that has created an environment which fosters teacher support and empowerment so much so that teachers do not leave the school site. Old Kings Elementary School (OKES) in rural Flagler County, Florida is a Pre-K-6 public school that had a high teacher attrition rate. The rate was double the national average and when asked why teachers wanted to leave, they reported lack of support. The administrative team worked on a plan to that included a new model for professional development. As part of the OKES New Teacher Program, nine novice teachers attended monthly meetings, book study, one-on-one informal support meetings with the administration, and instructional support coaching (Suriano et al., 2018, p. 128). The school site administrative team met to create the content for each meeting, which ranged from school events, school culture, and current experiences in their respective classrooms. Meetings with the administrative team were scheduled biweekly and each new teacher had an opportunity to speak candidly about struggles and ways to improve. The administrative team visited each classroom and worked on classroom management skills with the new teachers and other areas the novice teachers felt they needed to grow in, including lesson planning and analyzing data. Grade level chairs created meetings based on their teachers' needs and paired novice and veteran teachers within their grade level for mentoring (Suriano et al., 2018, p. 128).

The OKES study found that 90% of the novice teachers attended the monthly meetings and 100% attended the book study. Teachers had a voice in what areas they wanted to work on and were supported by the administrative team. Suriano et al. (2018) found that at the end of the first year of the implementation of the New Teacher Program, the attrition rate at OKES dropped from 60% to 10%. The school achieved the highest improvement in the district that school year. OKES's model for new teacher support was deemed successful in both novice teacher retention and academic achievement.

Another reason stated in the literature as to why teachers choose to leave the profession is the workload. The school site administrators asking teachers to add an additional class period to their schedules due to teacher shortages leaves little or no time for planning throughout the workday (Glazer, 2018). Teachers must stay afterschool or take work home with them to plan, grade, or analyze data in the evenings and on the weekends. The high stakes demands of testing and accountability have also been a concern for teachers. The encroaching policies, as stated by Glazer (2018), have negatively affected teacher retention. With the policies and accountability comes the mandated curricula from the state and districts that leave teachers with no autonomy and professional discretion for planning and teaching.

Solomonson et al. (2018) stated that compensation is another factor commonly associated with teacher retention. Loeb and Beteillie (2009) suggested that individuals are more likely to enter the profession when starting salaries are competitive with other careers. A teacher's starting salary is \$40,000 per year or higher, attrition rates are 10% lower after the first year and 9% lower after 5 years. However, according to the National

Education Association (NEA, 2017), the national average starting teacher salary during the 2012-2013 school year was only \$36,141. Ingersoll and Smith (2003) indicated that nearly 78% of teachers who leave the profession are dissatisfied with their salary. The impact of low salaries for single mothers who are the sole providers of their households forces them to leave the profession. In Miami-Dade County, the cost of living is incredibly high, estimated at \$77,000, which is \$46,000 more than the median income in the county, and the teachers' salary scale does not take this into account.

The literature focused on the personal and home lives of working single mothers has found that key stressors such as being the primary source of financial, emotional, and physical support at home impact their daily lives. The research related to the lack of preparation and support at work, and financial stress for teachers has revealed that the time dedicated to preparing for and becoming a teacher is lengthy and the financial struggles teachers face is consistent with working single mothers who are heads of their households (Willmott, 2021). The literature available on teachers who leave the classroom for leadership roles also provides financial issues and support as reasons for the move up (Sherman, 2005).

Theoretical Framework

This study was framed by feminist theory. bell hooks (2000) explained, "Feminism is the struggle to end sexist oppression. Its aim is not to benefit solely any specific group of women, any particular race or class of women, it does not privilege women over men. It has the power to transform meaningfully all of our lives." Hooks' vision captures the idea that feminism is a form of advocacy for society.

Historical Context of Feminist Theory

The feminist movement was started by upper to middle class white women who had help at home and a two-parent household believed that liberation would be achieved by working outside of the home. The framework and movement left out ethnic minority women who were already working due to socio economic levels and support.

Feminist theory became popular in the latter part of the 20th century, making strides in highlighting gender issues in society. Feminism is rooted in the idea that men and women are equal and have equal importance in society (Willmott, 2020, p. 46).

Feminist theory has evolved throughout history and includes a variety of manifestations including early feminist theory, classical liberal feminism, and Marxist feminist theory, and post-structuralist feminist theory (Willmott, 2020, p. 46). Early feminist theory and writing included the notion that the victimization of women is due to male dominated structures (Willmott, 2020, p. 46). Willmott (2020) also explained that classical liberal feminism rooted its writing in the notion that both male and females have a right to be free as individuals (p. 46). She further explained that Marxist feminism works to transform gender inequalities through changing societal structures (p. 46). Post structuralist feminist theory is rooted in the notion that history and trends in social differences between the genders is important and should be assessed (p. 46).

Feminist Theory Through Different Viewpoints

Friedan (1963) stated that the liberation of women was rooted in working outside of the home. Friedman discussed how the feminine mystique was used to describe the assumptions that women would be fulfilled from their housework, marriage, sexual lives,

and children, which was not the case. Although women have found their place in the workforce, in many areas of careers and jobs, almost 60 years after Friedan's work, the role of caretaker and household "manager" is still heavily placed on the woman. Now, women are working outside the home, but have twice the work and stress because it is compiled with household responsibilities that society deems to be theirs.

bell hooks (1984) examined feminist theory through the minority lens and discusses the struggle and implications societal norms have imposed on women as mothers. Mothers are the primary caretakers because they are seen as the nurturing and emotionally available parent (bell hooks, p. 33, 1984). The writer also stressed the need to understand feminist theory from the ethnic minority lens due to the differences found in the daily lives of white women, who have had privileges of schooling, financial stability, and help at home.

Miranda (1980) studied Dewey's ideas of feminist theory and its relation to public education. Dewey was an American philosopher who taught for three years before leaving to earn his doctoral degree from Johns Hopkins University. Dewey is credited for his modernizing of American education and taught at the university level until his retirement in 1930. In his belief, the private life of family did not contribute to the idea growth of a society and that schools were the outlet for this growth due to the overwhelming numbers of female teachers, involved mothers, and community organizations (Miranda, 1980, p. 199). Miranda stated, "The school, as a public institution, would be a less narrow and more humane agency than the family" (p. 198). The notion described is as follows, "The school derives its potential power from its

capacity to shape the desired social and moral qualities- particularly serviceableness” (Miranda, 1980, p. 200). She went on to state, “Through rendering social service, the individual fulfills himself and enriches the community” (Miranda, 1980, p.200). She described the role women represent as “a huge potential for change, standing as they did between the developing school and the shrinking family” (p. 198).

This article is approximately 40 years old, but the ideas expressed by Miranda continue to persist today. Dewey’s beliefs of women as public figures as public-school teachers who cannot voice their concerns due to their societal role contributes to the lack of support they receive. Women have been trained to be reserved and nonassertive, which creates a negative impact on supporting them in the classroom and other aspects of their careers.

Women were the sole caregivers of the home environment and now have moved out to the public schools and have become dually responsible for educating children and meeting the demands of the profession. Understanding what they need will only create a more positive environment at the school site and afford teachers with tools and resources to assist them in performing their role.

Applying and Conceptualizing Feminist Theory

This conceptualization of feminist theory provides a lens to inform understandings of the roles imposed on women to be nurturers, caretakers, and providers. Post structural feminism recommends advocacy for women and recommends change in society to remove the “otherness” of women (Willmott, 2020, p. 47).

Post-structural feminism invites taking a resistance lens. A resistance lens offers the opportunity to define expectations and existing tensions of class, gender, socioeconomic status, and race and to in turn deconstruct those expectations and address those tensions. De Saxe (2010) stated that critical feminist theory creates spaces to begin or renew essential conversations. This lens also informs this study because at the very core of this research is the opportunity to elevate the stories lived and experiences of these ethnic minority single mothers so that meaningful conversations about how to better support them can begin to take place. This outcome alone might not guarantee a tangible transformation to the asymmetrical relationships within the education community, but what it will do is ignite a conversation. This conversation will be the starting point for revolutionary and transformative change (De Saxe, 2010). Critical feminist theory implies the need to view situations, especially when it comes to education, with a resistance lens in order to create avenues for change within the system. The education system as a whole follows patriarchal ideas, from the coursework to the procedures put into place for hiring and promoting within the school district (Schlehofer, 2011).

According to Stacey (1993), the term *feminist theory* refers to a body of knowledge that offers critical explanations of women's subordination. By *critical*, Stacey clarified that the explanation does not seek to reinforce or legitimate, but rather attempts to undermine, expose or challenge, women's subordination. It also tends to operate at some level of abstraction, using analytical categories which move beyond the merely descriptive or anecdotal, and at some level of generalization moving beyond the individual case (Stacey, 1993). Feminist theory helps to better understand how and why

women have less power than men, and how this imbalance could be challenged and transformed (Stacey, 1993). Feminists have produced diverse and competing theories about the general patterns of inequality and the broader structures, belief systems and institutions which produce and organize particular experiences, in order to analyze, understand and, hopefully, challenge women's subordination (Stacey, 1993).

For this study, although the power struggle is not evident at first, inferences can be made about the dynamics of and imbalance of power this participant group faces due to lack of support and the flexibility and financial stressors that each one experiences, which ultimately become the deciding factors to leave the classroom.

Sherman (2005) stated, "Feminist research is needed that focuses on women's lives and experiences. Stories of women's lives and experiences are powerful and have the potential to shape the future because it is "through stories that we come to know our own values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, relationships, rituals, and traditions." Sherman also stated that "when discussions take place that begin with personal ideas, traditional and assumed meanings are redefined while new perspectives and possibilities emerge."

Sherman (2005) stated that in order to give women a voice, it is necessary to analyze power relations and make changes in educational administration by examining data through a feminist post structural lens. This method will be effective as it gives attention to power, meaning, and language (Sherman, 2005). Feminist post-structuralism "is a combination of the social change fundamental to feminist critical theory and the focus on language and discourse offered by post-structuralism" (Grogan, 1996, p. 26).

The use of this framework, because it is post structural and breaks with modernist beliefs by focusing on meaning and language, allows for the examination of language and power structures surrounding educational administration and the determination of how the category of “women” has been constrained by traditional, more masculine, modes of thinking.

For this study, I used a variety of lens of the feminist theory framework. Reading and understanding the different viewpoints of feminist theory helped me better understand how each one could be applied to this study, which I created to give space to this group of women, allow for the study to “ignite” discourse and drive discussions to better support ethnic minority single mothers who are teachers, and to, hopefully, create changes in the way decisions are made when dealing with the issue of teacher attrition.

While feminist theory has informed this study, I have also relied upon an intersectionality lens to better understand the relationships between gender and ethnicity in participants’ experiences. Intersectionality is defined as “the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage” (Oxford Dictionary, 2021). The three women who participated in this study are ethnic minority women who are single mothers, former educators, and currently are leaders in the school district or at a nonprofit organization that supports district students. Each of these aspects of the women’s lives come with their own set of dilemmas and issues. Financially, the pay gap for women and ethnic minorities has a significant

impact when you are a single-income home with children and are responsible for childcare and rearing (Macias & Stephens, 2019).

Summary

Few researchers have explored the personal lives and responsibilities of educators, particularly those of minority single mothers, and why they leave the teaching profession. Single mothers who are teachers spend their days educating and supporting groups of children, often neglecting their own children out of professional responsibilities (de Saxe, 2010). Framed by feminist theory, specifically critical feminist theory and post-structural feminist theory, this study provides an insightful analysis of the reasons why these ethnic minority single mothers left the classroom. The next chapter is an explanation of the methods used to gather and analyze the original data.

Chapter 3: Methods

Introduction

This study was focused on ethnic minority single mothers who left the classroom and their experiences that led to the decision. The participants for this study were ethnic minority women who are mothers and were at one point in the classroom as full-time teachers. The design of this study was narrative inquiry, which is a way of understanding an individual's experience through "collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 20). The design fits this study due to its approach in understanding the lives of particular participants and in giving them a voice. The term *giving voice* refers to providing a safe space for an individual to share experiences, opinions, and stories; the term does not mean that the individual did not have a voice to begin with. Through the approach of narrative inquiry, I have created a space for ethnic minority single mothers who have left the teaching profession to share their experiences through several interviews (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

The narrative inquiry approach fits this study due to the purpose and aim of understanding the lives of ethnic minority single mothers who left the classroom with the intent of creating awareness to better support others. An example of this approach used in a small sample study is Taylor's (2013) study in which the author discussed the importance of resilience as a key factor in retaining teachers. The methodology used was the historical biographical method and the narrative inquiry technique was used to give voices to participants in the study. Taylor created a space and opportunity for these

women to share their teaching experiences in the Deep South before, during, and after the desegregation of schools. Just like Taylor's study, a small sample of women were interviewed to give insight on the reasons why this subgroup, ethnic minority single mothers, of the teacher workforce decided to leave the classroom. The applying of the narrative inquiry method provided a deeper approach to understanding these women.

Methods

In terms of school research, little research is done on the experiences of students, teachers, and other groups of people whose experiences make up schools (Seidman, 2019). Interviewing is a powerful way to gain insight into educational and social issues through understanding the experience of the individuals whose lives reflect those issues (Seidman, 2019). Recounting narratives is in its simplest form a basic mode of inquiry. Choosing this method would only support my efforts in gaining an in-depth understanding of these women's lives and their experiences.

For this study, I modeled the research protocol after Taylor's (2013) narrative inquiry. In this study, Taylor interviewed four ethnic minority women, one of whom is her own mother, who were teachers in the South before, during, and after the segregation of schools to gain insight on how resiliency played a role throughout their careers. The study offered these women, through the Black feminist theory lens, an opportunity to share their experiences about teaching in the rural South during critical points in our nation's history. Through the use of a series of interviews, the purpose of Taylor's study was to show how the character trait of resilience is a key factor in teacher retention. In

this study, using a series of interviews has provided an in-depth understanding of the lives of ethnic minority single mothers and why they chose to leave the classroom.

According to Seidman (2019), the purpose of in depth interviewing is not to test the hypotheses, and not to evaluate. Seidman stated, “At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (p. 9). Seidman continued to explain, “At the heart of interviewing research is an interest in other individuals’ stories because they are of worth” (p. 9).

Seidman’s Three-Interview Series

This study was conducted using Irving Seidman’s three-interview series. The purpose of using this research approach was to use this model as a guide to explore the participant’s experience, place it in context, and reflect on its meaning (Seidman, 2019). The first interview is focused on putting the participant’s experiences in the context of their life story and include as much information as possible in relation to the topic (Seidman, 2019). Throughout the first interviews for each participant, I used guiding questions, but also afforded the participants to share freely their cultural background and family history. I asked them to share stories of their parents, their schooling, and their siblings. I also asked them to share their academic careers at the post-secondary level and work life. The women also shared stories about their home life- juggling careers, motherhood, and marriage.

The purpose of the second interview, which occurred 3 days after the first interview, was to create a space for the participants to reconstruct the meaning of their

experiences in the topic of the study (Seidman, 2019). Throughout the second interview of this study, the women shared their lives as teachers, discussing areas of support from students' parents, colleagues, and administrators. They also shared experiences of support that were happening simultaneously at home as a mother and wife.

The third interview, which occurred 3 days after the second interview, allowed for the participants to reflect on their experiences and share the impact those experiences had on the decision to leave the classroom. The effect of their lived experiences created opportunities for difficult decisions that were made based on their children financially, emotionally, and mentally. I used cues such as "Let's go back to when you said" to engage the participant in the reflection process.

The three-interview series afforded a space for the participants in this study to share their experiences of being an ethnic minority single mother and the decision to leave the classroom. The research approach allowed for mutual engagement from me, the researcher, and the participant. The approach also gave an opportunity to create a foundation for understanding and to work towards the research goal, which was to understand the experiences and decisions of these particular ethnic minority women. The first interview allowed for setting the context of the experiences, while the second interview established an opportunity to reconstruct their experiences within the context of being ethnic minority teachers and mothers, and the third interview for each participant gave space for reflection on the meaning of their experiences.

After each interview in the three-interview series, I transcribed the information and emailed it to the participant. Each interview took about 45 to 75 minutes, which

afforded me to spend about three hours with each participant over the course of two to three weeks. I asked her to read the transcripts and to reply with any revisions or additional information she would like to add. I also printed out a copy of the first and second interviews and shared the hard copy with her at the beginning of the third interview.

Figure 1

Interview Duration

	Ana	Maria	Maddie
	Audio	Audio	Audio
Interview 1	46 mins	63 mins	46 mins
Interview 2	57 mins	75 mins	52 mins
Interview 3	67 mins	75 mins	68 mins

Using Photos and Timelines

Before the first interview, I called and emailed each participant. I asked her to bring a series of photos to the interviews, which consisted of photos of her biological family, schooling, teaching career, and life as a mother. I used the photos to help the participants recall emotions and experiences of each of those time periods in her life. Throughout each interview, each participant worked on a timeline of her life, noting important dates and events, such as when she began teaching, when she married, the birth of her children, her divorce, and when she left the classroom. The photos and timelines assisted in putting the women’s experiences into perspective. For example, the photo of

Maria in her school uniform as a child and the photo of her family in her teens speak to her ethnic minority upbringing and the values and roles assigned to girls early on in the Latin culture. Another example of this is Ana's photo of her and her small children at a sports game, a task or activity usually assigned to the husband/father of the house, but due to the fact that she had to assume both roles, she would partake in those activities regardless of her gender. The timelines assisted each participant in recalling events and experiences and also assisted in being able to recall events chronologically. One such example of this is when Maddie used the timeline to help her go back in time and recall the moment she became an assistant principal correctly.

Sampling

The sample was purposive in that it was designed to provide me with rich information that yielded insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations (Patton, 2001). Participants are sampled from M-DCPS, a district with a predominantly ethnic minority teacher workforce. A set of three ethnic minority single mothers was sampled to capture their stories and to compare how their experiences might be similar or different.

Data Sources

I used the qualitative method of interviewing three participants who are ethnic minority single mother teachers who were employed by M-DCPS as teachers and who made the decision to leave the classroom teacher role and moved into administrative roles or left the public school system altogether. This sampling and data collection strategy of

interviewing three former teachers who are ethnic minorities and single mothers allows for in-depth analysis of the experiences that this particular group shares. Taking this approach allowed the forum for these women to have a voice in articulating the experiences leading to their decision to leave the profession yielding potential insights into ways to increase retention among this particular subgroup of teachers.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Name	Number of Years as a Classroom Teacher	Decision to Leave Classroom	Job or Role After Classroom
Ana	17	2011	School Site Administrator, Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Maria	17	2017	Program Director, First Star University of Miami Academy
Maddie	10	2002	School Site Administrator, Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Data Collection

The three-interview series affords “the interviewer and participants to explore the participants’ experiences place it in context, and reflect on its meaning” (Seidman, 2019, p. 21). Each interview was 45 minutes to an hour and included a series of semi structured questions. The interviews included questions as to the participants’ early lives, experiences at work, their home lives, and how they came to the decision to leave the classroom (Appendix A). Each interview was scheduled at least 1 week apart from the next to allow for a period of reflection. I recorded the conversations we had throughout each interview with participants’ permission (Appendix B Consent Form) and invited accuracy checks once I transcribed data and crafted analyses. I also shared drafts of the narrative with the respective participant for member checking and allowed for revisions from them in order to share their experiences as accurately as possible.

Table 2

Research Question Data

Research question(s) & subquestions	Informants/Participants	Types of data to be collected (interview, survey, focus group, documents, etc.)
Research Question 1 How do minority single mothers characterize the influences that have led them to leave the teaching profession? Subquestion 1 How have socially constructed understandings of women's roles/positions in society related to minority single mother's precareer, in-career, and postcareer decisions?	Single mothers who have left the classroom.	Interviews (3)/participant Documents

I also asked participants to share documents such as timelines and photos to provide details about their lives and the reasons for the decision to leave the teaching profession. The photos range from their early lives with their family and college life to becoming a teacher and mother and their time as full-time teachers and mothers. Before each interview, I asked the participants to find photos of the particular time we were going to discuss. For instance, before the first interview, I asked the participants to bring with them photos of their parents, siblings, and college life. Once we finished the first interview, I asked them to bring photos of their early teaching career and photos of when their children were small. For the final interview, I asked them to bring in photos of their children now as adults and of the participants in their new roles and careers. The timeline was started during the first interview and then worked on throughout interviews two and

three. Finally, during the week or more of reflection, I asked participants to note any reflections they made in a journal.

Data Analysis

Once I completed the three interviews for each participant, I transcribed the interviews and crafted interpretive memos (i.e., my thoughts and developing interpretations as well as subjective responses). I listened back to each of the recordings as I typed them and reflected on the answers given by each participant. Once typed, I cross-checked the participants' answers in order to find cross-cutting themes amongst their experiences and the literature (Creswell, 2019).

In conducting these interviews, I found that coding them would be difficult, considering the question of how do you code people's lived experiences, and just as Seidman suggests, "People whom we interview are hard to code with numbers" (Seidman, 2019, p. 9). Through reading and rereading the transcriptions and also listening to the audio recordings numerous times, I searched for themes and commonalities throughout the participants interviews. First, I read through each participant's series of interviews, highlighting by hand key words and thoughts, such as stress, childcare, financial concerns that each participant mentioned. I used a highlighter to code information that I found throughout each of their interviews.

Then, I read each participant's first interview subsequently, highlighting in a different color similar themes and commonalities they shared. For instance, Ana, Maria, and Maddie all discussed having very little support from their students' parents, so I highlighted their thoughts. I looked for key terms, such as *flexibility*, *pay*, and *support* to

better understand and analyze the interviews. I also kept in mind the intersectionality these women have and the issues they faced as Hispanic women, mothers, divorcees, teachers, and leaders.

I followed the same method for interviews two and three. As I reread the transcriptions multiple times, I gained more insight on each participant's story and lived experiences. Using this basic, yet useful color coding approach, I was able to make sense and make connections of the shared stories.

Once I completed the analysis of the data, I used a narrative style of writing to express findings. Using a storytelling technique afforded me the opportunity to construct the women's stories and to give them a space to share their experiences and voice, which is coherent with the framing of the study in feminist theory (Czarniawska, 1997). Using the narrative and storytelling technique acted as a source of understanding (Cortazzi, 2001) also provided insight into decision making (O'Connor, 1997). My intent was to tell their stories, such that the narrative becomes an instrument to construct and communicate meaning and impart knowledge. I tell these stories with rich detail about the contextual backgrounds of my participants so values and beliefs that contribute to the construction of individual identity or concept of community can be revealed.

Figure 2

Data Analysis

Stage of Data Collection	Process
Recruitment	Prospective participants were recruited through snow balling. Recruitment script was sent via email to former teachers to participate in the study.
Consent	Written consent was obtained by participants prior to interview.
Photos/Timelines	Participants were asked to bring photos to the interviews that depicted life as a single mother and teacher. The participants were also asked to create a timeline of important events in their lives throughout each of the interviews.
Semi-Structured Interviews	The interview instrument was used throughout the interviews for data collection.
Researcher Notes	Throughout each interview, I wrote down important information and clarifying questions.
Transcribing	After each interview, I transcribed the audio recordings. Once I completed the transcribing for the three interviews, I sent them to the participant for member checking.
Analysis of interviews	I reread all the interviews to find common themes throughout the participants' stories.
Findings/Themes	As I reread the transcriptions and listened back to the audio recordings, I looked for similarities throughout the participants' stories and drafted images of the commonalities.

Data Integrity

Throughout the study, I ensured the integrity of the data through the use of active listening and member checks (Creswell, 2018). Repeating responses back to the participants allowed for me to ask for clarification when needed and ensured that I understood participants' intended meaning. Another step I took to ensure that participants' voices are being shared accurately was to send the transcriptions of their interviews to each participant (i.e., member checking). This afforded them an opportunity to clarify, correct, or change their responses if warranted. Throughout the composing of the study, I used direct quotes from the transcriptions to highlight the participants' voices (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Figure 3

Data Integrity



Subjectivity

I also integrated material related to my own background and subjectivities (as recorded in interpretive memos) throughout. I was raised by a Hispanic single mother who chose not to continue with her teaching career due to the lack of flexibility from her school site administrators and pay. I work as a school district administrator at a school site where several of the teachers are ethnic minority single mothers and I witness first-hand their struggles in juggling their work and home lives. As a former teacher, I understood the salary issues and struggling financially. There is little research done on teacher retention from this subgroup. I hope that my research gives a voice by offering a space for these women to share their stories and I also hope to impart their experiences with people who are in decision-making roles within district. I hope to give school site administrators a glimpse of what it is like to be a full-time caretaker – both at work and at home.

Data Security

The study required the recording of the interviews and collecting of documents, including photos and timelines created throughout the interviews by the participants. I used a recording platform that is protected via password and kept the documents in a secured and locked filing bin. Names of the participants have been used. The participants agreed through IRB-approved consent procedures and at the beginning of each interview. I also asked about using their real names when I emailed drafts of their chapters to them.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

This study was focused on ethnic minority single mothers who left the classroom and their experiences that led to the decision. The participants for this study were ethnic minority women who are mothers and were at one point in the classroom as full-time teachers. Before the interviews, I asked each participant to bring with her photos of different stages of her life: her biological family as a child, her schooling, her teaching career, and her family life as a mother. I met with each participant three times for three separate interviews. I recorded and then transcribed each interview. After each interview, I sent the participants the transcriptions and gave them the opportunity to revise, add, remove, or discuss further any details they felt needed to be fixed.

At the start of the first interview, I handed the participant a sheet of paper and a pen. I asked her to draw a timeline. As she spoke, I asked her to add key events of her life to the outline. I kept the outline and brought it to each interview. The participant added information as the interviews were conducted. I also asked each participant to share photos and describe the photo and that memory when it was relevant to the interview. Once I drafted the participant's chapter, I sent it to her so she could have the opportunity to revise it if she felt the need to. The photos and the timelines have been used to triangulate their stories and add to the rich detail of their narratives.

This study validates the research and literature that has been compiled regarding single mothers and the struggles they face daily. Stressors such as work, pay, childcare, and support at work and at home all resonate throughout the stories shared by the

participants in this study. This study also created a space to discuss the intersectionality of race, marital status, gender, and teaching in order to better understand this subgroup.

I met Ana in her office for each of the interviews. She greeted me with a warm smile and asked me to join her at the conference table. After reviewing the interview protocol and acquiring the appropriate signatures, I asked if she had any questions or needed clarification on any of the items listed in the consent form. I also explained that her name would be used and would not be confidential, as this study is about the personal lives of women who have left the classroom, not about the school district. The first interview lasted about 45 minutes, the second for about 50 minutes, and the final interview was 58 minutes in length.

The Voice of Ana

Ana was born on March 3, 1970, in Miami, Florida to Cuban parents. Growing up, her father was a certified public accountant and her mother, Georgina.

I went to private parochial schools from kindergarten through twelfth grade I, am from a very traditional Cuban American household. My mom was a stay-at-home mom until I was a senior in high school. My dad was a CPA certified public accountant He worked two jobs for as long as I can remember. My dad was very strict about certain things- I couldn't drop a class in college because he would not pay for wasting time.

Ana's parents were practicing Catholics and the family attended mass regularly. She attended private, parochial school from kindergarten to twelfth grade. As a child, Ana aspired to be a broadcast journalist, but her father did not believe that to be a

practical career. While attending a four-year university, she decided to study English Education because of her love of writing. Ana graduated from college at the age of 21. She has a sister, Georgina, who also attended parochial school and studied Finance in college.

My sister and I are very close. We travel together, take turns helping our mom with her daily needs, and talk on the phone and text throughout each day. She has always helped me and given me advice and support, but she has a family and two daughters of her own, so her time and attention were focused on them.

Figure 4

Ana Photo 1



Before graduating with her bachelor’s degree, she had to complete an internship at a local high school, which lasted a full spring semester. After graduating from college in 1991, Ana’s teaching career started at Rockway Middle School, where she was assigned to teach at-risk students. “Although I started as a middle school teacher, I wanted to be a high school English teacher because of my own high school teachers. I loved all of my teachers. I only have nice memories of them, and my high school teachers were so inspiring and loving.”

She taught English to sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. She fondly recalled her salary at the early stage of her career and how being so young, she thought that it was all the money in the world. When Ana lesson planned, she always wanted her students to be engaged and enthusiastic about the topics at hand. She remembers planning 6 weeks ahead and being very organized.

I planned very thoroughly and way ahead of schedule. I would plan, then review the plan, then revise it. It was one of my favorite parts of the job. Looking at the resources and textbooks and learning how to create fun and engaging lessons was awesome. Then after you plan, you actually teach the lesson and see the learning take place- it's so wonderful.

She also recalled her first observation by her administrator, Ms. Duncan. She was so nervous that she began to cry. Ms. Duncan told her that she would come back to observe her again, and when that day came, she left impressed by Ana and told her that she would be a great teacher. "Thankfully I had the best principal who cared for her teachers and supported us in everything as long as it was the right thing. She saw the potential I had and helped give me experience outside of the classroom."

After her first year of teaching, Ana married her college boyfriend in 1995 and in 1996, transferred to Paul Bell Middle School where she taught English and was the English Department Chairperson.

Being in a leadership role at work gave me a lot of responsibility and I grew close to many teachers and my administrators. They depended on me for quite a few

things throughout the day, including creating emergency lesson plans and finding coverage for the teachers in my department if they were out.

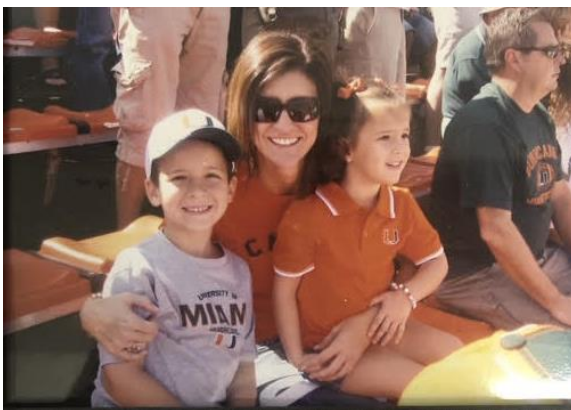
She then went on to earn a master's degree in English for Students of Other Languages (ESOL) in 1997. She chose this program largely in part due to the pay increase and remembers how the professors in this degree track helped her develop her lesson planning and teaching skills.

My master's program was one of the programs that gives you a pay increase, so it was a no brainer. Even though I taught general education English, the strategies I learned in the ESOL program helped me in becoming a better teacher. I chose the masters in ESOL because it gave you the \$3,000 regardless of what you taught.

Soon after, in 2001, her son, Andres was born. Ana's daughter, Ana Georgina, was born in 2004. "Having my son and daughter were the best moments of my life. They have been my greatest gifts and although it was a whirlwind when they were small, I enjoyed every minute with them."

Figure 5

Ana Photo 2



In 2005, Ana transferred to Southwest High School, and in 2006 her divorce was finalized.

When my children were two and three years old, my father passed away and I felt I owed it to him to live a better life. Although I was married when he passed away, I knew he always wanted me to live a happy life, and that wasn't my reality. Getting divorced was the most difficult process, but I know that my father was guiding my decision, as everything else I do in my life. No one in my family has gotten divorced, so I had to learn how to navigate every aspect of it on my own. I have always maintained a positive coparenting relationship with my ex-husband, but it was a difficult transition at first. Everything fell on me- taking and picking up from school, making breakfast, lunch, and dinner for them, finding someone to help me take care of them, and almost often times, financially, too.

She decided to earn a specialist in Educational Leadership. Once she graduated from this program in 2008, she moved into administration. She found it difficult, but necessary to move out of the classroom in order to provide a better life for her children. She also felt guilty once she moved up into administration due to having other responsibilities outside of the regular school day.

There wasn't a moment when I didn't feel guilty. If I left my children because I had to work a night event, I felt the guilt of not being with them and taking time away from them. If my colleagues told me they would cover for me, so I could spend time at home, I felt guilty of not being a team player or holding my weight as a peer.

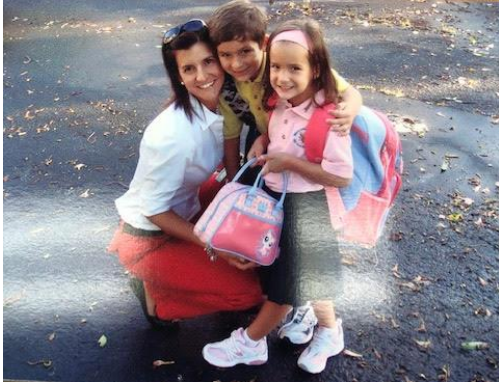
In 2006, Ana moved into an apartment with her two small children after her divorce. She recalls feeling proud of her apartment and how she felt about living on her own for the first time in her life. She invited her ex-husband for all the special moments in their children's lives. "I was happy to move into my own space with my children. It was the first time I was in charge of a house. I included my ex-husband in everything, but having my own space was great."

During her children's infancy, Ana paid for private care in her home. She recalls how expensive and stressful that time period was. She felt that she was at the mercy of the caretaker had a strict time constraint after work. "I hired a woman to come to our house to care for my two small children, but it was very expensive. I remember most of my check went to paying the caretaker."

Once in daycare, Ana recalled having to leave her children very early in the morning every day because of the high school hours. Although, they were the first children at their school during early care every morning, she was always there to pick them up right after school and take them to their extracurricular activities- ballet and karate. "One of the great aspects of being a teacher is that you can leave once your day ends and spend the rest of the afternoon with your children and family."

Figure 6

Ana Photo 3



In 2011, Ana became an administrator at Southwest High School. She recalled how her realm of responsibility included a variety of areas, including security, curriculum, testing, and the Exceptional Students department. She went from being focused on just her students and her classroom to learning every aspect of running a large high school.

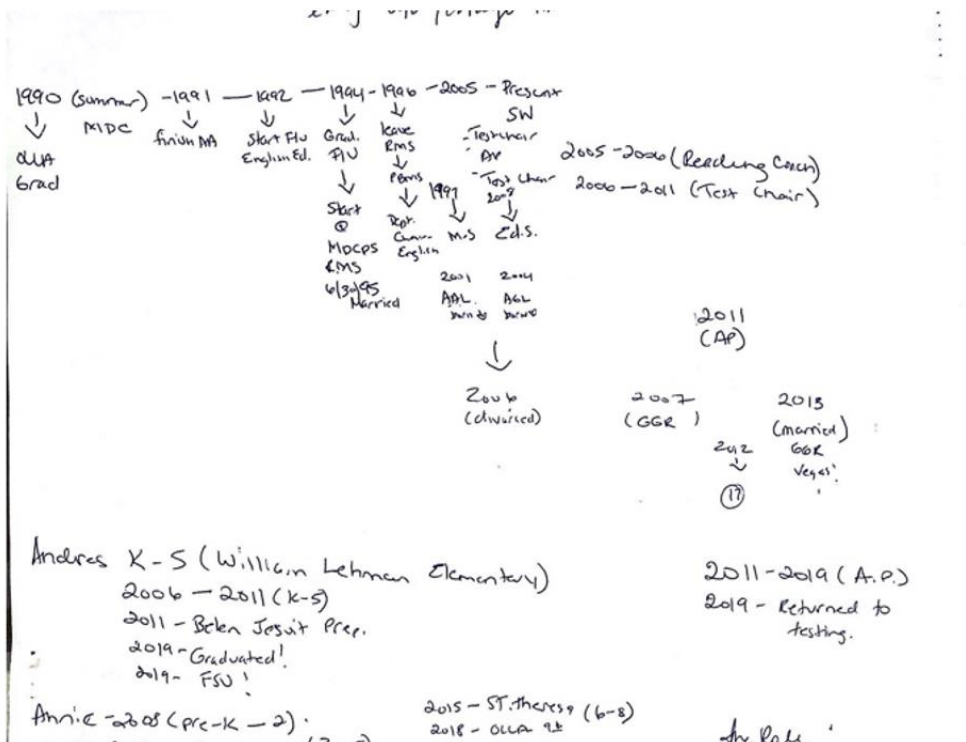
The change was tough, but having a great principal made all the difference. He had high expectations, but also had a lot of patience and taught me how to do things properly. And as my children grew, I would share stories of things that would happen at school and the decisions students would make, which was a great parenting tool. Explaining right from wrong and the impact of their decisions have on those who love them helped shape them into the adults they are today.

The biggest hurdle she encountered as an administrator was the night events when her children were young. Luckily, she had a supportive principal who understood her role as a single mother and excused her from some night events. She remembers feeling guilty

about not being able to attend her children's field trips and not being home in the evenings to help her own children with their homework due to the night events. "A huge challenge I had was the high school night events. I felt so guilty not being able to be home to help with homework or to take my children to their afterschool activities." She also experienced guilt for not attending events because she felt as though she wasn't doing her part amongst her administrative team. "And then when I was excused from events, I would feel as though I wasn't carrying my weight and more work was being given to my colleagues."

Figure 7

Ana Timeline



Perceived Influences and Support

Throughout the interviews, I touched upon the perceived influences Ms. Roll had in becoming a classroom teacher and the decision to leave the classroom. In becoming a teacher, Ana believed that being a teacher couldn't be difficult and would be happy to have the summers off. As a student, Ana recalls,

I had the utmost respect for my teachers, because I don't remember, ever really having a bad teacher in elementary and I had great teachers in high school. As a matter of fact, my English teachers were like my role models at Our Lady of Lourdes Academy, and my senior year English teacher Ms. Blanco, who I think is

still there, my favorite teacher of all time. So, I wanted to be an English teacher, a high school English teacher because of her, but, yes, I always had great respect for all my teachers.

She also recalled thinking that she would spend a lot of time with her own children and would model her parenting after her mother, who was a stay-at-home mom.

My mom is an exceptional mom who was always present. She is the model I try to follow, but I know I fall short because she had the time and did not need to stress about work. When it came time to take care of my children, she simply stated that she had raised her own, so my sister and I had to do the same.

While a teacher, she became a teacher leader and felt a sense of belonging and community within her school site. She hosted Christmas parties and a going away party for one of her principals at her house and enjoyed a positive work environment. Her administrators at all three schools were supportive and so were the students' parents. She remembers never having any issues with either her administrative staff or parents.

Because she taught seventh and eighth grade at Paul Bell, in particular, she remembered how parents were happy that she was their children's teacher again the following year.

"The years I worked at the middle school were great years. I truly enjoyed being a part of the school community. I took on leadership roles, hosted parties at my house, and created friendships that I still have today. The students were great and so were their parents."

As for her colleagues, Ana recalled the "team" approach to teaching in middle school. The students were placed in cohorts called "teams" and so the core teachers,

English, Math, Science, and Social Studies, shared the same students, which made parent conferences and cross-curricular planning easier.

Being in teams pushed us to work together. As a teacher, especially in secondary schools, it's easy to fall into the idea that you are on an island by yourself, but with this team approach, you shared students with the same group of teachers, so you could help each other with discipline, parent contact, and create opportunities for cross-curricular activities.

At both middle schools, Ana remembered working with a few male teachers and recalls being part of a largely female-employed work site at both schools. It wasn't until she transferred to the high school that Ana found herself amongst more male colleagues.

I went to an all-girls high school, I only have female friends, and I was in a profession that is comprised of mostly women, so I did not really pay attention to the few male teachers we had at the middle school. When I got to the high school, however, there were more male teachers, and some of them were very good teachers and some were not.

While studying for her specialist degree, Ana recalled thinking about how much flexibility she would have as administrator and not being tied down to a classroom. She also remembers how she believed that the increase in pay would alleviate the financial stress she had as a classroom teacher.

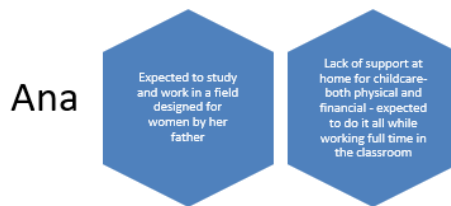
Leaving the classroom was a pivotal decision. The impact it had on my family was both positive and negative. The substantial pay increase made life easier, but the stress and late hours took a toll on me. I remember one day; I was running late

as usual to pick up my two small children from after care. I was super stressed about being late, but then when I walked into the cafeteria, there was a lot of commotion, and the kids were all excited. I heard this voice singing over the PA and thought to myself “Wow! Who is that singing?” When I looked over, it was my son! He was singing the main song from *Rent* about love and at that point I realized that my son had a real talent. His music teacher was there afterschool and told me that she wanted him to try out for the Miami Children’s Choir, which he was a part of for 5 years.

Understanding Her Story

Figure 8

Ana Story Elements

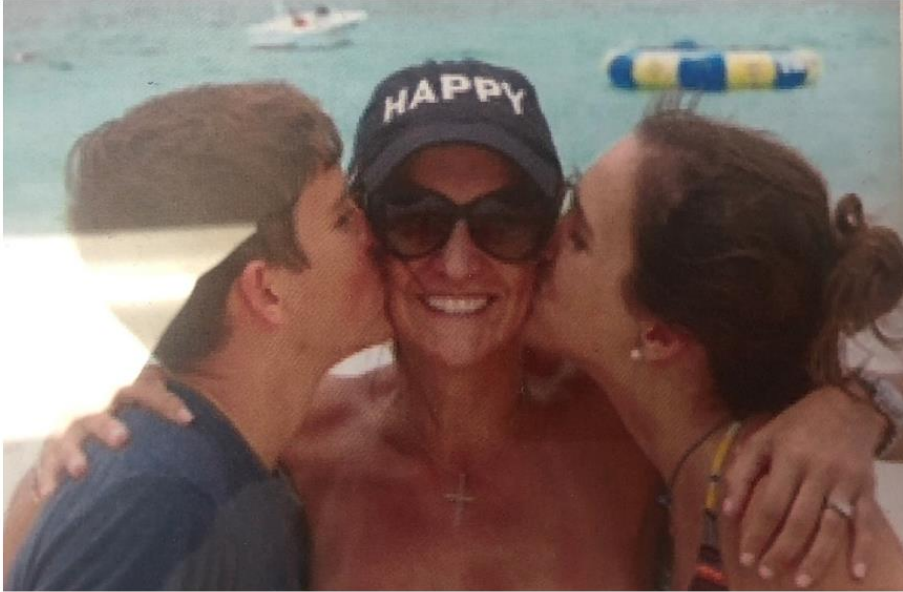


The overall findings of Ana’s story mirror the literature in many ways. Single mothers bear the burden of being the prime caregiver in all aspects- financial, emotional, and physical. Her experience validates the concerns of how society has formed the notion that women are the primary individuals charged with the responsibility of raising children. Lack of support and financial stress of the modern -day single mother also contribute to the idea that the literature on single working mothers, although limited, has been found to be true. Her decisions to become a teacher and then an administrator fall in line with the research and theoretical framework. Ana found success even though she had

to balance being a single mother and creating opportunities for financial and professional growth. The financial stress of her base salary plus the need to pay for childcare during the early years of her children's lives took a toll on her classroom experience. The lack of support from her family throughout her children's early lives also added to the decision to leave the classroom.

Figure 9

Ana Photo 4



The Voice of Maria

Because Maria lives close to my school site, she met me in my office for all three interviews. We greeted each other with “virtual hugs” and reconnected after a few years. Maria worked at my high school for several years as a tenth grade English Literature teacher. She taught this course to approximately 125 students each year, preparing them for the high-stakes state exam, Florida Standards Assessment. At the beginning of the first interview, I read the agreement with her and went over the protocols. I asked her if she had any questions or needed me to clarify anything. Once all of her questions were answered, we began the interview. For the second and third interview, I reviewed the protocols and the agreement with her.

Biographical Information and Cultural Influences

Maria was born in Colombia to a lawyer and a stay-at-home mom. She moved to Miami, Florida during her teen years and finished high school here.

I was born in Colombia, I moved to Miami when I was 15, my dad was a lawyer, my mom was a stay-at-home mom. I have one brother who is younger. I went to an all-girls Catholic school, most of my school life, so coming here and going to a public school, I went to Gables High it was like totally different. It was kind of culture shock. When I came here just the thought that I could wear regular clothes, to go to school was just weird.

Figure 10

Maria Photo 1



Figure 11

Maria Photo 2



Maria's father stayed in Colombia while the family was in Miami and then Texas. When I was 18, I went back to live with my dad. My dad was a prosecutor for the state and while I was living with him, he became a magistrate, and then a few months later he died of a heart attack. So, I came back here, but not to live with my mom because my mom lived in Texas. I lived with a friend a very close friend, that I had met when I was in high school, and we went to Miami Dade College together. Eventually I lived with my mom for a year in Texas, but I didn't like it, so I came back to Miami.

Before, During, and After Teaching Experiences

While getting her master's degree in Secondary English, Maria worked at Miami-Dade College helping college students find jobs. She came across an advertisement about teaching and decided to apply.

I was going to school and getting my Master's. I started looking for a job like in Dade County Public Schools and so I got a job at Redland middle, which was my first teaching job. I became a middle school teacher for the Students at Risk program the county had initiated. My students were all minority who came from low socioeconomic households and who were at risk of dropping out. I had this perception of the Michelle Pfeiffer movie and "Freedom Writers," so I was determined to be an inspirational teacher to these children. I really enjoyed going to work. You know it was hard, but it was worth it.

She met her husband throughout her teaching career and had two boys. They soon divorced in 2017, so Maria had decisions to make.

Since we had split the costs of the boys' schooling and household expenses in a way that wasn't so difficult to revise, I applied for a scholarship for my sons' Catholic school and was able to continue to sustain our lifestyle. My mom also came to live with me and helped me financially when we needed it.

Figure 12

Maria Photo 3



Perceived Influences and Support

Maria described her teaching career as one filled with memories of the students and how she was as a teacher.

So, I used to be a creative teacher. I used to make my kids journal and I used to read novel that were not in the text book and my first 5-6 years I was very creative as a teacher and then you know like year it wasn't like a jump but every year I had to follow a new set of rules and follow a new set of standards and do pre-test and post-test and you know and interims test, it seemed like all that time that I used to devote to be creative was being taken by all these other things that I had to do and all of a sudden reading stuff was no longer about having a conversation about what we read. It was more about highlighting the main idea. It

became, like I said, it happened from one day to the next, it was kind of like the following year, and then the last I want to say the last maybe 4 years to 5 years that I was here at the high school I had a pacing guide. I no longer had to plan my teaching because it was done for me. So yea, I needed to read ahead I needed to know what the story was about I needed to. But it was no longer about, “Let’s talk about why this person is in the wrong or why this person is,…” It was more about 3 details that state the following... and you know that became frustrating.

She also recalled the discrepancies between male and female teachers when it came to leadership opportunities.

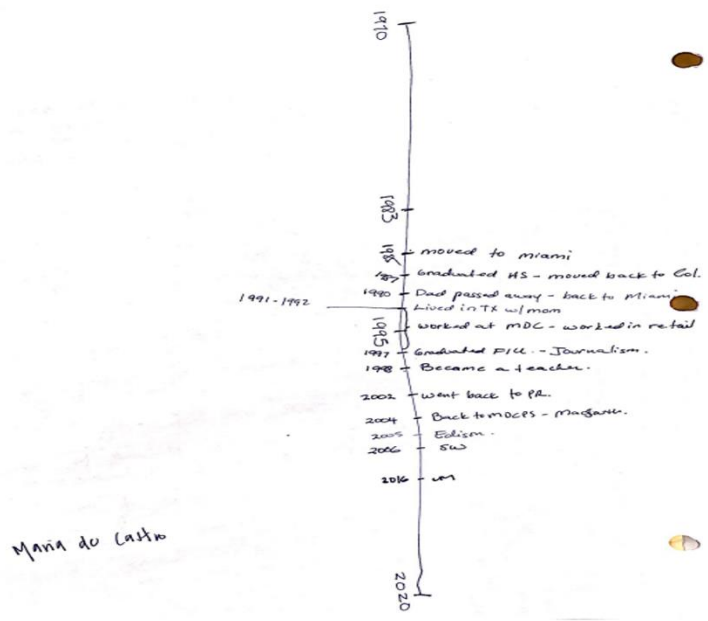
All the people that were given like administrative responsibilities well not all but for the most part were males. Yeah, all the CSI teachers that we’ve had have been males.

Maria chose to leave the school system in 2017. She felt that being tied to a classroom was overwhelming, especially since she was the primary caretaker for her children. She began a career at the University of Miami as the director of the STAR program, a nonprofit that supports foster children throughout their academic career.

Leaving behind the politics and lack of support has been a relief. My job now is flexible. I can work from home, take my kids on their field trips, plan activities throughout their school breaks. My direct boss is also a mom, so she understands the importance of being present for our own children.

Figure 13

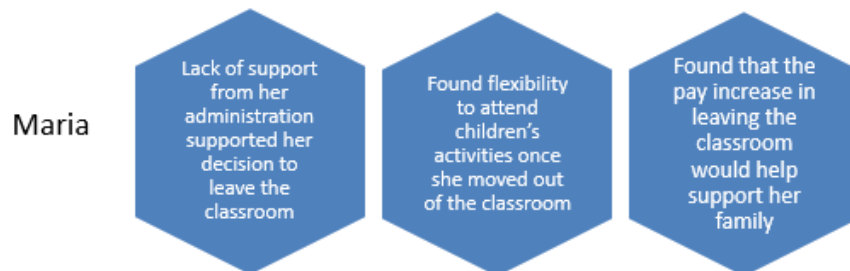
Maria Timeline



Understanding Her Story

Figure 14

Maria Story Elements



Maria's story is an example of how women are faced with decisions that impact not only their personal lives, but also their careers. For Maria, choosing to leave the school system was an opportunity to grow and be with her family. Her experience also validates the concerns of how society has formed the notion that women are the primary individuals charged with the responsibility of raising children. Lack of support and financial stress of the modern-day single mother also contribute to the idea that the literature on single working mothers, although limited, has been found to be true. Her decisions to become a teacher and then leave the school system altogether are in line with the research and theoretical framework. Maria found success even though she had to balance being a single mother and creating opportunities for financial and professional growth.

Figure 15

Maria Photo 4



The Voice of Madeleine

Because Madeleine (Maddie) works at my school site, she met me in her office for all three interviews. We greeted each other with “virtual hugs” and went through our daily “How was your day?” a very loaded question considering all the situations that occur at a large public high school. Maddie has worked at the high school for several years as an assistant principal. Her responsibilities include personnel/payroll, facilities and operations, activities, and athletics, and she is also the principal’s designee. She was

also charged with the task of building the master schedule for our 120 teachers and 2,400 students this year.

At the beginning of the first interview, I read the agreement with her and went over the protocols. I asked her if she had any questions or needed me to clarify anything. Once all of her questions were answered, we began the interview. For the second and third interview, I reviewed the protocols and the agreement with her before each conversation.

Biographical Information and Cultural Influences

Maddie was born here in Miami, Florida in 1970 to a Cuban family who was exiled in 1960. Her father was a contractor and carpenter by trade and her mother was a stay-at-home mom.

My mother was the best example of a mom. She was always there for us. She made breakfast, packed our lunches, and dinner every single day. She helped my father with his work when she had time to, and never missed an event in our lives, whether academic or sports related. My father worked hard to provide for our family. He worked at any job he could get to make money for us to live comfortably.

Figure 16

Maddie Photo 1



Before, During, and After Teaching Experiences

She was the first to graduate from an American university in her family. At Florida International University, she studied Psychology and Criminal Justice in hopes of becoming a federal agent. Throughout her college career she completed internships with the Department of Children and Families and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. While attending Florida International University, one of her professors urged her class to apply to become Miami-Dade County Schools substitute teachers, because the work was flexible, and the pay was decent. Maddie took the suggestion and was hired as a substitute at G. Holmes Braddock Senior High School. In 1992 she graduated from FIU and began to apply for openings with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). In August of 1992, due to Hurricane Andrew, many teachers at Braddock lost their homes and relocated out of Miami. The administration asked Maddie

to work as a full time teacher for the Students at Risk Program (SARP). She taught Science, World History, and Peer Counseling.

We had a team approach, which helped a lot. I learned so much from my colleagues and we were really invested into making the students' lives better. We would meet very often and discuss our students' academic and behavior concerns. We worked together to create plans for each student and knew that we were responsible for helping them graduate.

Maddie married in 1993 and continued to teach and go through the lengthy application with the FBI. "In 1994, I completed the coursework to become a full-time teacher with a teaching certificate. I still had my hopes of joining the FBI but continued to work at Braddock with my SARP kids."

In 1997, her son, Jayce, was born, and soon after in 1999, her daughter, Madison, joined their family. In 2000, Maddie received the letter of acceptance to join the FBI, but she declined because of her family.

I knew I only had one decision to make. The FBI job would have made me relocate our family to New York or Puerto Rico, and I just couldn't do that to my kids. My husband was not hands on, and my mother and his parents were the ones who helped me take care of them, so I could not leave. My dream job was not more important than my kids.

Maddie continued to teach until her principal asked her to move into the Activities Director role due to a vacancy.

I always helped out at school- I helped with discipline, I organized Open House, I volunteered my lunch to supervise the students during their lunch time, and I also helped with different activities, so I guess he thought it would be a good fit. I was also the head coach for both boys and girls swimming and boys and girls water polo. I was hesitant because it was going to be a major change and I had just had Madison.

Figure 17

Maddie Photo 2



Her children stayed at home with her mother and her parents-in-law until they were each 3 years old, and then joined the Braddock Bunch, a daycare at the school where students learned how to take care of children. They also joined her at the many afterschool activities she had to organize and oversee. Around that same time, FIU was offering a free Educational Leadership certificate to any one in the school system who

had a Master's degree. Maddie completed the program and in 2002, she became an Assistant Principal at G. Holmes Braddock.

Figure 18

Maddie Photo 3



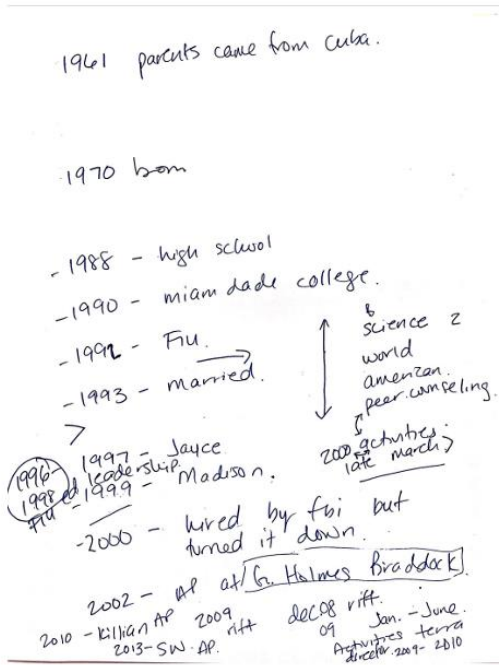
I went from a sub to a teacher to Activities Director and finally to an AP at the school. It was wonderful because I had built so many relationships there. I was one of five Assistant Principals, but the only female. It was also about a \$20,000 increase in pay, which was crucial because I was in the process of getting divorced. It also helped that if my children had events at school, there were so many administrators that it was ok for me to leave for an hour or so.

I really didn't decide to leave the classroom. My principal, in 1999, just showed up in my classroom and asked me to be the Activities Director. Since I had helped

out with some of the leadership responsibilities and activities, he asked me to do it. I had just had my daughter and I was back from maternity. I was teaching Peer Counseling and was happy because it was my subject matter. I did not want to make the change- another big change in my life after having two kids- but it was made for me and my schedule was given up to other teachers. I was very worried because I didn't even know what a field trip form was. I was also very worried about my kids and the night events.

Figure 19

Maddie Timeline



Perceived Influences and Support

As a teacher, Maddie had a lot of support from her colleagues.

The team I had for my students worked well together. We always communicated and supported each other. We were always on the same page. We would plan activities for each end of nine weeks because we knew most of our students were socio-economically disadvantaged and had never been to a baseball game or the movies. Also, Braddock was the largest high school at the time, with 5,500 students, but our faculty was close.

Maddie recalls not going to the administrative team for support.

Back then, the teachers would handle their own issues. We worked together to find solutions, without needing to go to the administration. If it was a very extreme case, then yes, they were available, but I don't really remember ever going to them. The school population was so big, that they had a lot on their plates, so we would deal with our issues in our classroom.

Parental support was also nonexistent.

Because I had the SARP kids, their parents were not active. These students struggled in every aspect, including not having supportive parents. But the parents, for the most cases, were not involved because they were constantly working to make ends meet. Or they had a language barrier and they thought no one would help them. We worked with the students without really focusing on their parents or needing their parents because we knew it would get us nowhere. We would incentivize their attendance and academic progress and create activities and field trips for them.

Once she became an administrator at the school, she would often joke with her colleagues about their roles at home.

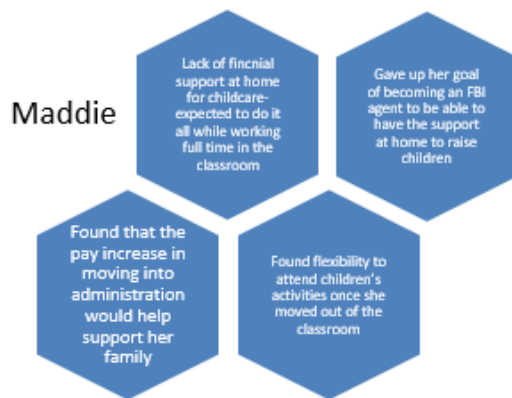
I used to have this joke with them. I would say "Man, I wish I had a wife!" The APs and the principal were all men, so they had wives at home who cooked, cleaned, stayed home with the kids when they were sick, took them to school and all of their extracurricular activities. I was that to my kids plus an AP. I was the one who cooked, cleaned, stayed home with the kids when they were sick, took them to school and all of their extracurricular activities. It was me. In my house, I

was it. I did not have anyone to help me, but luckily my principal was very understanding to my home life situation. The student council students really helped me. The first Grad Night I had was on my daughter's first birthday. The trip was scheduled before I came into the role, so I remember having to get back here at like 7:00 AM and going to the party area we rented to set up her birthday. I took my kids everywhere and to all the events. For prom, the principal rented hotel rooms for us, so I made it a family weekend. Overall, the events would have been the most difficult part of the job once I became an AP.

Understanding Her Story

Figure 20

Maddie Story Elements



Like Ana and Maria, Maddie had decisions to make based on her family life. Being a single mother propelled her decision to go into administration and leave the classroom. Flexibility and the pay increase were two of the factors that led Maddie towards administration. Her reasons and experience are aligned with the literature about the struggles single mothers face.

Figure 21

Maddie Photo 4



Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications

The primary purpose of this research was to understand how ethnic minority single mothers characterize their experiences that led them to make the decision to leave the classroom. The aim of this study was to share the stories of the participants, all who are ethnic minority single mothers and no longer teachers. Being that these women all worked for M-DCPS, the fourth largest school district in the United States, which is predominantly an ethnic minority and female dominated teacher workforce, their stories are showcased in the context of being a majority, but little research has been conducted for this particular subgroup of teachers who leave the classroom. This study strived to understand their experiences in and out of the classroom and the support they had at home and at work.

The practical aim of this research study was to understand how, through the resistance lens of feminist theory, gender, race, and marital status impact the lives of teachers and their decisions to leave the classroom. Through this study, administrators, both at the school site and district office levels, have insight on how to better support this subgroup of teachers in order to avoid teacher attrition. When researching single mothers and teacher retention, both include the areas of support, financial stress, and lack of flexibility (Bautista Solis, 2019; Ingersoll, 2018). I endeavored to gain understanding on how to better support this group of teachers.

This final chapter is organized into the following sections: statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, summary of the study, summary and interpretation of the findings, discussion, theory, practical implications, limitations of this

study, implications and recommendations for future scholarship, limitations, and conclusions, with a brief note on how COVID-19 has impacted single mothers in the workforce.

Statement of the Problem

Teacher attrition is a nation-wide issue. In the state of Florida, it is an even greater issue, with 40% of the teacher workforce leaving year after year. This issue trickles down at the district level, and M-DCPS is also impacted by the alarming rates of teachers leaving the profession. Teacher attrition has a large impact on society; the education of children has an everlasting effect of on our communities, and the revolving door of teachers coming and going and the resources, both financial and human, that are invested in the training and certification processes are wasted year after year. The research done for this study has given insight into how to minimize teacher attrition from the subgroup of ethnic minority women who are single mothers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study, which used the narrative inquiry design, was to create a space for women who are ethnic minority single mothers and chose to leave the teaching profession to share their experiences in order to gain insight on how to better support this subgroup. In doing so, the goal was to understand their struggles and the issues they faced and how those issues led them to leave the classroom or teaching altogether. The feminist theory lens provides an opportunity to for the space to share with the notion that the door for discourse will open, and ultimately change will occur (hooks, 2020).

Research Questions

1. How do ethnic minority single mothers characterize the influences that have led them to leave the teaching profession?
2. How do ethnic minority single mothers' view women's roles/positions in society related to their pre-career, in-career, and post-career decisions?

Summary of the Study

For this study, three ethnic minority single mothers who left the classroom were interviewed using Seidman's three-interview series approach. The women also shared documents, such as personal photos and created a timeline of important events throughout each interview. As the women shared their stories and experiences, I took notes and recorded each interview, which took 45 minutes to an hour. After each interview, I reflected on the conversation, linking themes and ideas together from the previous interviews.

Summary and Interpretation of Research Findings

All three of the participants in this study came from Hispanic middle-class families who had expectations of them to have a career that was suitable for a woman, beginning the systematic concerns of feminist theory regarding the patriarchal system. In regard to their race, Hispanic families are rooted in the machismo culture, which is characterized by the male being the head of household and the one who makes all the decisions for his wife and children (Quinones & Resnick, 1996). The participants attended college and chose academic paths that were aligned with their parents' notions

of what a career for women was. Ana, the first participant dreamed of becoming a broadcast journalist, but was negated by her father, so she studied education.

Soon after college, each participant worked as a teacher, a career that has been historically female-driven and considered to be a profession suitable for women (hooks, 2000), and then married soon after and had two children. Although Ana and Maddie discussed needing to make more money once they were divorced, Maria, who had her mother to rely on and was not concerned with the financial aspect of being a single mother. All three shared the need for more flexibility throughout their daily lives to be able to attend their children's activities or tend to them when they were sick, which they all assumed to be their role as the primary caretaker for their children and the role of mother that has been imposed on women (Bautista Solis, 2015). Also, Ana, Maria, and Maddie all described the high stress level that came with being a single mother in a one-income household and being the primary caretaker for their children while working a full-time job.

Themes

Seidman (2019) stated that the best way to analyze interview data is by organizing excerpts from the transcripts into categories. While reading and analyzing the transcripts, I searched for shared themes and patterns throughout the women's stories. I took this approach to analyzing the data and found three themes that were consistent throughout the narratives of the three women:

- Financial Stress
- Flexibility at Work

- Support at Work and at Home

The women's shared experiences correlate to the literature found on working single mothers. One such example is when Ana stated, "I hired a woman to come to our house to care for my two small children, but it was very expensive. I remember most of my check went to paying the caretaker" (Ana, Interview 2, May 2020). The financial stress of being a one-income household is evident throughout their narratives. Leaving the classroom and moving into an administrative role relieved the financial stress for Maddie, "It was also about a \$20,000 increase in pay, which was crucial because I was in the process of getting divorced" (Maddie, Interview 2, October 2021).

Flexibility at work is also a common theme shared by the three women whom I interviewed. Maddie recalled that being an administrator at a large high school was easy when it came to attending her children's school activities, "It also helped that if my children had events at school, there were so many administrators that it was ok for me to leave for an hour or so" (Maddie, Interview 2, October 2020). Ana also shared the same thoughts.

Being a teacher was very structured; you were responsible for the students every day and if you missed a day, well, they missed instruction. As an administrator, my principal allowed me to leave for a few moments if one of my kids had something at school. There were other APs who were there to cover for me. (Ana, Interview 2, May 2020)

Maria shared in her third interview.

Leaving behind the politics and lack of support has been a relief. My job now is flexible: I can work from home, take my kids on their field trips, plan activities throughout their school breaks. My direct boss is also a mom, so she understands the importance of being present for our own children. (Maria, Interview 3, June 2020)

Another theme that was shared throughout the narratives of this study was support, both at home and at work. While Maddie and Maria both had their mothers to help them with their children, Ana did not. Maddie recalled, “My mother and my parents-in-law were there to care for my two small children when I returned to work after maternity leave and throughout their lives” (Maddie, Interview 2, October 2021). Maria shared the following experience, “I applied for a scholarship for my sons’ Catholic school and was able to continue to sustain our lifestyle. My mom also came to live with me and helped me financially when we needed it” (Maria, Interview 2, June 2020).

The women shared that they had great collegial relationships with their coworkers but had very little support from their students’ parents. Being at high-risk schools or working with students at risk of dropping out, all three women shared that they had very little support from the parents. Maddie shared.

We had a team approach, which helped a lot. I learned so much from my colleagues and we were really invested into making the students’ lives better. We would meet very often and discuss our students’ academic and behavior concerns. We worked together to create plans for each student and knew that we were responsible for helping them graduate. (Maddie, Interview 2, October 2020)

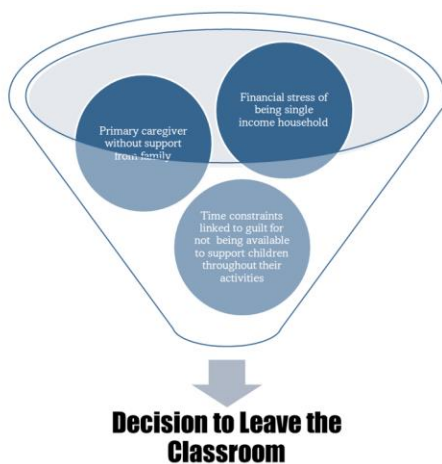
But it was different with the students' parents as she remembered.

Because I had the SARP kids, their parents were not active. These students struggled in every aspect, including not having supportive parents. We worked with the students without really focusing on their parents or needing their parents because we knew it would get us nowhere. We would incentivize their attendance and academic progress and create activities and field trips for them” (Maddie, Interview 2, October 2020).

The language used by the three participants were consistent with the post structural feminist theory language. They shared stories and vignettes that included words such as *nurture*, *care*, and *support* when discussing their roles both at home and at work. These words are linked to feminine roles and feminine work. They also had consistent language when discussing their male counterparts at home and at work. Such examples of this language are *professional responsibility*, and *career focused*.

Figure 22

Themes

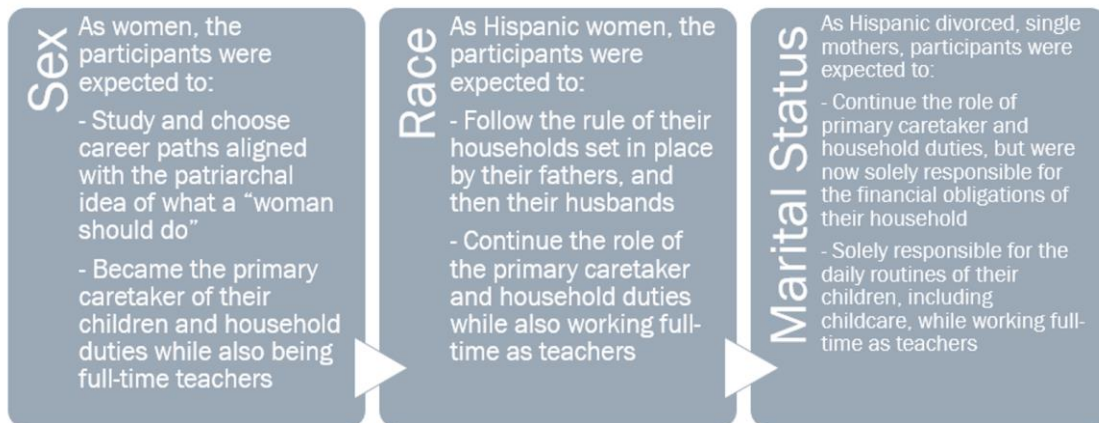


Theory

Arinder (2020) stated, “The core concepts in feminist theory are sex, gender, race, discrimination, equality, difference, and choice.” From early on before women are able to choose their paths, social constructs, systems and structures in place that work against individuals (Arinder, 2020).

Figure 23

Theory



Implications of this Study

Arinder (2021), stated that “Feminist theory proposes that when power and oppression are acknowledged and disrupted, change can occur.” Understanding the barriers women, in general, face is key to making progress. When taking into account the roles marital status and race play in women’s daily struggles, one understands the additional issues that compound the already existing problems they face. In this study, ethnic minority women who are single mothers made the decision to leave the classroom but had someone taken the time to understand their needs and stories and support them, the decision to leave the classroom would not have taken place.

At the district level, it is important for leaders to understand their workforce and to allow for variations of schedules with flexibility. Creating opportunities for teachers to work from home in the virtual setting started to take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic and can continue through the use of the district's Miami-Dade Virtual Schools. This will allow for teachers to work from home and the flexibility to attend their children's activities and other needs that the ethnic minority single mothers who left the classroom reported in this study.

Another practical implication of this study is the understanding that the financial stress single mothers and teachers face is one of the key factors why these women chose to leave the classroom. Creating opportunities for supplemental income and having open and honest conversations about the financial needs they have are important steps in retaining this subgroup of teachers. Opportunities for such work could be during the down time teachers have throughout the school year or virtual throughout the school year, where they could be home and work at the same time.

Another practical implication of the study is the opportunity to create district level funding opportunities to increase teacher pay. According to a 2018 press release by the M-DCPS Office of Communications, the district created the voter-approved Referendum to Raise Teachers' Salaries (RRAS), which "approves a levy based on determined property value at approximately \$75 per \$100,000 of assessed value for up to four years. This levy would allow M-DCPS to raise \$232 million annually. The average homeowner would make a contribution of \$0.39 a day, or \$12 a month." Continuing to create

initiatives such as the RRAS will support the district's efforts in teacher retention and, in turn, financially improve the lives of ethnic minority women who are single mothers.

One final implication of this study that I found to be resoundingly impactful was the need for childcare. As district leaders know, the school times for the different levels of education- elementary, middle, and high school- all vary. District administrators should consider creating opportunities for free before and after care for teachers at the school district. Childcare should be part of the district's benefits package to attract more prospective teachers to the workforce. The time off, such as winter, spring, and summer breaks are not enough. Teachers need early morning and afternoon support for to be able to report to work on time and not stress about their children's wellbeing.

Single mothers who are teachers are a part of the teacher workforce. It is important to understand their stories and assist in supporting their lives- both in and outside of the classroom. As Morey (2017) stated, "Four years into my single motherhood, I am becoming more and more aware of the courage and strength being a single mother brings to my life. I am incredibly proud of my story, and I see how my path has made me a better person and educator."

Although the sample size for this study was small, it is important to note the depth of the data collected and analyzed. Spending time listening to and understanding these ethnic minority single mothers' stories afforded great opportunities for insight on how to retain teachers who are a part of this subgroup. Being able to provide in depth analysis of the topic is often more important than the need for a large sample size. One such example of this is Arnetha Ball, who in her 2008 study titled, "Toward a Theory of Generative

Change in Culturally and Linguistically Complex Classrooms” began with 100 participants, but chose to fully work with and analyze the stories of just two participants.

Recommendations for Future Scholarship

There is a vast collection of research on teacher attrition, working single mothers, and of course, feminist theory, but none of which combine the three through the intersectionality and resistance lenses. Future scholarship should focus on the needs of ethnic minority teachers, with a focus on single-income households. Another area that future research should focus on is the stress teachers face as they play two very important roles simultaneously as educators and primary caregivers at home. Affording women a space to share their stories

Limitations

The limitation of this study is that it is based on the sampling of a very particular group, the ethnic minority Hispanic single mothers who have left the teaching profession. This limitation may not allow for the research to be used in school districts who do not have a high rate of Hispanic teachers or single mothers. In M-DCPS, in Miami, FL, the Hispanic ethnic minority is actually the majority of the teacher workforce, so in this context, it is applicable. This qualitative study is not to be used in a generalization of all single mothers who leave the teaching profession.

Life as a Single Mother and the COVID-19 Pandemic

It is important to note that this study included the experiences of ethnic minority women who have left the classroom. These women worked as teachers before the pandemic that has overpowered and overwhelmed daily lives. It is also just as important

to note that the impact the COVID -19 pandemic has had on single mothers across all professions. Taylor et al. (2021) discussed the daily struggles of single mothers, financial stress, lack of childcare, support from family, and mental health and how they have been amplified due to the pandemic. Restrictions on childcare due to outbreaks, closing of businesses and schools, and isolation from others due to precautions and spreading of disease have all enhanced the daily struggles single mothers face (Taylor et al., 2021). The authors also studied the notion of gratitude and finding ways to cope. They discussed the participant' feelings towards taking up hobbies and slowing down to lower stress levels from very long workdays (Taylor et al., 2021).

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Consent Form

Purpose. You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted for my dissertation at Florida International University in Miami, Florida. The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of minority single mothers who have left the classroom in Miami -Dade County Public Schools. I am interested in your experiences as a minority single mother who was a teacher.

Participation requirements. You will be asked to take part in a series of three interviews in order to gather information regarding your experiences related to your position as a former teacher. You will be asked to answer the questions as honestly as possible and will be given the right to refuse to respond to any questions, which cause uneasiness or personal concerns or terminate your participation in the study at any time. The interviews will be completed in three sessions that should last approximately 45 minutes.

Potential Risk/ Discomfort. This study will contribute to MDCPS and other districts' understandings of factors related to the retention of teachers who are minority single mothers. Because the focus is on effective practices, not on evaluating individuals or schools, no significant risk to your participation is anticipated, but rather opportunities to reflect on your experiences.

Potential Benefit. There are no anticipated direct benefits to you for participating in this research as no incentives are offered, yet others reading the study may benefit from the knowledge obtained from this research.

Anonymity/ Confidentiality. The data collected in this study will not be confidential. With your consent you will share your experiences as a single mother who was a former teacher. I will also include documents you provide to share your experiences. In addition, the Institutional Review Board officials responsible for monitoring this study may inspect these records.

Sharing of Results. Information about the impacts of this research will be shared with you through a process of member checking (i.e. checking with you on the accuracy of documents) prior to sharing in the dissertation or in any related reports, articles, or conference presentations. You will also receive transcripts of the interviews for your review.

Right to Withdraw. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

I would be happy to answer any question that may arise about the study. Please direct your questions or comments to Janelle Bravo-San Pedro (786) 863-2613, or at jbravo02@fiu.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, any complaints about your participation in the research study, or any problems that occurred in the study, please contact me as well. You can also contact Florida International University's Institutional Review Board Coordinator Maria Melendez-Vargas via email at mdemelen@fiu.edu or 305-348-8311.

Signatures

A.

I volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by Janelle Bravo-San Pedro from Florida International University. I understand that the project is designed to gather information about the experiences of single mothers who have left the classroom. I will be one of approximately 4 people being interviewed for this research.

I have read the above description of “How do Minority Single Mothers Characterize the Influences that have led them to Leave the Classroom?” study and understand the conditions of my participation. My signature indicates that I agree to participate in the study.

1. My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without penalty. I can decline to participate or withdraw from the study.

2. I understand that most interviewees in will find the discussion interesting and thought provoking. If, however, I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview.

3. Participation involves being interviewed on three separate occasions by the researcher from Florida International University. Each interview will last approximately 30-45 minutes. Notes will be written during the interview. An audio tape of the interview and subsequent transcriptions will be produced. If I don't want to be taped, I will not be able to participate in the study.

4. I understand that the researcher will identify me by name in the reports using information obtained from this series of interviews and documents I provide.

5. Faculty and administrators from my school site will neither be present at the interview nor have access to raw notes or transcripts. This precaution will prevent my individual comments from having any negative repercussions.

6. I understand that this research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Studies Involving Human Subjects: Behavioral Sciences Committee at the Florida International University. For research problems or questions regarding subjects, the Institutional Review Board may be contacted through Maria Melendez-Vargas via email at mdemelen@fiu.edu or 305-348-8311.

7. I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

8. I have been given a copy of this consent form.

Participant's Name

Date

Signature

B.

My signature below indicates that I agree to have this interview audio recorded.

Participant's Name

Date

Signature

Appendix C: Recruitment Script

**How ethnic minority single mothers characterize the influences that
have led them to leave the teaching profession
Recruitment Script**

Dear _____,

My name is Janelle Bravo-San Pedro, and I am a doctoral student in the College of Arts, Sciences, and Education at Florida International University. I am conducting a research study examining how minority single mothers characterize the influences that have led them to leave the teaching profession and you are invited to participate in the study. If you agree, you are invited to participate in several interviews to share your experiences. Each interview is anticipated to take no more than 45 minutes and will be audio-taped.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your identity as a participant will be shared during and after the study. The purpose of sharing your identity is to ensure that your story is told in an authentic manner.
If you have questions or would like to participate, please contact me at 786-863-2613.

Thank you for your participation,

Janelle Bravo-San Pedro
Florida International University
College of Arts, Sciences, and Educations
Doctoral Student

Appendix D: CITI Program Certifications



Completion Date 02-Sep-2019
Expiration Date 01-Sep-2022
Record ID 33061367

This is to certify that:

Janelle Bravo-San Pedro

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Basic/Refresher Course - Human Subjects Research (Curriculum Group)
Social/Behavioral Human Research Course (Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic Course (Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Florida International University

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w8c2a3a3c-5baf-42bb-9de1-5680cbacf146-33061367



Completion Date 25-Jun-2020
 Expiration Date N/A
 Record ID 37194031

This is to certify that:

Janelle Bravo-San Pedro

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Responsible Conduct of Research
Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research
Course
1 - RCR

(Curriculum Group)

(Course Learner Group)

(Stage)

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME. Do not use for TransCelerate mutual recognition (see Completion Report).

Under requirements set by:

Florida International University



Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wbb8cd40d-6327-42ea-bea1-7f8887ae3d2a-37194031

VITA

CURRICULUM VITA

JANELLE BRAVO-SAN PEDRO

jbravosanpedro@gmail.com

2006 B.A., English and Women's Studies, Florida International University
Miami, Florida

2011 M.P.A., Public Administration, Florida International University
Miami, Florida

2014 Ed. S., Educational Leadership, Florida International University
Miami, Florida

2022 Ed.D., Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Florida International University
Miami, Florida

2007- 2013 Middle School Teacher, Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Miami Springs, Florida

2013-2016 High School Reading Coach, Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Miami, Florida

2014- 2021 Assistant Principal, Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Miami, Florida

2021-2022 Academic Recovery Coach for Literacy, Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Miami, Florida