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Dissertation Abstract Journal

October 1, 2012

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Many readers of this journal have written to SAS requesting copies of the full dissertations represented here. Our department does not distribute copies of the dissertations, but they will eventually appear on ProQuest. It takes approximately 90 days for ProQuest to process the dissertation - so if the dissertation is not already there, search in ProQuest every month or so and eventually it should appear.

Congratulations to those represented here who have completed their doctoral journey, and may they guide the way for those who seek to follow.

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October 1, 2012

In this issue:

Micheline A. Issa, D.B.A.

Alena Cheppel, Ed.D.

Ryan Young, D.H.A.

Audrey Donaldson, Ed.D/CI.

Mario Vaccari, D.M.

Gregory Tramaine Thompson, Ed.D.

Titus Kolawole Oyeyemi, D.M.

Kent R. Acheson, D.B.A.

April Renee Grant-Williams, D.M.

Barbara J. Yancy-Tooks, D.M.

Timothy R. Taylor, D.M.

Rebecca J. Yackel, D.H.A.

Tracie D. Johnson-Wagner, D.H.A.

Aldon Wayne Scott, D.M.

Almitra L. Berry, Ed.D.

Hung Q. Kieu, D.M./IST.

Yolanda D. Williams, Ed.D.

Lodessa S. Washington, Ed.D.

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Carol Hall, Ed.D - Education (K-12)

Elizabeth Young, Ph.D - Education (K-12)

Anastasia Metros, Ph.D - Higher Education

Micheline A. Issa

Dissertation Title THE ECONOMIC EFFECT OF PRIVATIZATION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE LEBANESE MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATION SECTOR

Abstract

The Republic of Lebanon has to change its dominant State-Owned Enterprises to Private-Owned-Enterprises through privatization. The increase in public debt to GDP ratio and budget deficit to GDP ratio urges the country to set an immediate fiscal reform plan. Privatization intervenes as a remedy for economic policy reform. The purpose of the quantitative correlation study is to examine the macroeconomic influence of mobile telecom privatization as a fiscal reform plan in one of the Middle Eastern countries, Lebanon throughout the periods ranging from 2003 until 2010. The Extreme-Bounds Analysis (EBA) model used as an econometric regression facilitated the testing of various control and policy variables on GDP economic growth rate. The robust results from control and policy variables examined privatization sensitivity on GDP growth rate. After running several growth regression clusters, empirical results demonstrated a non-robust or negative correlation between privatization estimates and Lebanese economic development.

Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation to my beloved country, Lebanon as I inspire that my country shall soon witness the first privatization transaction initiated by the mobile telecommunication sector. My dissertation is dedicated to my parents whose joy whispers upon completion of this research, who always valued education and continuously supported me in reaching my personal goal. I also dedicate my dissertation to the management and colleagues of MTC Touch, one of the mobile current operators to whom I have always been part of the family.

Acknowledgements

I thank God for giving me the strength and patience needed to continue through the most difficult times in pursuing my doctorate degree. There were many days I prayed for wisdom, patience, understanding, and perseverance needed to complete this project. To all those individuals who were active in assisting me to achieve my lifelong dream I am ceaselessly grateful.

I'm earnestly thankful to Dr. Gerald Weisenseel from University of Phoenix whose encouragement, guidance, and patience sustained my complete journey. His support in correcting my final submission enabled me to prepare the complete settings of the subject. I want to express my gratitude for spending time and promptly answering any question.

I owe my deepest gratitude to my committee members Dr. Nandy Subhashis and Dr. James Francisco, for their revision, support, and encouragement in helping me finalize and succeed in my journey.

I cordially thank my parents, without whom I would never have been able to achieve so much. Your wonderful patience, encouragement, and support sustained my persistence throughout my doctoral journey. Lastly, I offer my regards and blessings to all those who supported me in any respect during the completion of this research.

Alena Cheppel

Dissertation Title A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF UNDERGRADUATE AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS' DECISION TO PARTICIPATE IN STUDY ABROAD

Abstract

The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative study was to explore African American undergraduate college students' intentions and reasons for participation in study abroad programs. The study involved gathering data from recorded and transcribed semi-structured interviews with 20 African American volunteer participants. Data analysis involved the use of Moustakas' (1994) modification of van Kaam's phenomenological methodology. Collected data were analyzed using NVivo 9 software to identify themes exploring the decision making process of African American undergraduate college students

from the University in the North East Maryland (pseudonym) to participate in study abroad programs. Findings of the study include: (a) Important concerns/consideration for going to study abroad; (b) Most Influential Messengers; (c) Assumptions about Study Abroad; (d) The most important information needed for participation in Study Abroad; (e) Best ways of seeking/providing information about Study Abroad; (f) Reasons for participation in Study Abroad; (g) Sources of Funding Study Abroad ; (h) Perception of the amount of academic emphasis on producing globally competent citizens; (i) Study Abroad Office involvement; (j) Suggestions on how to improve participation in Study Abroad; (k) Outcomes of Study Abroad/Benefits; and (l) Study Abroad Experience Feedback. This study expanded the existing knowledge in the area of Study Abroad participation. The study provided insight into what encourages African American undergraduate students' participation in study abroad programs. Findings of the study may help in addressing the unique needs of African Americans in order to increase their study abroad participation. Study findings may enhance educational, local, state, and federal leaders' abilities to properly address minority students' low participation level in study abroad programs.

Dedication

I dedicate this study to my daughter Anna for appreciating and supporting me during an extremely difficult and challenging time for me. Also, I devote this dissertation to my mother Svetlana and to my father Viktor for raising me as a goal oriented person with a drive to succeed. I am genuinely grateful for the moral support and inspiration all of them have given me.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my dissertation committee and the University in the North East Maryland (pseudonym). I want to thank and acknowledge Dr. Joann Kovacich, my dissertation chair, for her outstanding mentoring and encouragement that carried me through this doctoral program. This accomplishment would not be possible without her guidance and understanding. Also, I would like to specially thank my committee members, Dr. Julio C. de Carvalho and Dr. Michael K. Daniels for their help, support, and advice.

Ryan Young

Dissertation Title RURAL NURSE RETENTION: A CONSTRUCTIVIST GROUNDED THEORY APPROACH

Abstract

As a result of several factors, rural area health care facilities have a difficult time retaining nursing staff. This issue causes problems with patient care in both quality and outcomes. In addition, poor retention of nurses can result in added costs to the facility, which is a significant issue for rural areas that are often limited financially. The purpose of this qualitative research study using a constructivist grounded theory approach was twofold. First, to describe the experiences of nurses who have decided to leave rural nursing practice. Second, to use grounded theory methods to inductively and systematically generate a theory that explain a rural nurse's influences and decisions to leave rural practice. Purposive and snowball sampling was used to attain the participant group. Fifteen nurses who have left a rural nursing position for a more urban nursing position within the last five years were interviewed to discover constructions related to this decision. A constructivist grounded theory approach was utilized as researcher and participants developed meaning from the identified constructs; creating a partnership in the data collection and the analysis process. Four main categories presented during data analysis, which included personal and professional growth, responsibility of the rural nurse, the work environment, and wage and benefits. The constructs identified from these four main categories led to the emergence of the orbiting model of nurse retention, which indicates that there are many factors that contribute to a rural nurse's decision to leave for a more urban position with some factors being more important than others. This theory may provide rural nursing leaders with a foundation of knowledge to begin to address nursing retention.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this body of work to my wife and children. You are there when I need someone to hug, you provide unconditional love and loyalty, and you find the good in me no matter what I do or do not do. You all inspire and motivate me to be the best person I can be. This would not have been possible without you. You should feel just as successful as I do as you have completed the journey by my side, each step of the way. I could not have asked for a better team to experience this journey with.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I must thank my first born child, Cassidy Ryanne Young. My wife experienced a difficult pregnancy from the start, but as her due date approached all seemed to be well, until the delivery. As the baby progressed into the birth canal, a knot in the cord tightened cutting off her blood supply. She was still born. Approximately one month earlier, while my wife was sleeping, I had laid my hand on her stomach and Cassidy seemed to be following the movements of my hand. In hindsight, this is my perception of the only true time that she and I spent together. At the time I experienced this, I was a licensed practical nurse with no intention of pursuing a higher degree. Mourning her loss, led me to the desire of wanting her to be proud of me and to become a better man. Whether higher degrees have anything to do with being a better man or not, each degree of education I have attained has stemmed from the motivation for a continual desire to "be better."

Next I would like to thank my family. My wife and children (Michelle, Nick, Nate, Colby, and Caleb) have been there for me and supported me throughout this journey. I have not always been easy to live with, or easy to support, but whether I was irritable, frustrated, depressed, or elated they have stood strong and most importantly by my side. They have all shown me what true loyalty and love is. I also want to acknowledge my parents, through them I have learned to be strong, dedicated, and persevere. Finally, without my grandmother, the most compassionate and giving sole I have ever experienced, I would not be in the successful position I am. She was a caring and compassionate nurse, mother, and grandmother, and I know she is showing that care and compassion to my daughter as they both look down upon us.

I would also like to thank Dr. Judith Treschuk for her support, encouragement, and hard work mentoring me to this point. She has spent numerous and most likely frustrating hours attempting to guide me through this process. She has become a valuable resource and friend, and has found a special place in my heart. Thank you for everything, Dr. Treschuk.

Finally I would like to thank Dr. Strang and Dr. DeRuiter for their hard work and valuable input as committee members. I would also like to thank Dr. John Conklin for serving on my committee and his hard work through the proposal process. Thank you, this would not be possible without any of you.

Audrey Donaldson

Dissertation Title INQUIRY SKILLS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF FIRST-YEAR COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study was to explore the specific factors associated with inquiry skills as a component of success with college level coursework. A hermeneutic phenomenological study was conducted to gain an understanding based on interview responses to questions about learning experiences as perceived and reported by first-year community college students. Thematic analysis was used to identify themes. Findings revealed various teaching and learning factors associated with the acquisition, development, and utilization of inquiry skills. Key findings include concepts related to student needs, ability, and opportunity for skills development, such as the perceived barriers that inhibit the acquisition, development, and application of inquiry skills.

Dedication

To students and teachers of the present, and future, I dedicate this work. As you learn the significance of the language of inquiry, what to ask, how to ask, who to ask, and when to ask you will learn how to truly engage in the teaching and learning process. Asking is essential to the process of learning.

Acknowledgements

The doctoral journey has enabled me to reflect on the significance of skills to ask questions. The acquisition and development of inquiry skills is a concern for every learner who has ever struggled as a result of the lack of opportunity to practice these vital skills. Learning to ask, the willingness to ask, and the freedom to ask are all critical components of the learning process.

Along the path, I have been encouraged by family whose support has made this journey possible. My mother, Bernice Harper, has always encouraged me to do my best. It was her voice that continued to lead me on to pursue my doctorate. My son, Kahlil, and his wife, Angie, continue to support me as they persist with their educational endeavors and as they instill the value of education to my grandchildren: Jordyn, Kamryn, Kihya, and Kahlil. I am so fortunate, so very blessed to represent my ancestors-foremothers and forefathers who only dreamed of this day. AND I am also blessed with a husband, June, whose love, endless support, and consideration throughout this process.

A special extension of appreciation to my cousins, Brenda and Vince Adams, who have graciously welcomed my husband and I as guests in their lovely home during each of my doctoral residencies. Although deceased prior to my journey, my Nana and my grandfather, Clarence's unconditional love helped to carry me along the doctoral journey. And despite his death, which occurred at the midpoint of this educational endeavor, my father, Charles Harper, Sr., was and continues to influence my progress. Inspiration flows from a host of family members, including foremothers and forefathers, whose resilience and perseverance provided a strong foundation.

My mentor, Dr. Dorothy Williams and dissertation committee members, Paula Young and Dean Finley were an exemplary team. They each played a significant role in my development and achievement as a doctoral scholar. In addition, the following educators and specialists: Paula Smith, Kenesta Mack, Karen Katz, Dr. Fran Lassiter, and Marlisse Taylor, facilitated the journey. I am truly blessed to have lived this experience with each of the persons mentioned.

I was introduced to the HOTS, Higher Order Thinking Skills, by a 7th grade teacher, Sheila Linton. Whenever, her students visited the school library, she referred to this set of skills often and her students understood and responded appropriately. This exposure lit a spark for me. And although that was nearly 20 years ago, the meaningful lessons have been truly inspirational. Thank you, Sheila.

My humble appreciation to all the educators and librarians everywhere who strive diligently to promote questioning, inquiry, or critical thinking. You are preparing students in a way that truly makes a difference in their ability to engage meaningfully in the processes of learning. As the student, who many times did not ask, I appreciate your efforts to create a welcoming climate that supports inquiry skills development. Your commitment will prepare students and equip them with a vital set of learning skills that are pertinent for the classroom, workplace, community, in their personal lives, and perhaps, on a global level.

Thank you ALL!

Mario Vaccari

Dissertation Title A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE REASONS WHY PARENTS CHOOSE CHARTER SCHOOLS OVER TRADITIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore parents' perceptions between charter schools and traditional public schools in the New Orleans school district, and how these options were driven by pre-conceived notions in regard to charter schools level of academic achievement or other significant underlying reasons. Interviews were conducted with parents in the West Bank area of the New Orleans Parish, Louisiana, who currently have children attending charter schools, and whose children attended traditional public schools (before charter schools were available). A sample size of 20 parents provided sufficient comparable data for an in-depth study. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews by using open-ended questions that revealed the meaning of the participants' lived-experiences. In order to help with data organization, and to develop commonalities, a qualitative data software was utilized, NVivo 9. Five themes were discovered from the findings: (a) perceptions of academic achievement, (b) failing pre-Katrina public schools, (c) charter schools making a difference, (d) autonomy results in meeting individual academic needs, and (e) school achievement level: a major selection factor. The findings suggested that parental perception is that charter schools are making a difference in New Orleans, and that 70% of the parents interviewed use academic achievement as a major school selection factor.

Dedication

I dedicate the completion of this dissertation to my parents Mario and Nancy. They have always believed in me, supported me and offered words of encouragement along my doctoral journey. I also dedicate this dissertation to my daughters Veronica and Andrea for their continued support while their father worked long hours and attended school.

Acknowledgements

My close friends deserve recognition for their continuous support and encouragement while I faced so many personal obstacles and challenges. I owe special thanks to my mentor, Dr. Teresa Lao, whose continuous support, guidance and patience provided me the encouragement I needed to finish my dissertation. My Committee members, Dr. Priscilla Sagar and Dr. Gerald Nebeker also deserve recognition for their continuous scholarly guidance during my dissertation process.

Special thanks to those 20 volunteer participants who shared their lived-experiences with me. I would also like to thank all University of Phoenix support members. They were always available when I needed guidance and words of encouragement. Finally, I would like to thank my academic counselor, Breona Tunge, for her continuous support and guidance.

Gregory Tramaine Thompson

Dissertation Title A PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERS' EXPERIENCES IN TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOL CLASSROOMS

Abstract

Teachers are lacking skills to manage classroom disruptions related to behavior and discipline among at-risk students. The growing challenges of managing disruptive, violent, emotional, and other behavioral disorders consume instructional time within the classroom (Lassen et al., 2006). The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the experiences and perceptions of educational leaders (EL) in Texas public school classrooms. This study involved interviewing 11 (K-12) educational leaders to gather data and explore educational leaders' experiences and perceptions regarding teachers' beliefs about students and students' sense of identity. The data was analyzed by transcribing the

interviews and using the NVivo8 program to discover the important themes. The findings included seven themes. Theme 1 consisted of perceptions of educational leaders relating to behavior and discipline issues in the classroom. Theme 2 was the amount of time educational leaders spend on behavior and discipline issues. Theme 3 signified the solutions that educational leaders use to manage behavior and discipline issues. Theme 4 included perceptions of professional development training provided by school districts. Theme 5 dealt with the experiences of student removal from the classroom to In-School Suspension (ISS). Theme 6 highlighted perceptions relative to students' identity and behavior. Theme 7 related to how teacher perceptions compete with the popular media. The findings might influence practices and decision-making in professional development programs and classroom environments. Targeted professional development programs can provide educational leaders with knowledge regarding teachers' beliefs about behavior and discipline issues that disrupt instructional learning.

Dedication

First, I thank God for blessing me with the strength, patience, and intellect to complete this journey. I dedicate this doctoral degree to my loving mother, Ruthie Thompson, who has truly been an inspiration and pushed me to do my best. My 110 year old great-grandmother, Clara Davis, lived a wonderful life from November 28, 1900, to August 3, 2011. Three months before passing, she still showed no signs of alzheimers. Although she passed 14 days before the dean approved my dissertation, I know my angel is still smiling on me. The strength of my 88-year-old grandmother, Jennie Thompson, motivated me to instill God in my life and go to Him for myself. The love and support from late Thompson family members: Grandfather Tennessee, Uncle O'Neal, Uncle Donell, Sr., Uncle Freddy (Nicole), Uncle Claude, Aunt Mabel, and Brandon Thompson, a special thanks to Aunt Mamie Bluford and paternal grandparents T.W. and Annie Thomas. God bless! I extend this dedication to the educational quality of at-risk students. I am forever appreciative of the past and present educational leaders from my alma maters: Shelbyville ISD-Texas, Angelina College-Texas, Peru State College-Nebraska, and University of Phoenix, who sacrificed to make this accomplishment possible.

1 Corinthians 15:51

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge God Almighty, my Savior Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Triumph the Church and Kingdom of God in Christ and Fountain of Praise in Houston, Texas, for the prayers and strength to complete a doctoral program in Educational Leadership. I am grateful for my dissertation mentor, Dr. Michael Daniels, committee members: Dr. Casey Reason and Dr. Jim Alstott. I am thankful for my advisors Alyssa Schultz, Amber Biles, and Ronnie Perez for their continued guidance and time dedicated to complete this long, arduous journey.

To respect the confidentiality of the participants involved in this study, I will not use their names. It is a pleasure to thank the Superintendents, the Business Manager, the administrative team, and the educational leaders of the school district for their willingness to participate and the opportunity to explore their experiences for data.

To the entire Garret-Davis-Thompson family, my sisters, brothers, nieces, nephews, cousins, friends, nephew Tavion "Trez" Barnes, neice Tiaja Bre'l Thompson, Todd Spring community, the class of 1993 (Angel Lout and Montrell King-rest in peace), thank you for the motivation. The Brinson family, Mr. Rush McCowin (rest in peace), Mrs. Dazella Moore, Mrs. Pinky Atkinson, Mr. J.W. Cartwright (rest in peace), Mr. Elzie Suell, Mr. Reggie Daniels, Mrs. Mozell Dupree (rest in peace), the Allen family, the Bolton family, and the Terry family... thank you for the valuable experiences and believing in me. I give thanks to Tammy Williams & family, Lawrence Hollier & family, co-hort Trina Crews Tant, and Carole Harvey McGrath.

1 Corinthians 15:57&58

Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Titus Kolawole Oyeyemi

Dissertation Title EVALUATING PEACE EDUCATION AS MAINSTREAM CURRICULUM: A STUDY OF NIGERIAN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Abstract

Peace education as a mainstream curriculum is now being favored as a solution to school violence involving the youths. In line with this reality, the Federal Government of Nigeria, through the National Education Research Development Council (NERDC) introduced peace education as an embedded curriculum into the Civic Education and Social Studies for Junior Secondary Schools Students beginning from the 2008/2009 school session. The purpose of this quantitative, quasi-

experimental, pre- and post-test design research study was to determine if teaching the embedded peace building instruction in Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) in Nigeria, through the national curriculum in civic education (NCCE) for JSS and national curriculum in social studies (NSS) for JSS, would result in JSS students developing greater awareness of peacekeeping and conflict resolution strategies. JSS-2 students in Lagos State, who were JSS-3 bound were the population for the sample. The sample population consisted of 120 students drawn at the rate of 20 JSS2 students from each of the six education districts in Lagos State. The instrument used to test the hypotheses consists of 13 construct multiple answers questions related to peace and conflict aspects of the NCCE and NSS curriculum developed in consultation with active classroom civic education and social studies subject teachers. Tests were scored by determining the ratio of correct answers, and the statistical evaluation was done using the process of analysis of variance (ANOVA). The research question was: Is there a significant mean difference in test scores between the treatment group and the control group?

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my eldest daughter, Eniola, who, on August 13, 1996, escaped being lynched during a student riot in Nigeria at the polytechnic where she was studying for an OND in laboratory technology. As in the Virginia Tech massacre of 2010, many young people go through childhood and adolescence without being taught how to resolve conflict; instead, they resort to outbursts of violence when confronted with the least form of conflict and injustice, believing that violence is the best way to resolve conflicts. As a result, I am encouraged to continue this work that promotes the ideals of teaching the culture of peace education (COPE) as espoused by UNESCO and peace and conflict education (PACE) because these are the seeds needed to empower young people to prevent and avert the unwarranted consequences of unbridled violence prevalent among adolescents.

My immense appreciation goes to my wife, Fehintola, and to our younger children, Iyadunni, Babasanmi, Olasunkanmi, and Ore-Oluwa. They deserve special thanks for the support they gave me throughout this journey, which undoubtedly took more years than necessary because I have to combine peacebuilding practicum with my studies. I am also dedicating this work to all of my teachers, beginning with my mother, who taught my cradle spirit and soul how to respect and understand the feelings of others to maintain peaceful co-existence and prevent unwarranted conflicts. Last but not the least, I dedicate this work to those people who have heeded the divine call to teach peace to children, for the Scripture says "And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD and great shall be the peace of thy children" (Isaiah 54:13). Those who teach peace as the nobles of the land, "as it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace. And bring glad tidings of good things?" (Romans 10:15).

Acknowledgements

My thanks go to Dr. April Flanagan, the last but not least of my teachers, who epitomized qualities of a dedicated and selfless teacher as she patiently and courageously worked me through the final stages of this dissertation, building on the foundational work done by my first chair, Dr. Osayinmwense Osa, and ably assisted by my dissertation committee members, Dr. Oludotun Oni, and Dr. James McTyre.

I thank the secondary students in Lagos State who participated in the study and the tenured classroom teachers who supervised the program, the numerous chaperones of the Youth Peace Alliance Clubs in the secondary schools in the six education districts of Lagos State and from other states of Nigeria for the solidarity they expressed for this study. I thank the officials of the Lagos State Ministry of Education, the commissioner for education, the permanent secretary, the directors, as well as the tutor-generals and directors of co-curricular activities for their cooperation. I am also grateful to the Nigerian Education Research Development Council (NERDC) for permitting to use the embedded peace education curriculum in the Civic Education and Social Studies for Junior Secondary Schools in Nigeria as the basis for this study. I am indebted to friends, colleagues, and associates at the African Projects and Foundation for Peace and Love Initiatives in the United States and in Nigeria; they contributed immense insights into this work.

Any omission to thank all the people that have supported me in this journey is not intentional, only space could not permit me to mention everyone.

May Peace Prevail on Earth! KAYERO! KAYEROJU!!

Kent R. Acheson

Dissertation Title A STUDY OF THE NEED TO CHANGE UNITED STATES PATENT POLICY

Abstract

The purpose of this case study was to learn how US patent policy requirements differ for the Software and Pharmaceutical Industries, specifically if United States Patent Policy adequately protects intellectual property rights (IPR) for two divergent industries while still encouraging research and development (R & D) investment sufficient to increase profits and

innovation. Data for this study consisted of 38 witness testimonies delivered to US Congress between the years 2005 and 2010 by experts representing the two industries of interest: pharmaceutical and software. Key findings from the data analysis of these 38 testimonies revealed both within industry differences and between industry differences in patent law protection. Within industry differences showed variance based on size of the company and the degree to which they relied on their own R & D. Between industry differences reflected divergent 'products' with Pharmaceutical Industries needing long-term protection to recover R & D expenditures that include expenses for human trials research to proceed from patent application to market. Software industry, on the other hand, uses follow-on innovation of others to continue technological advancement by constantly improving upon existing software. The data shows that these two industries use patent policy protection in different ways for different reasons. This information will enable Policymakers to develop another form of product protection in lieu of the current patent law to better meet the needs of these two industries rather than try to modify the existing law.

Acknowledgements

First, and foremost, I would like to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He has given me the strength and abilities to overcome, and the success through all hindrances and obstacles impeding my progress through life. I had an automobile accident immediately after high school graduation leaving me in a coma for 6-weeks and erasing my memory of the preceding years of my life. I had to relearn how to think and learn, and how to stand and to walk. The neurosurgeon gave me a note instructing my professors that allowed me more time on exams, as my brain did not process information quickly. I struggled with life for the next four or five years. I still have residual effects in short-term memory loss, dizziness, frequent headaches, and trouble speaking clearly at times.

I want to thank my mother especially, who has encouraged me and has been my principle motivator; and, likewise, my number one thorn in the flesh, in a loving way of course, is Laura who has also been my encourager and motivator. My father has helped me financially by giving me a place to stay, and has given me a kind ear to listen to my problems and heartaches while antagonizing me along the way. But without the pain and the prodding, and the nagging from all my loved ones I would not be the person I am today, which may not always be a good thing to some, maybe even most, and is a wonderful thing to others.

April Renee Grant-Williams

Dissertation Title COMMUNICATION, EMPOWERMENT, AND LEGACIES OF BEHAVIOR: THE AFRICAN AMERICAN PERCEPTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Abstract

African American students have been underrepresented in higher education since the 1960s. The study of this disparity has caused many researchers to consider the social and institutional correlating relationships that could contribute to the declining retention rates for African American students in higher education. The purpose of the grounded theory study was to develop a theory based on the discovery of the perception that African American students apply to communication messages received from the students' higher education institutions and social relationships. Communication theories and self-fulfilling prophecy theory guided the research development. Twenty African American students who attended Girard College, a college preparatory school in Philadelphia, PA, were selected to participate in the study. Two theoretical models emerged from the findings that explained the relationship between communication, empowerment, and legacies of behavior. The study findings suggested that communication exchanges between African American students and the students in-group was an underlying discovery associated with African American students' higher education retention and completion.

Dedication

First and foremost, I would like to give all praises to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for allowing me to accomplish this goal. I am thankful that you have chosen me to use in this moment and placing this seed in my mind many years ago. Lord, I am truly grateful. I would also like to thank my husband and best friend, Quinn Williams, for your unending support, love, and many readings of my assignments. You have inspired me through everything to be the best that I can be and it will take the rest of our lives to tell you how much I appreciate you. I am truly grateful and thank God for you, I love you! I would also like to thank my mother and best friend any daughter could ever have, Dorothy Mae Grant. Mommy, you have always believed in me even when I did not believe in myself. Words will never be able to sum up how I feel about the sacrifice, love, and dedication you continue to show me, I love you! I thank God he gave me to you! Last but not least, I would like to thank my little joy growing inside of me now, Luke Sean Williams. You are the reason why I am doing all of this! I never knew I could love someone as much as I love you! You are truly the best blessing God has ever given me and I cannot wait to see your face. Luke, your Mommy loves you and is inspired by you! This dissertation is dedicated to all of you! Thank you for having me in your lives and I love you all!

Death and life are in the power of the tongue:

and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.
(Proverbs 18:21)

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Gaynel Olsen for all of your support to help me push forward and achieve my dream. Your thoughtfulness, caring words, and supportive nature have allowed me to see my true potential and for that, I am truly grateful. I would also like to thank my committee, Dr. Robin Throne and Dr. Cynthia Loubier for your unwavering support and effort, I truly appreciate you both. Finally, I would like to thank my academic advisor, Alisha Coleman, for all of your assistance, guidance, and kindness during this process. Each one of you has been influential in this experience and I will always be grateful to you for lending your talents to me. Thank you!

Barbara J. Yancy-Tooks

Dissertation Title IMPACT OF SELECTION PRACTICES ON CAREER ADVANCEMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN IN COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION

Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative ethnographic study was to explore the experiences of African American women about their perceptions of factors (i.e. senior administrator selection practices, institutional practices, barriers, and coping strategies) that hinder or facilitate advancement in community college administration. The following questions guided the research: What are the factors African American women identify that enabled them to succeed? What are the perceptions of African American women participants in this study about the senior administrative selection practices at Texas community colleges? What are the perceived barriers hindering African American women from advancing to senior administrative positions in Texas community colleges? Nine African American senior-level administrators from Texas community colleges participated in face-to-face interviews. An NVivo8® data analysis and transcribed interviews revealed nine themes: factors influencing advancement, supportive relationships in current position, professional experiences, selection and hiring processes are in place, perception that selection practices are fair, perceptions that selection practices inhibit fairness, local leadership development programs lack mentoring and preparation, personal barriers hindering advancement, and perceived barriers hindering African American women. The participants in this study revealed firsthand information about the impact of selection practices on the career advancement of African American women administrators. The results of the study highlighted the need to develop stronger policies and procedures to encourage participation in community college administration.

Dedication

I thank God, my light, and savior for opening the path for the completion of this arduous journey. Through Him, all things are possible. I dedicate this study to my daughter, Barbara Juanita Tooks, for her sacrifice, patience, and the support that I needed to accomplish this work. To my late mother, Margie Daniels Yancy, who encouraged her seven children to maintain a hard work ethic and an appreciation of the value of an education in pursuing our dreams. Lastly, I wish to dedicate this study to my siblings, April Denise Yancy, Ronald Anthony Yancy, Keith Damon Yancy, Michael Thomas Yancy, Sharon Paulette Gatling, and Clara Lynn Yancy for your motivation giving me the impetus to move forward in my passion for this topic; and the love and support in whatever endeavor I chose.

Acknowledgements

I must thank my mentor, Dr. Marcia Brevard Wynn for her willingness to work with me on short notice and continually providing positive encouragement and feedback throughout the dissertation process. A special thanks to my committee members, Dr. Ify Diala and Dr. Dennis White for being forthright and honest in providing feedback on the dissertation. I would like to acknowledge a number of individuals that helped me throughout this journey. Amber Archuletta-Lucero, Lucretia Thomas, Lourdes Garcia, Rhonda McCay, Heather Cardova, Sandy Calderon, Evelyn Hollis, and Dr. Adriana Contreras. I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the women in this study for pausing their busy schedules, sharing their experiences, and making me a proud Black woman in higher education.

Timothy R. Taylor

Dissertation Title THE DEGREE TO WHICH LEADERS' CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE, LEADERSHIP SKILLS, AND NPO PERFORMANCE CORRELATE

Abstract

This quantitative, correlational study generated an empirically-based inference that knowledge of cultural intelligence (CQ) theory and practices and leadership skills across the nonprofit sector in the West Michigan Triplex of Kent, Ottawa, and Muskegon Counties, including its faith-based segment, need elevation. By extension, the study supports the qualitative research commissioned previously by the West Michigan Chamber Coalition. This study examined responses of a sample

of 91 of the 589 NPO organizational leaders who indicated willingness to participate. Specifically, the current study found a weak, negative correlation relationship between leaders' leadership skills and the financially based performance of their organizations. Dissimilar to the results of other studies, the current study also found very weak correlation of the sample leaders' CQ and their NPO's financial performance, as measured by the efficiency ratio. The test for a mutually advantageous conjunction of CQ and leadership skill only proved that the lack of CQ was dilutive to the covariance of leadership skills. The concluding inference is the need for leaders and practitioners to elevate NPO leader CQ, as well as leadership knowledge and ability. The study also recommends the efficiency ratio as a quick, all-inclusive method of financial performance measurement allowing NPO leaders, including board members, to concentrate more readily on mission/vision issues.

Dedication

To Linda, my only true love since we were in our mid-teens, I dedicate this work in tribute to your encouragement, patience, and endurance for the past four years. You claim you always wanted to marry a doctor, and my inability to become a veterinarian was not an obstacle to your commitment. I only regret that 50 years have passed since you began your encouragement.

I dedicate this also to our children, Lisa, Lori, and Andy, their respective spouses, Rob, Steve, and Stephanie, as well as our seven handsome and loving grandsons who enjoy life and will hopefully learn to love learning: Luke, Logan, Brady, Jacob, Carson, Tyler, and Lincoln. I look forward to catching up on the family fun time we have missed in the past four years.

Finally, this is dedicated in love, respect, and memory of my father, Robert W. Taylor, whose counsel many decades ago taught me many important achievement lessons. In particular, when I was not accepted into veterinary school, he said as only a Father can, "Look, why don't you stop brooding. Just go back to college and study something you would enjoy learning about." Those words became the quintessential elements of life-long learning for me, a lesson that has served as airflow under my wings, of inspiration for this project to be completed at the not-so tender age of 65, but also the inspiration to continue contributing after 42 years as a banker.

Acknowledgements

Many words of appreciation exist, and some will be probably go unsaid. First, I am indebted to many faculty, but especially to Dr. Dean Finley, who was willing to take me on as a mentee. He chaired this dissertation project despite an immense schedule of teaching, mentoring, speaking internationally, and board activities. My most sincere thanks are also extended to Dr. Pearl Smith, whose encouraging words, availability, and counsel were a constant. I am grateful as well to Dr. Cathie Witty, for helping me through facilitating a course that taught me how to construct meaning from the often-obtuse issues of philosophy, as well as for reading and counsel on this project as a committee member.

I also must extend my appreciation to my statistician, Dr. Maureen Steinwall, whose credentials are only overshadowed by her commitment as a teacher. Dr. Maureen was there when I needed help with the technicalities of statistics, or just some encouraging words. Dr. Norma Turner came recommended as being a highly qualified editor. That was an understatement, so the favor of recommendation has been extended to others, just as it is here.

Dr. Dave Livermore has become a new friend through this project. His writing in the scholarly field and relatively new construct of cultural intelligence span academics into the introduction of the theoretical to practitioners. CQ is on the cutting edge between introduction and implementation. Dr. Livermore's abilities will enable that important advancement into practice. I hope this project serves that effort in some small way.

Finally, I would be terribly remiss not to acknowledge the University of Phoenix for its leadership in the facilitation of on-line learning. This project, the curriculum that led to it, and the experience of working with other learners from many parts of the United States as well as other nations and continents, have all been awe inspiring. The faculty is prepared, trained in on-line facilitation, and an outstanding set of individuals who inspire learners to think and write with form and substance. The on-line library and e-Texts are fantastic tools for the 21st century learner. The program's building-block curriculum generates a logical concluding event: production of another life-long learner, leader, scholar, and practitioner. This commendation of the University of Phoenix seems only appropriate.

Rebecca J. Yackel

Dissertation Title RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF NURSES IN LONG-TERM CARE WITHIN THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Abstract

The problem of interest is that the nurse shortage, both nationwide and within the state of Florida, has affected the

recruitment and retention of nurses in long-term care facilities. The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs has experienced difficulty with recruitment and retention of nurses to their long-term care facilities. The researcher developed the research instrument and conducted personal and telephonic interviews. The five main themes which developed include the nurses work for the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs because of the great benefits, the nurses are proud to serve Veterans, the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs provides a quality work environment and the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs provides quality care to the Veterans. There are negative aspects to working at the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs such as substandard salaries.

The results of the study identify very positive perceptions of the nurses who work with the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs which greatly influence the decision to recruit and retain employment within the Department. The negative concerns include the need for improved salaries, incentives and career advancement opportunities. Recommendations for a future study include replication of this study at a later date. This study was limited to nurses who have remained within the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs as opposed to nurses in the private sector. The results are limited by the honesty and accuracy of the participants' responses.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my deceased father, Lt.Col. John B. Baxley, Ph.D. My father, John Baxley will be remembered as a hero, as a gentle man with a strong sense of integrity and faith. He loved his country and he served his country well as a Veteran of three wars. He loved his community and he never hesitated to become involved in the community he lived. He was a scout leader, Shriner, educational leader and strong member of his church and faith. My father loved his family. My father encouraged all his children and grandchildren to pursue education as an avenue to succeed and excel. My father would be proud to see how I have achieved this level of education as he had attained. Thank you, father for your lifetime of support.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express heartfelt appreciation to the following people, without whom I would have been unable to complete this dissertation. First, I would like to acknowledge my committee, Dr. Jeffrey Rhoades, Dr. Susan Merideth, and Dr. Amy Hakim. Dr. Rhoades, for his direction and patience while directing the dissertation. Dr. Merideth, for the guidance, support and attention to detail. Dr Hakim, for continuous support and encouragement. I thank Dr. Diane Dusick for continued advisement on proper format and editing of the dissertation.

I would especially like to acknowledge my husband Paul McClintock, for his unconditional support and sacrifice for the past 5 years as we completed this journey together. I also acknowledge my children Patrick and Jonathan who provided ongoing support with this major endeavor.

Finally, I would like to thank my team cohort members James Cannon, Kimberly Steele and Karen Macaulay. The strength, support and encouragement I received from my team members provided the ongoing motivation to continue and complete the journey with the accomplishment of a Doctorate in Health Administration.

Tracie D. Johnson-Wagner

Dissertation Title COMPARISON OF SYMPTOM TYPE AND CLUSTERING WITH RACE IN THE DIAGNOSIS OF SCHIZOPHRENIA

Abstract

The United States healthcare community has recognized the existence of disparities in mental healthcare and the need to establish equality across various population segments for access and delivery of services (IOM, 2002). This nonreactive, quantitative, descriptive, and comparative study examined Schizophrenia patient records from a Veterans Administration hospital to identify current diagnostic characteristics in two ethnic populations. Results indicated a general randomness in diagnostic patterns that were inconsistent with previous research but suggested certain other patterns that were related to ethnicity and consistent with past research. Results of this study support a recommendation for expanded descriptive diagnostic research.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my wonderful best friend and soul mate, David. You kept me grounded and focused throughout this entire process. Through sickness and in health your dedication, perseverance, and positive attitude were instrumental in my achieving this extraordinary goal. To Missy, Raven, Fancy, Alice, and Tracee, my beautiful angels, thank you for providing the unconditional love and humor that I needed during this journey.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Philip Davidson, my mentor, who guided me throughout this process. Your advice and support

were essential throughout this incredible journey. My committee members, Dr. Patricia Callow and Dr. Elisabeth Weinbaum, thank you for your commitment, wonderful advice, and guidance. To Dr. George Lutz of the North Chicago Veterans Administration Hospital, thank you for your assistance, hospitality, and support throughout the data collection process. Finally, thank you to my cohort and residency mates; it was an amazing experience, one that I will never forget.

Aldon Wayne Scott

Dissertation Title URBAN INDIAN HEALTH CLINICS, FUNDING ISSUES, AND THEIR EFFECTS ON DECISION MAKING

Abstract

The purpose of the sequential triangulation mixed methods study was to explore the effects Indian Health Service (IHS) government funding cuts of 30% or higher might have on decision making in the areas of access, quality, and cost for urban Indian clinics in the San Francisco Bay Area. The study involved assessing the opinions of Indian health care leaders in an effort to gain an understanding of the potential impact of future IHS budget cuts on the Native American population in the Bay Area. The study findings revealed that a significant cut in IHS funding would affect access to high demand programs and services as well as programs and services with a high level of cultural significance. In response to a significant cut, the urban Indian clinic would focus on other revenue prospects or restructure organizational services using a lower budget. Any significant disruption in access would cause urban Indian patients to either travel to other community clinics for services or to stop using the clinic's health care services altogether. The study findings indicated that a potential cut of 30% or higher in IHS governmental funding to urban Indian clinics would affect the quality of health care at the local urban Indian clinic. A significant cut in IHS funding would force the clinic's leadership to cut staff or providers, limit the amount of time spent with Indian patients, or recruit less qualified staff or providers. Despite any action taken by the clinic's leadership, the clinic must always provide high quality services. The findings indicated that potential cuts of 30% or higher in IHS governmental funding to urban Indian clinics would affect the cost of health care at the local urban Indian clinic. A significant cut in IHS funding would cause the leadership to focus on other revenue prospects, cut transportation services, increase patient out-of-pocket expenses, or cut free programs or services. An increase in cost might cause urban Indian patients to relocate to native reservations in response to an increase in out-of-pocket expenditures at the local urban Indian clinic or to stop using the services altogether.

Dedication

To all of my friends, family and loved ones that have been an inspiration to me. The love and support given by everyone had no small part in my achievements thus far.

Acknowledgements

First, I must give thanks to my mother Jo Rene Scott. Without her love and support, I never would have gotten this far in life. I want to give a special thanks to Allison Jones. Without her love and sound counsel, it is hard to imagine ever advancing this far. I want to thank Gary L. Olimpia and the whole Olimpia, Whelan, Lively, and Ryan family for molding me into the professional I am today. Without their help and support, I would have never gotten through my undergraduate and graduate school with such high marks. I give thanks to Elizabeth Hunt CEO, Barbara Miao CFO, and Dorsey Moore former Director of Development of the Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley for the insights into the inner-workings of governmental grants and contracts. Without their help in understanding the complexities and issues of government funding, completion of this dissertation would have been almost impossible. I must thank my mentor Suzanne Richins, DHA, and committee members Dr. Brian W. Sloboda and Dr. Leslie Kille for their help and support during the dissertation process.

I owe a lifelong debt to my good friend Bryan Scott Fiddler who as an urban Native American opened the door and guided me into Indian country. Without his influence, help, and support, I would have never thought to study any aspect of urban Indian health care issues. I owe special thanks to Eugene Newman, for sharing his insights into what it is like for urban Native Americans to live in two worlds (Indian country and American society). I would also like to thank Michael Duran and Stephanie Reynolds for their continual demonstrations and insights into native ways.

Almitra L. Berry

Dissertation Title ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND LEADERSHIP IN LARGE, URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS: QUANTITATIVE DIFFERENCES BY SUPERINTENDENT PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine if any relationship existed between superintendents' professional background and academic achievement in 60 large, urban school districts with minimums of 50% minority student population and 40% Title I eligible students. The sample districts, all members of the Council of the Great City Schools, were geographically

located in 33 states and the District of Columbia. The 60 districts in the sample ranged in student population from 15,825 to 997,618. Minority representation in the districts ranged from 55% to 99%. Levels of socioeconomic disadvantage ranged from 41% to 100% Title I. The study primarily relied on archival achievement data. Results were inconclusive as to whether any correlation exists between academic achievement and the professional background of superintendents.

Dedication

For Anuit and Stephen

My daughter and son, you tolerated so much for so long for me to finish. Thank you. Mommy loves you.

For Dr. Mom

You always seemed to set the bar a little higher for me, but I am certain much of my obstinate nature comes from you, providing me the dogged determination to reach it.

For Daddy

While you did not live to see this day, I can only imagine you dreamt it and would be pleased to see it come to pass.

For A.J.

Mimi's free now! Let's play

Acknowledgements

In pondering the doctoral journey in retrospect, what first comes to mind is the Beatles' *The Long and Winding Road*. Long days and nights, many tears cried, but I knew somehow I would finally reach this door. It is a long and often lonely journey, but one never traveled alone. Many people along the way have encouraged, berated, and prodded me, contributing to this research effort. First and foremost, I thank my family. I thank my children, Anuit and Stephen, who had to endure Mom's endless lockdowns in the casita to read, research, and write. I know at times you thought I might never come out. I thank my mother, the original Dr. Berry, for setting the bar high. I thank my siblings who never asked me if I was completely insane for taking this on.

I would like to acknowledge and thank my mentor, Dr. Karen Halvorson who provided just the right amount of soft-spoken guidance and quiet insight to keep me focused. I greatly appreciate her feedback throughout the process. From beginning to end, she kept me focused and on schedule. Guidance, direction, feedback, and insight provided by my committee members, Dr. James Demery and Dr. Dennis White provided the perfect triangulation of viewpoints for this research. I offer my thanks and appreciation for your willingness to read and reread, question and redirect, until I finally got it. Credit goes to my editor, Suzanne for her keen eye and attention to APA detail.

I'd like to acknowledge the tolerance of my friends and colleagues too numerous to name who patiently endured my lack of social engagement. Although some of you did clearly and frequently state that I was insane, you never doubted, only encouraged and supported. Thank you all.

Finally, to my doctoral cohort friends: thanks for staying on the bus with me.

Hung Q. Kieu

Dissertation Title LEADERSHIP STYLES AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE: A PREDICTIVE ANALYSIS

Abstract

Leadership is critically important because it affects the health of the organization. Research has found that leadership is one of the most significant contributors to organizational performance. Expanding and replicating previous research, and focusing on the specific telecommunications sector, this study used multiple correlation and regression analyses to demonstrate a significant relationship between leadership styles and organizational performance at a communications company. Validated in the study were the effects of employee job satisfaction and affective commitment on the above relationship. Participated in the Web-based survey were 151 IT knowledge workers from a major communications company in the United States. Quantitative correlational was the research method used in the study. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (5X) Short Form was the major instrument used to measure the predictor variables of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. The findings of this study indicated that transformational and transactional leadership related positively and significantly to organizational performance. Transformational leadership was a stronger predictor of organizational performance, satisfaction, and commitment than transactional leadership was. Conversely, laissez-faire leadership had a direct and negative relationship with organizational performance. The empirical results of this study may contribute to the body of leadership knowledge and practice, and provide IT leaders and managers with a new, validated leadership style that is situational, transformational, visionary, innovative, participative, and employee-oriented. Recommended in the study was a new leadership model that includes a new decision-making paradigm.

Dedication

I am forever grateful to God for His unconditional love, amazing grace, spiritual calling, and wonderful blessings. May I glorify His Name with the results of this research study. May the learning I receive from this study be a blessing to everyone.

To my late father, Hưng luôn tưởng nhớ đến lời dạy dỗ của Bố, và nhớ ơn Bố vô vàn. Ước mong Bố đã toại nguyện và mỉm cười nơi cõi bình yên vì con cả của Bố đã cố gắng vượt bực để duy trì huyết thống của giòng họ Kiều.

To my living mother, I always felt strong and loved when I was a toddler resting in your arms. Today, I strive diligently and vigorously when I think of you, remembering your plain words, “Con cứ chịu khó thi đỗ đi.” These words are plain and simple yet they are a special inspiration to me, a motivation for my lifelong learning.

To my wife, children, and grandchildren (Caleb and his future siblings, cousins), this dissertation is my precious gift to you all. I prayerfully hope it will be of an inspiration to your academic endeavor. When I was in high school, I said to myself constantly that I must study hard, very hard for the ones I love someday. The day has come, and I want each of you to know that I love you very much.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to many individuals who provided me with love, support, and guidance. I am indebted to Dr. Eugene Jablonski, my committee chair and mentor, who taught me in a philosophy class early in the doctoral program, and later accepted my invitation to serve in the dissertation committee. Since then, I have been receiving nothing but his gracious response, warm support, practical guidance, and encouragement.

I would like to thank Dr. Stuart Gold and Dr. Brenda Jack who served as committee members. I was inspired by the challenging, intriguing questions they offered. They exemplified the quality of research and asked me tough questions, which enabled me to become a stronger and resilient doctoral learner. I thank Dr. Bammel for her speedy, outstanding editing services provided to me.

To the professors who taught me in this doctoral program at University of Phoenix, I am very appreciative of their wisdom embedded in the lecture notes, scholarly comments, and feedback. Their teaching and leadership were indeed exemplary. From my perspective, they transcend the rigorous requirements of the doctoral program. My special thanks go to Dr. Jack Crews, Dr. David Gould, Dr. “Phil” Davidson, Dr. M. Lind, Dr. Alex Hapka, Dr. S. Ferebee, Dr. J. Keyes, Dr. Ron Black, and Dr. Frank Appunn.

The completion of this dissertation was not possible without great assistance I received from my classmates, colleagues, friends, and business partners. I thank Ted Woodrow, Glenda Holcomb, and Jose Gotay for their input to the pilot study. I am thankful for the time and effort of the 1,200 people who received and responded to my invitation e-mail. Words cannot express my gratitude to the 240 people who accepted my invitation graciously and completed the survey successfully.

Yolanda D. Williams

Dissertation Title A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF KINDERGARTEN AND FIRST GRADE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COACHING

Abstract

The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative study was to explore the perceptions of kindergarten and first grade teachers on professional development and coaching from a consultant in a New York City Public elementary school. Teachers described what tools they used from the professional development and coaching sessions to support them in meeting the needs of disruptive students instead of referring students for special education services. Ten participants from a New York City public school were observed and interviewed. Data were transcribed and analyzed using the modified van Kaam method of Moustakas. Ten themes emerged from the observation analysis, whereas seven themes emerged from the analysis of the interviews. One of the significant findings was that student referrals were reduced as a result of professional development and coaching. The most salient teacher behavior and strategy used by the participants for a variety of disruptive student behaviors included: (a) reminding the students the rules and (b) moving a student near the teacher in order to give the student more focused attention. In terms of instructional strategies, the participants learned vocabulary techniques and learning center strategies from professional development. Based on the results of the study, it was recommended that professional development and coaching to be encouraged by school administrators in reducing student referrals for special education services. The limitations of the results were provided in the study.

Dedication

When I was a little girl, my mother would always tell me that God sent angels to watch over us. I always believed this to be true. Before taking this doctoral journey, I asked God to provide me with guidance and the angels as he has always done. He opened all doors and windows that allowed me to take flight. He sent me the angels I needed for traveling purposes.

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, best friend, encourager, and supporter. His most famous words were, "Baby, we'll do what we have to do".

My children and grandchildren, who looked up to me as their caregiver had become my caregivers by becoming more independent with their responsibilities allowing me time to complete my work. I hope that I have inspired them to achieve their true potential.

My mother, who always told me that education, will allow me to be anything I want to be. I thank you so much for these words over the years for they have inspired me to continue my education.

My mother-in-law, who always had kind words to say, prepared meals for the family, and always offered support so that I could complete this journey.

My siblings, who refer to me as the nerd of the family and constantly reminded me that I was only doing what was expected of me. Thank you all for the vote of confidence.

In loving memory of my Uncle Thomas Paisley and my friend Lorna Bristol. Uncle Thomas encouraged me to become an educator and Lorna told me to focus on the family and my doctorate degree. Thank you all.

Acknowledgements

My experience as an online learner at the University of Phoenix has been phenomenal. I believe that I have had an opportunity to learn from individuals who know their roles in society and their responsibilities to society. These individuals are willing to pass the torch to others so that the roles and responsibilities not only continue but also become instrumental in improving future generations and the world as a whole. I enjoy playing basketball and each one of my committee management members played the key positions in helping me win the championship.

Dr. Robin Chambers, mentor of my dissertation committee, who played center. She remained with me throughout the dissertation process even when I changed my topic several times. She was very open to my ideas and provided assistance when I needed it. She let me run the show. Thank you for the independence.

Dr. Marie Klofenstine, committee member who played point guard. She called the play that provided me with guidance and direction when I started my initial proposal. Her experience in the area of students with special needs helped me to look at policy differently. Dr. Patricia Shopland, committee member who played forward. She picked up the ball, ran with it, and assured all players were in place before letting it go. As my first facilitator, she provided me with the writing skills I needed to make it through this program. Dr. Muhammad Betz, who was unable to continue the dissertation journey with me but was very instrumental in providing me with positive feedback.

The University of Phoenix not only has great faculty members but counselors as well. I have had the opportunity of receiving administrative guidance throughout this journey. I would like to thank Debbie Huff, admissions counselor. Debbie and I have developed a relationship throughout my journey. Her dedication, openness, and honesty helped me tremendously. Thank you for sticking with me from the beginning to the end.

I want to also acknowledge and thank the individuals who supported encouraged me:

- Clara Paisley, my aunt who kept saying, "You are doing it", so enthusiastically.
- Carmen Roldan, my good friend who understood what I was doing and encouraged me to finish.
- Ramona Kelly, who was open and honest about everything and kept calling me Dr. Williams throughout the doctoral program.
- Alix Jospitre, my colleague who helped me to look at things differently without making judgment.
- Irwin Albert, my colleague who always shared his ideas with others.
- Marvin James, my cousin who was very instrumental in assisting me with technology. He did such a great job that I was able to teach him some things.
- Sharon Graham, my childhood friend who said that I was going places.
- Audrey Sumpter, my friend who stepped in as a mentor for me when I started teaching.
- Iris Medas, a friend and colleague who told me to go for it.
- Keena Flournoy, a colleague who encouraged me to grow professionally.

- Doren Robinson, a good friend who continuously prayed for me.
- Virgie Jones, a good friend who always listened.
- George Moore, a colleague who always shared ideas with me.
- Sharon Smalls who encouraged me with her thoughtful words.
- Kimberly Snead-McDaniel and Marjorie Gibbs-Bond who were in my cohort and became very close friends.
- My principal who allowed me to conduct the study in the school
- The 10 teachers who participated in this study.

Lodessa S. Washington

Dissertation Title FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE UNWED MOTHERS TO COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL IN A SCHOOL-BASED PARENTING PROGRAM

Abstract

The purpose of the qualitative phenomenological study was to explore educational leaders' perceptions of the factors that influence unwed pregnant and parenting students enrolled in a school-based parenting program to complete high school by conducting in-depth interviews of 20 educational leaders in Dougherty County, Georgia. The chosen leaders were personnel from the Network of Trust School Health Program, a division of Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital. Findings of the study reflect ways that school leaders can employ teen pregnancy prevention programs more effectively to reduce dropout rates and improve graduation rates. The results could help to employ new pregnancy prevention instructional strategies replicating the lived experiences of 20 educational leaders. Data collected from the interviews were transcribed and coded in a qualitative software analysis program and organized into the following themes: (a) perceptions and experiences, (b) services and support, (c) assessing students' performance, (d) barriers in school-based parenting program, (e) perceived needs of unwed pregnant and parenting students, (f) childbirth /parenting curriculum, g) professional development, (h) reducing dropout rates and improving high school graduation rates, (i) services and programs provided by community partners, and (j) role of education in policy evaluation. The results of the study led to the construction of the school-based parenting leadership model to assist school district personnel in developing educational programs and community outreach programs focused on reducing dropout rates and improving high school graduation rates through education and collaborating together with federal, state, and local governments. The partnership of synergism can be a powerful tool to renew individual lives, both academically and socially.

Dedication

I dedicate this academic accomplishment in the loving memory of my mother, Alberta Harris Swain, a woman with an open heart, a keen mind, and a giving soul. Among other things, she was the first to teach me the meaning of leadership. I am so much a product of my mother's efforts, and for that I say, I love you, Mom. Although my mother is no longer with us in body, her soul lives on in the hearts of those who experienced her loving touch, and because of this study, maybe in the life of an unwed pregnant or parenting student that she never met, but surely would have loved. I am forever reminded of her words embedded in my spirit, "You can do anything you want to, you just have to try hard!"

Acknowledgements

Praise the Lord everybody! Throughout my life, my family, church, and friends have always provided me with the genuine care that I find so powerful in motivating success, and this has been especially true for this project. To my husband, Rev. Eddie Washington, who encouraged and supported me during this process, I want to thank him for being my devoted friend and pillar of strength. To my daughters RONALDA and LOETTE, I want to thank them for their encouragement, understanding, and love. Thank you for showing interest in what I was doing, how I was doing, and making me believe that I could do this. I also lovingly acknowledge my daddy and Earlene for the influence they had on my life. I am both humbled and proud to complete this work, knowing the impact this accomplishment may have on future generations to do the same.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my committee. A special thanks to Dr. Deborah Gilbert, who was my guiding light, for encouraging hard work and well deserved breaks. My sincere gratitude goes to Dr. Florence Aitken and Dr. Mohammad Sharifzadeh for their time and dedication to the quality and refinement of my work. A special thanks goes to my editor, Toni Williams, for all the time she spent reading the various versions of my dissertation.

Finally, a special thank you to Angie Barber, the Director of Network of Trust School Health Program, for providing the host facility to conduct the research study and for providing me with the time and resources to dedicate to my research study. With the help of this extraordinary individual, this project became a reality. I would also like to thank the Network of Trust team who participated in the research study; I am grateful for their support and encouragement.

Debra Marie Di Nola

Dissertation Title A QUALITATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF ILLITERACY IN HAITI

Abstract

Haiti, considered the poorest country in the Western hemisphere, has suffered from high illiteracy rates for generations. This qualitative, phenomenological study recorded the lived experiences of Haitian educators from the Bethesda Cazeau, Bethesda d'Haiti, and Mixte Confraternite Cité Soleil schools in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. One-on-one, semi-structured interviews with 10 Haitian educators were conducted in the current study. The three themes that emerged from data analysis included: Higher literacy would reduce Haiti's societal problems, including crime and exploitation of women and children; Haitian educational programs are more effective with the use of imagery, objects, and interactive activities; and, school feeding programs are important to education, and mentoring is a key component of education within Haiti. The current study explored the effect of cultural, social, political, religious, and familial influences on the Haitian education infrastructure. In the wake of the January 12, 2010, earthquake, the most significant challenge Haitian educators' face is a total restructuring and reform of the country's educational infrastructure.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the victims of the catastrophic January 12, 2010, earthquake in Haiti and to the Haitian people, who with amazing resiliency, dignity, faith, and grace start the process of rebuilding their lives and beautiful country. May the children of Haiti be the beacons of hope and light for your future!

To the two heroes in my life, my parents Edna Zimmermann Di Nola and Michael John Di Nola, who instilled in me the importance of honor, respect, integrity, accountability, perseverance, and service, and who gave me the love, compassion, and wings to walk my own path.

Acknowledgements

It indeed takes great teachers to make successful students. I would like to thank many of my teachers who supported, challenged, and empowered me in my academic and life pursuits: Betty Yeaw, Bernard Ouellette, William Elwell, Warren Muchmore, Wendell Purrington, Richard Gremlitz, Charles Rodis, Raymond Chase, Wendy Snow Fogg, Carol Lizotte, Reagh Greenleaf, Jr., Carol Hutchins, and Christopher Penczak. I am grateful for the patient guidance and unending support of my mentor, Dr. Lisa Kangas, whose direction has broadened the perspective of the scope of my study, and to my committee members, Dr. Daniel Kealey and Dr. Frederic Will, for their valuable contributions and insights. Heartfelt thanks to Clark Bourne for introducing me to Haiti, to Nancy Turner for her help in obtaining locations and participants in Haiti, to the schools and participants who agreed to be part of the current study, to Jean Higaud Daniel Antoine (GoGo), and to Beth Runnels, Sandra Allaire, and the students of Timberlane High School for their support. To my cousin, Rosanne Di Nola, for her insights into literacy in the United States; to my sounding boards, Mimi Alberu and Sharon Welch, for their tireless feedback and encouragement; and to my cohort members, Ray Benedetto, Linda Sudi, Yealonda Johnson, Ron Polite, Carmen Vega, Jacqueline Jackson-Palmer, and Megen Saez, for excellent repartee and camaraderie. Many, many thanks to my teammate, Aldith Bell, and peer coach, David Tait, for their daily connections, grounding, and inspiration during life challenges that came to pass during this journey. We kept our eyes on the prize!

Special thanks to my cousin, Dr. Marlane Zimmermann Steinwart, who put the seed for the doctoral program into my head on the magic front porch in Rye Beach. To my wonderful family—Uncle Lenny, thanks for the animated and enlightened conversations on comparative religions and world philosophies; Mike, Mark, Matty, Christopher, and Jason, thanks for the help with my many home improvement projects while I was focused on the doctoral program; Maria and Donna, thanks for reminding me that girl power is alive and well and for being my greatest cheerleaders! Most importantly, to my beloved mother, Edna, who has always believed that I could achieve anything I put my mind to and who taught me to always be true to myself.