

#LEADINGMAMAS – A VISUAL ETHNOGRAPHY

by

Sarah Jean Baker

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Council of
Texas State University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
with a Major in School Improvement
December, 2016

Committee Members:

Sarah Nelson Baray, co-chair

Barry Aidman

Jennifer Jacobs

Patrice Werner, co-chair

COPYRIGHT

by

Sarah Jean Baker

2016

FAIR USE AND AUTHOR'S PERMISSION STATEMENT

Fair Use

This work is protected by the Copyright Laws of the United State (Public Law 94-553, section 107). Consistent with fair use as defined in the Copyright Laws, brief quotations from this material are allowed with proper acknowledgement. Use of this material for financial gain without the author's express written permission is not allowed.

Duplication Permission

As the copyright holder of this work I, Sarah Jean Baker, authorize duplication of this work, in whole or in part, for educational or scholarly purposes only.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Andrew Minor Baker. Thank you for always loving me and supporting my dreams. And I think you're fun to hang out.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to thank my parents for their unconditional love and support. I would also like to thank my children, Sawyer Nathaniel, Jack Andrew, Finn Michael, and Phoebe Elizabeth for always being my best teachers.

I would also like to thank the collaborators of the study: April, Natalie, and Tracie. Thank you for your willingness to share your stories of being a leadingmama.

I appreciate Texas State University for designing the PhD program using a cohort model, and I must thank Cohort 12. Everyone in the cohort has taught me something. I am especially thankful to Adrienne and Jeff. Our time together carpooling is something I still miss.

Finally, I am thankful to each of my committee members for their support and especially thankful to my chair, Dr. Sarah Nelson Baray for her belief in me from the beginning of this journey.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	ix
ABSTRACT.....	xii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	4
Purpose of Study.....	6
Research Questions.....	6
Theoretical Framework.....	7
Significance.....	9
Scope of Study.....	12
Definitions.....	13
II. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	16
History of Women: “In the Beginning”.....	16
History of Women: In the School.....	18
History of Women: In the Home.....	24
Expectations of Mothers.....	28
Challenges for Mothers.....	37
Expectations of Educational Leaders.....	44
Challenges for Women Educational Leaders.....	48
Conclusion.....	53
III. METHODOLOGY.....	54
What is Ethnography?.....	55
What is Feminist Ethnography?.....	58
What is Visual Ethnography?.....	60
Why Feminist-Visual Ethnography?.....	62

Contemporary Ethnography	63
Collaborator Selection	65
Data Collection	68
One-on-One Interviews.....	69
First Focus Group	72
Expectations for Collaborators and Self	73
Second Focus Group	74
Third Focus Group	76
Fourth Focus Group	77
Final Focus Group.....	77
Analysis.....	78
Trustworthiness.....	84
Limitations and Delimitations.....	86
Researcher Perspective	87
IV. FINDINGS	89
Introducing the #leadingmamas	89
April	89
Natalie	94
Tracie	97
Sarah (me).....	102
Superwoman	108
Double Agents	123
Intensive Leadership & Mothering	140
Change Agents	149
Conclusion	155
V. CONCLCUSIONS	156
Conflicted Mothering.....	166
Transpersonal Mothering.....	175
Implications.....	177
School Districts.....	177
Academy	178
Policy Makers	179
Future Research	179
Recommendation	181
Conclusion	184
REFERENCES	187

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Data Collected.....	69
2. Participant Profiles.....	107
3. Types of Mothering.....	174

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Our sick child.....	3
2. Motherhood.....	80
3. April being a mama with her first son and expecting her second son	93
4. April being a leader along with some other teachers at her school	94
5. Natalie with her children, after school pick-up.....	97
6. Tracie’s first born, a son, Ryan.....	101
7. Tracie’s daughters.....	101
8. Mama to four.....	106
9. Superwoman Comic.....	108
10. #leadingmamas need to keep the home clean and organized	109
11. #leadingmamas get up early, even on the weekend.....	110
12. #leadingmamas need to provide learning opportunities	111
13. #leadingmamas need to cook healthy dinners	111
14. #leadingmamas feel guilt when others help out.....	117
15. Quote about mothering young children	121
16. #leadingmamas are superwomen.....	122
17. #leadingmamas are double agents	123
18. A book being read by one of the collaborators	130

19.	Where do you focus your time?!?	134
20.	Laundry and student teacher evaluations [Emoji]	136
21.	Trying to decide...Evaluations or District Leadership...Both require sitting behind a computer	136
22.	Healthy lunch (ha)...investigations, student leaders, and parent phone calls, woohoo!	137
23.	Sick baby snuggles.....	137
24.	Love nighttime snuggles	138
25.	So, Phee is already asleep	139
26.	High school Graduation 2016	144
27.	I wish!	145
28.	I know I'm both	149
29.	After-school with dad	154
30.	#leadingmamas	155
31.	Healthy lunches for proper health and development	157
32.	Children's behavior is a reflection of their mother's abilities to mother	157
33.	School Improvement results are a reflection of the leader's ability to lead.....	158
34.	Increasing student learning is a result of leadership	158
35.	Celebration: nap time.....	170
36.	She wanted up	171
37.	Success: ironing done...With a slight consequence [Emoji].....	172
38.	Proud of this boy for his Caring Citizen award	173

39. #leadingmama 185

ABSTRACT

This study begins to fill the void of the challenges women who are mothers face while being an educational leader. Using an emergent feminist post-structural method, this study explores how women who identify as educational leaders and mothers negotiate these identities in their everyday lives. Four participant collaborators employed visual ethnographic methods to create representations of their leader and mother identities and explored the meaning of these representations through focus groups and digital communication tools (Instagram, texting, and Facebook). The findings support other studies that suggest women struggle to meet the expectations of intensive mothering (Hays 1996). The study also reveals an associated struggle with the expectations of what we call intensive leadership. Leadership and mothering identities are not separate from one other, but rather integrated in the everyday life of women.

I. INTRODUCTION

The music from my husband's iPhone wakes us up to another Monday morning, the start of another school week for both of us. He jumps into the warm shower, while I take a few more moments to lie in bed under the warmth of the down comforter and enjoy the quiet of the house. I know once I get up from bed, the day will start and there will be no more quiet moments until the sun sets on the day.

I reluctantly rise from the bed when I hear Minor turn off the shower and I amble through our home, turning on lights as I pass by the switches on the white walls. I hear our oldest son, Sawyer, and we meet in the hallway. He wraps his arms around my legs and looks up to me, making direct eye contact and waiting for his morning kiss. As I kiss him on his chubby cheeks, I hear his younger brothers, twins, Jack and Finn, rising from their wooden bunk beds. Jack's voice is easy to hear, as he's grunting and fussing about getting out of bed. I enter our boys' shared bedroom with Sawyer following me.

I begin singing a favorite song of the boys with the hope that Jack will leave his grumpy attitude in the bed. Sometimes this works, but most of the time there is no cure for Jack's mindset about starting the day. Finn and Sawyer are already dressing themselves and looking for more morning kisses and hugs. I hear Minor enter the kitchen; I take this as my cue to get into the shower and get myself dressed and ready for the day. The boys are able to finish dressing themselves, but Minor is close by, making breakfast should the boys need him.

This morning by some miracle I am able to get through my shower without any of the boys wandering in and declaring an immediate pressing need ("I can't put on my socks!") or an injustice they had to endure from a brother or even Dada ("I was playing

with Bumblebee, first!”). I finish getting ready for the day by finding my pair of black wedge sandals in the closet. Minor walks into the bathroom to put a kiss on my cheek and lips before leaving for the day. We briefly exchange reminders about our day, “The boys’ lunches are ready on the counter.” “I have a meeting until 4.” “There’s a note in Sawyer’s backpack for his teacher. We’re having spaghetti and blue cheese salad for dinner tonight and we’ll eat at 5:30.” We end this exchange with the platitudes always spoken before leaving for our work day; “Have a great day.” “I love you.”

Some versions of the morning routine happen every workday without fail. While some mornings the boys may protest more about their breakfast choices or arguments between the boys abound, this is how the day begins before my husband and I leave for our positions at our schools. We are both school leaders. Interestingly, we became school leaders around the same time. This transition into education leadership coincided with the arrival of our first child, so while we were figuring out how to create changes in our school settings for the benefit of all children and families, we were also figuring out how to be parents.

Two of the most important identities my husband and I have are our identities as school leader and parent. While we both claim these identities, how we experience them is remarkably different. The language of discourse that is used with being a school leader and a parent “operates to produce very real, material, and damaging structures in the world” (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 481).

During our morning routine, we share the parenting responsibilities of getting the boys ready for their school day. In our home this is family work, not mother’s work. But

while we may practice the value of family work in our home, this value does not often carry into our places of a work, school settings for both of us.

One particular morning Minor and I were awoken by the sounds of a child throwing up. After jumping from our bed to investigate who was sick and where they had gotten sick, the next question became who would stay home from work to take care of our sick child. In our home, this decision is made each time a child is sick. Together Minor and I evaluate our work responsibilities for the day and make a decision that works best for our professional needs that day. On this day, we decided Minor would stay home with our sick child.



Figure 1. Our sick child. A photograph captured by my husband while our son was home from his school leader role for the day.

When I picked up our oldest son from school that afternoon, the same school where Minor is assistant principal, I considered two noteworthy remarks, one from an assistant in the office and the other from a teacher in the hallway. The assistant said,

“Minor’s such a great dad to take care of the kids when they’re sick.” And the teacher commented, “The boys sure are lucky to have a dad like Minor to take care of them when they’re sick.” Walking to the minivan with the boys I began to reflect on these statements and wondered about their hidden message.

If Minor is such a great dad and our boys are lucky to have him as their dad, what does this mean for me, as the boys’ mother? Am I not a great mom, because I needed to attend to my responsibilities as a school leader on this particular day? Are the boys unlucky they have a mother who works outside of the home as a school leader? And why do I often feel my school leader and mother identities are in constant conflict? And why does Minor seem to get extra credit for anything he does with the boys (e.g. taking them grocery shopping, taking them to the doctor, or taking care of them when they are sick)? I often feel I am looked upon with contempt for being a mother who works and sometimes puts my professional needs before my boys, even when they are sick.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this dissertation study is to examine the identities of school leader and mother in everyday life for women. The role of the school principal is changing (Crow, 2006; Ediger, 2014). The principal is no longer viewed as just a manager of the school (Ediger, 2014). Rather, the principal is recognized as a leader in charge of teaching and learning for the students (Ediger, 2014), as well as the teachers (Drago-Severson, 2012). The school leader not only has a role in high-stakes accountability (Crow, 2006) but is also expected to manage the myriad complexities associated with changing student populations and technology advances, as well as increasing interactions with the community (Crow, 2006). And, the school leader must also not forget to share

decision-making (DeMatthews, 2014). Being a school leader has become more than a full-time job; there are not enough hours in the day to accomplish all that needs to be done.

Being a mother, a good mother, traditionally has been viewed as a full-time job. What does being a good mother mean? A good mother in Western culture is someone who is engaged full-time with her mothering role at-home, typically White, middle-class, and expects all her aspirations will be filled by the mothering role (Hays, 1996; Johnston & Swanson, 2006). This definition of a good mother leaves out women of color, single parents, low-income, and even lesbian mothers (Johnston & Swanson, 2006; Medved & Kirby, 2005). This traditional mothering ideology is preserved by cultural hegemony and those who are not privileged by the dominant culture experience failure in meeting the good mothering standards (Johnston & Swanson, 2006). When one is a mother, the same can be said that is said about school leaders; there are not enough hours in the day to accomplish all that needs to be done to care for the children and home. So, what happens when a woman is a school leader and a mother?

As a woman who is a school leader and a mother I have personally experienced the impossible expectations of each of these identities. I have been subject to the views that women are still to be in charge of the children and home, even though I work outside of the home in the local schools, as a leader (Okimoto & Heilman, 2012). Never mind the fact that my husband is also a school leader, facing the same impossible expectations at another local school campus. Further, he is also a father and my partner in parenting our children. As I shared my experiences facing the impossible standards of being a school leader and a mother with my colleagues, who were also school leaders and

mothers, I began to notice they had similar experiences to share with me. So, I began to wonder more about these two identities, identities that I value and yet struggle with daily as I try to meet the cultural expectations of each. Why does the struggle exist for women who are school leaders and mothers? And what can be done about this struggle for women?

Purpose of Study

To more fully understand the experiences of women who are school leaders and mothers, this research study seeks to use visual ethnographic methods, specifically digital images captured by the participants, to convey the life experiences of women who are both educational leaders and mothers. The belief that “images convey” (Stanczak, 2007, p. 1) meaning is the starting place for the methodology of this study. The following research questions will be explored through this research study.

Research Questions

1. How do women make sense of their identities of being an educational leader and mother?
2. How do the identities of educational leader and mother interact, connect, and contribute to each other?
3. How do women negotiate their identities of being an educational leader and mother?

A single truth to be discovered is not the goal of the study; rather the goal is to discover how women’s identities are produced and regulated and the effects of their identities in the social world (St. Pierre, 2000). The research questions reflect the theoretical framework of this study, which is post-structural feminism.

Theoretical Framework

Post-structural feminism theory is the theoretical framework that will guide this study. Post-structuralism “rejects objectivity and the notions of an absolute truth and a single reality” (Frost & Elichaoﬀ, 2007, p. 43). Post-structural theory also focuses on how language, discourse, reason, power, resistance and freedom, and knowledge and truth connect to individuals (St. Pierre, 2000). For feminists this means there is an ability to look closer at the power of patriarchy and how it influences the social structures in the world (Frost & Elichaoﬀ, 2007). Another premise of feminism is that “women and men tend to lead different lives and have different experiences living within patriarchal cultures and societies” (Green, 2001, p. 7).

The belief that knowledge is socially produced, unstable, and contextualized will place an importance on discourse and language of this study (Frost & Elichaoﬀ, 2007). Post-structural feminism uses the theory of discourse from post-structuralism to investigate norms which unquestioned, continue to oppress and control women (St. Pierre, 2000). A theory of discourse helps us to better understand four interrelated ideas, as identified by Fraser (1990).

1. How social identities are created and change over time
2. How social groups are formed and unformed through collective agency, often under conditions of inequality
3. How the process of cultural hegemony in “dominant groups is secured and contested” (p.83), and
4. “Emancipatory social change and political practice” (p. 83)

Fraser (1990) also states that the “right kind of theory would counter the disabling assumption that women are just passive victims of male dominance and would help us understand how, even under conditions of subordination women participate in the making of culture” (p. 86). St. Pierre describes the hardest work is “being willing to think differently” (p. 478).

Thinking differently allows one to question the effects of humanism, which can be especially challenging as humanism is viewed as “so natural” (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 478). Feminists use post-structural theory to answer questions about life experiences differently, as well as ask questions that humanism does not allow (St. Pierre, 2000). Policies and structures can also be questioned and challenged and so an opportunity exists to create change. One result of changing structures is to allow for the creation of different mothering narratives, which can change both the meaning of mothering and feminism (Green, 2001). As these norms are uncovered and questioned in the everyday lives of women there is the opportunity to reject them and “make different statements about their lives” (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 486). This allows for deconstruction. St. Pierre (2000) wrote,

Thus, deconstruction is not about tearing down but about rebuilding; it is not about pointing out an error but about looking at how a structure has been constructed, what holds it together, and what it produces. (p. 482)

The limitations of language create structures that produce binaries, categories, and hierarchies that celebrate uniformity and neglect differences within people (St. Pierre, 2000). There can be no single definition of being a mother, “one size will never fit all” (Pomerantz, 2009, p. 155). Language is always incomplete and never able to capture the

full meaning of what is being named in the world (St. Pierre, 2000). Using a belief of feminism that “everything is political” and the post-structural belief that “everything is dangerous”, St. Pierre (2001) wrote, “If everything is both political and dangerous, then we are ethically bound to pay attention to how we word the world” (p. 484). This study looked to explore and understand how women understand their experiences as school leaders and mothers and how these identities create stresses, intersectionalities, and definition within the everyday lives of the participants.

Significance

While there is extant research into the challenges mothers in higher education face as they secure tenure (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2006), the stories from women who identify as educational leaders and mothers are missing from the research literature. There is also research on the leadership styles of women in both schools and businesses; (Ellemers, Rink, Derks, & Ryan, 2012) however, there is limited research on how the identities of being a school leader and mother are experienced by women. Research has established the impact leaders have on student achievement (Leithwood, 2006). And, it is also known that school leaders face challenges as leaders (Ferrandino, 2001; Sanchez & Thornton, 2010).

Sharon Hays, a sociologist, published her work in 1996 about “the cultural model of mothering” (Hays, 1996, p. x). She conducted in-depth interviews with 38 mothers of two to four year-old children in 1991 in San Diego, California. She also analyzed the history of child rearing and analyzed the texts of best-selling contemporary child-rearing manuals to discover their themes (Hays, 1996). From her research she named the ideology of intensive mothering (Hays, 1996).

The ideology of intensive mothering is a gendered model that advises mothers to expend a tremendous amount of time, energy, and money in raising their children. In a society where over half of all mothers with young children are now working outside the home, one might well wonder why our culture pressures women to dedicate so much of themselves to child rearing. And in a society where the logic of self-interested gain seems to guide behavior in so many spheres of life, one might further wonder why a logic of unselfish nurturing guides the behavior of mothers. These two puzzling phenomena make up what I call the cultural contradictions of contemporary motherhood. (p. x)

While Hays published her work in 1996, the ideology of intensive mothering still exists twenty years later. And perhaps the ideology has only intensified in today's culture, as Douglas and Michaels (2004) wrote,

Intensive mothering insists that mothers acquire professional-level skills such as those of a therapist, pediatrician ("Dr. Mom"), consumer products safety inspector, and teacher, and that they lavish every ounce of physical vitality they have, the monetary equivalent of the gross domestic product of Australia, and, most of all, every single bit of their emotional, mental, and psychic energy on their kids. (p. 6)

I believe that women who are school leaders and mothers experience this intensive mothering ideology in their daily experiences. Hays (1996) believed as women read her work *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood* they would find themselves recognizing the mothers in her study as women they could know and have an "aha experience" (as cited by Hays, 1996, p. xii). As I read her work, I had quite a few aha

experiences. The woman who participated in this study had similar experiences to share about the ideology of intensive mothering. In addition, to the ideology of intensive mothering, I believe an ideology exists for school leaders who are women and this ideology very much mirrors the ideology of intensive mothering.

The complexities faced by today's school principal are extensive and varied (Crow, 2006). The literature discusses the often gendered nature of leadership, not only within school organizations, but also within business organizations (Christman & McClellan, 2008; Ellemers et al., 2012; Lumby, 2015; Lumby & Azaola, 2014; Powell, 2011). So, in addition to the complexities school leaders face in today's culture, gender continues to impact women in school leadership positions.

Stereotypes of desirable characteristics in leaders: authoritarian, independent, disciplined (Sanchez & Thornton, 2010) seemingly favor men who are perceived to have those characteristics (Sanchez & Thornton, 2010). On the other hand, women are perceived as being cooperative, dependent, and emotional, which are not considered desirable traits for a leader (Sanchez & Thornton, 2010). Women also face the stereotype that they are responsible for all family concerns, duties, and obligations even if they work outside of the home (Sanchez & Thornton, 2010).

I have built upon the word choices Hays (1996) used to define intensive mothering in order to define this theoretical ideology of intensive leadership. Intensive leadership is a model that advises leaders to expend a tremendous amount of time, energy, and money to lead their school. The model is gendered, because women must work against, or comply with, stereotypes of what it means to be a leader (Sanchez & Thornton, 2010). "In seeking to form and control an individual identity, a woman cannot

avoid confronting the patriarchal systems that have variously evolved in cultures and religions over time” (Lumby, 2015, p. 30). An intensive leadership model exists, so how did these women negotiate the ideologies of intensive leadership and intensive mothering? This study benefits women currently in the field as school leaders and mothers, as well as future school leaders. The hope is that by better understanding the dynamics of the identities of being a school leader and a mother, improvements to systems and structures may be identified to improve support for women not only as school leaders, but also as mothers.

Scope of Study

This qualitative research includes women who identify as both school leaders and mothers in Central Texas. The women included in this study work or have worked within different leadership positions in schools. Some of the leadership positions the women have held include instructional leader, assistant principal, and principal. The goal of the research is “to expand and generalize theories (analytic generalizations) and not to extrapolate probabilities (statistical generalizations)” (Yin, 2014, p. 21).

The study was purposeful in not including men school leaders who are fathers. Fathers also experience challenges in meeting parenting and work expectations.

Fathers, like mothers, can enact intensive parenting in ways that are highly time consuming, expensive, labor intensive, relative to the fewer hours that men have available to participate in childrearing, and emotionally absorbing. Intensive fathers, like intensive mothers, become emotionally absorbed by the *activity* of parenting. (Palladino, 2014, loc. 5027 of 6032, italics original)

So, while I recognize that fathers have specific lived experiences about being a father and school leader, I am being purposeful in my study by not including the experiences of fathers who are school leaders. My research was conducted from a feminist standpoint which means I am privileging “women’s issues, voices, and lived experiences” in this study (Hesse-Biber, 2014).

Definitions

The following terms will be used throughout the study. For the purpose of this study these are the definitions I will be utilizing with these terms.

- **Educational Leader:** A woman in a leadership position in the school or school system. This can include a variety of positions within a school or school system, including: assistant principal, principal, central office administration. An Educational Leader is also defined as one who has studied and earned credentials or a degree in educational leadership. Educational Leadership is defined using the “working definition” of Bush & Glover (2003, p. 8). “Leadership is a process of influence leading to the achievement of desired purposes. Successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values. They articulate this vision at every opportunity and influence their staff and other stakeholders to share the vision. The philosophy, structures and activities of the school are geared towards the achievement of this shared vision.” (Bush & Glover, 2003, p. 8).
- **Mother:** A woman who is “responsible for and in a parental relationship with one or more children” (Garey, 1999). And from Rich (1976), “To ‘mother’ a child implies a continuing presence, lasting at least nine months, more often for years.

Motherhood is earned, first through an intense physical and psychic rite of passage—pregnancy and childbirth—then through learning to nurture, which does not come by instinct” (p. 12). A mother can also become a mother through adopting children. The term mother is often used to call out groups of women who are not good mothers and not nurturing: *working mother*, *welfare mother*, *teenage mother*; while the term mom means you are good in your mothering identity: *soccer mom*, *stay-at-home-mom*, *PTA mom* (Douglas & Michaels, 2004).

- Mama: The term mama was popularized during the early years of the mothers’ movement, as the term refused the more child-centered term mom or even mommy, as well as the role focus of the term mother (Kinser, 2010). So, using the word *mama* is an attempt to pay more attention to how we use words to describe our world when we talk about the identity of women who are mothers¹. It is a word, I believe, that is also more inclusive and affirming for all women and does not separate women from each other in their mothering identity.

¹The similarity of infant words for mother in 474 languages is *mama*, which was studied by George Peter Murdock (1959). His study noted that the easiest sounds for infants to make were nasal constants, like [m] and low vowels, like [a]. And this combination of sounds, often first sounds by the infant, have acquired the meaning of mother in baby talk, “through the early association of the infant and its maternal parent” (Murdock, 1959, p. 421). It is also interesting to note that the sounds associated with father [pa], [papa] are nearly as easy for infants to make in their first months (Murdock, 1929). Using the word *mama* also highlights the need to create more narratives around being a *mama*, remembering that “one size will never fit all” (Pomerantz, 2009, p. 155).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this literature review, I trace the history of women in schools, as well as the history of women in the more private sphere of the home from a Judeo-Christian Western perspective. The scholarly literature on the expectations of educational leaders and mothers will be explained. The challenges women educational leaders and mothers experience will also be examined to illustrate how gender impacts women in their leadership and mothering identities.

History of Women: “In the Beginning”

The idea of women being inferior and subordinate to men is found in the very first narrative in the Bible. The Biblical scriptures begin with the story of creation, and includes the narrative of Adam and Eve (Clifford, 2001). The story of Adam and Eve has been used to support the oppression of women (Noddings, 2003). Found in Genesis chapters two and three, their story is often retold with a focus on Eve. She is created after man is created (2:7); she is created to help man (2:18-23); she is created from the rib of a man (2:21-22); and she tempted man (3:6; Clifford, 2001). This narrative from the Bible has created, as have other narratives in the Biblical scriptures that include women, a Biblical paradigm that has established boundaries in society regarding gender roles (Clifford, 2001). During the late 70’s, Phyllis Trible, a Protestant, feminist Biblical scholar developed an interpretation of the passages about Eve (Genesis 2-3) that challenged long held beliefs about the patriarchal interpretation of the passage (Clifford, 2001).

Trible used a combination of hermeneutics of suspicion and hermeneutics of remembrance to recreate the story of Eve (Clifford, 2001). She focused on the Hebrew

words *'ādām*, *hā-'adāmâ*, and *'ēzer* in the scripture and their translation in English-language. These words are most often translated with the English words Adam and *helper* (Clifford, 2001). With a different interpretation of the Hebrew words to English-language, she presents the idea that the first creature created by God was an earthly creature, sexually undifferentiated, not specifically a man (Clifford, 2001). And then, God created a *companion*, not a *helper*, for the earthly creature (Clifford, 2001). The word companion signifies the relationship between the two is mutually beneficial (Clifford, 2001). This companion comes from the earthly creature's rib, where God is the surgeon (Clifford, 2001). The earthly creature will become a man, as a result of the creation of a woman (Clifford, 2001). God does all the creating; the man does not have a role in her creation, just like he had no role in his own creation (Clifford, 2001). The words in Genesis 2:23, "bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" show their "unity, solidarity, mutuality, and equality" (Clifford, 2001, loc. 1756 of 6799). In the next chapter of Genesis, the serpent challenges the woman and she eats from the forbidden tree and then shares with the man. Eve is known as the one who tempts Adam. Tribble's interpretation points out Adam's presence the entire time Eve interacted with the serpent (Clifford, 2001). Adam does not speak up to encourage obedience to God's command; instead he takes and eats what Eve gives him (Clifford, 2001). Then, God comes looking for the pair, but they hide from Him because of their fear and nakedness. Adam and Eve respond to God's questions and their responses show they are no longer companions, as God had designed them to be for each other (Clifford, 2001). Not only has the pair been separated from God and the other creatures of the garden, they are now also separated from each other (Clifford, 2001). As a result of sin, the man and woman will know the

dissonance and separation of patriarchy (Clifford, 2001). This is “symbolized in the man naming the woman (Gen. 3:20)” (Clifford, 2001, loc. 1792 of 6799). Therefore, patriarchy is not what God intended. He intended for there to be a partnership between women and men (Clifford, 2001).

The story of Adam and Eve is only one of the many stories from the Bible that have been used to influence the role and expectations of women (Clifford, 2001). In fact, the number of stories in the Biblical scriptures has created a Biblical paradigm (Clifford, 2001). The Biblical paradigm uses “symbols in ways that define and limit a society’s beliefs and attitudes. It establishes boundaries in a society that define the important realms of shared life, including gender roles and expectations” (Clifford, 2001, loc. 1815 of 6799). These boundaries are evident in our schools and our homes, even today.

History of Women: In the School

In order to understand today’s world, it is important to study yesterday’s world. The Biblical account of Adam and Eve creates a paradigm of expectations for women. Religion has been used to not only limit women’s education, but also to advance women’s education (Watts, 2013). The expectations of women have existed and prevailed for significant time (women and men still fight to change long-held beliefs and expectations about women) and were noticeable in the education system (McClelland, 1992). To understand the place of women within schools or the education system is to understand the values and beliefs held by a society (McClelland, 1992). The “attitudes, policies, and practices related to the rearing of the next generation and the continued intellectual and social development of its adult members” are a reflection of the values and beliefs of the society (McClelland, 1992, p. 3). For much of time the values and

beliefs of society have excluded women from any type of formal schooling (Goodsell, 1931; McClelland, 1992; Woody, 1929).

Lawrence Cremin (1976) states education to be “the deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to transmit, evoke, or acquire knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, or sensibilities, as well as any outcomes of that effort” (p. 27). So, while it is recognized that formal schooling is not the only means to an education, the focus of this section in the literature review will be the history of formal schooling for women. This limit has been adopted because the study’s participants are educational leaders in the formal education system; however, I also recognize knowledge is created and received in many places, not just through formal schooling. The settlers who came to the United States brought not only their families to the new land, but also their ideals and beliefs, including their ideals and beliefs about formal education for women (McClelland, 1992).

There are three beliefs, beliefs that began with the early Greeks and continue today, that have worked to keep women from receiving a formal education, even as beliefs about what it means to receive a quality education have changed through time (McClelland, 1992). The first belief is that women have intellect inferior to men (Aiston, 2010; Buhle, Murphy, & Gerhard, 2015; Goodsell, 1931; McClelland, 1992; Woody, 1929). The second belief is that women are fundamentally evil and an education would make a woman dangerous to individuals and society (McClelland, 1992). And the third belief is that a woman’s role, in the home, does not necessitate formal schooling beyond basic literacy (Goodsell, 1931; McClelland, 1992). Cultural traditions saw no need for women to acquire intellectual learning (McClelland, 1992). While these beliefs were the reasoning behind the rhetoric of denying women a formal education, there have always

been men who have argued for their daughters, and sometimes their sisters and wives, to have access to a formal education (Aiston, 2010; Bulckaert, 2010; McClelland, 1992). It is important to remember that “the education of women was and is not a single, monolithic experience but is shaped by time, place, status, opportunity, and individual and collective endeavor” (McClelland, 1992, p. 7).

One’s social class has always and continues to impact a woman’s access to education (Bulckaert, 2010; McClelland, 1992). Upper-class women have had opportunities for schooling different from those available to the working class and poor (Bulckaert, 2010; McClelland, 1992). Formal schooling opportunities for women grew in the 15th and 16th centuries when humanists expressed their belief that women had the intellectual capacity for learning (Bulckaert, 2010; McClelland, 1992). Although formal schooling for women at this time was still focused on preparing women for what was perceived as their natural roles of mother and wife (Buhle et al., 2015; McClelland, 1992; Woody, 1929). A “learned wife” (Woody, 1929, p. 107) or “learned woman” (McClelland, 1992, p. 19) was not desired for fear that this type of woman, who was educated as well as, or even better than a male, would not provide a good home for her husband. The prevailing belief was being a woman and being learned were in principle contrary to each other (Aiston, 2010). But, by the end of the Revolutionary War and into the 19th century new beliefs about what the new republic needed (e.g., educated citizens) produced changes in thinking about the formal schooling girls should receive (Buhle et al., 2015; McClelland, 1992; Perlmann & Margo, 2001; Woody, 1929).

The academy, or female seminaries for girls, began in the original colonies and moved west as the frontier was explored (Buhle et al., 2015; Goodsell, 1931). Notable

women who were influential in the development of the female seminaries were Emma Willard, Catharine Beecher, and Mary Lyon (Buhle et al., 2015; Goldstein, 2014; Goodsell, 1931; Madigan, 2009; McClelland, 1992; Woody, 1929). These seminaries made it a reality for privileged White women to study subjects such as classical languages, science, mathematics, and history, that were often only thought of as appropriate studies for men (Buhle et al., 2015; Goodsell, 1931; Sexton, 1976; Woody, 1929). While girls and women had the opportunity to attend formal schooling, the purpose of the early seminaries remained to prepare women for life, not college (Buhle et al., 2015; Woody, 1929). Then, the common school movement began and seminaries soon became a place for women to be educated as teachers (Goldstein, 2014; Sexton, 1976; Woody, 1929).

As the common school movement gained momentum, the need for more teachers developed (McClelland, 1992; Woody, 1929). Men dominated the teaching positions in schools during this time (Blount, 2000; Buhle et al., 2015; McClelland, 192; Perlmann & Margo, 2001). This was due to their opportunities to attend university training, as well as the view that men were more capable of disciplining and controlling older boy students (Perlmann & Margo, 2001). As concern increased among taxpayers about the cost of the common schools, which provided a free and compulsory public education, an obvious answer to this economic question was to hire cheap labor (Goldstein, 2014; Sexton, 1976; Woody, 1929). And, women were cheap labor (Goldstein, 2014; Sexton, 1976; Woody, 1929). So, “by 1890, about two out of every three teachers were women” (Sexton, 1976, p. 47). In addition to the benefit of being able to pay women less, the idea that women were better suited for the position of teachers gained strong support. This idea was based

on the belief women were more effective teachers due to their natural tendencies to be motherly, given their traditional role of caring for, and nurturing, young children (Goldstein, 2014; McClelland, 1992). Mary Lyon, a prominent pioneer in women's education, supported viewing the classroom space as an extension of the home sphere for women (Buhle et al., 2015; Enoch, 2008). In fact, Catharine Beecher, another prominent pioneer in women's education, even argued that teaching should become a woman's profession (Buhle et al., 2015; Goldstein, 2014; Woody, 1929).

Catharine Beecher believed women made the ideal teacher (Goldstein, 2014). This came from her belief that the home and school were intertwined spaces (Goldstein, 2014). Then, there was also the belief that women were more naturally suited to teach young children (Enoch, 2008; McClelland, 192; Weiler, 2006; Woody, 1929). The combination of these two ideas, the school as an extension of the home and women as natural mothers, promulgated the idea of the *motherteacher* (Goldstein, 2014). A *motherteacher* is the concept that teaching and mothering require essentially the same set of skills, simply carried out in different settings (Goldstein, 2014). The belief that women are better suited for teaching persists even today, as seen in women's teaching roles within institutions of higher education.

Like the nineteenth-century teacher discussed in this essay, the composition instruction is constructed as the dedicated mother—characterized by her sacrifice, deep investment, and care for her students. Her job is seen as a simple one. She (and the composition instructor is often a “she”) nurtures and guides students to learn dominant discursive practices so they are well prepared to enter “real” classes and the “real world.” (Enoch, 2008, p. 292)

The role of women in education continues to perpetuate the notion that women are doers rather than thinkers (Buhle et al., 2015). Women are the teachers (doers), and men are the leaders (thinkers). The role of educational leaders has been, and continues to be, dominated by males (Adams & Hambright, 2004; Blount, 2000; Chard, 2013; Litmanovitz, 2011; Perlmann & Margo, 2001; Sexton, 1976). This was the result of women entering public employment in the schools, “the creation of male-identified niches” (Blount, 2000, p. 86). Administrators were viewed as supervisors and supervisory work has “been structured from the start to suit masculine-appropriate gender definitions” (Blount, 200, p. 86). The idea that teaching was women’s work had become established, so men either moved out of the classrooms into positions of leadership, or they risked being viewed as effeminate (Blount, 2000). The gender gap in women leading schools persists today.

Numerous reasons for the tenacious gender gap in educational leadership have been identified, including lack of role models and mentors, masculine expectations for leadership styles, and family responsibilities. All of these factors continue to influence women on the road to becoming educational leaders. The place for women has been determined to be the home or private sphere (Aiston, 2010).

Women across the centuries have been defined by the “private” sphere and denied equal access to the “public” life. In this sense, women historically have inhabited what might be referred to as a “third” sphere, as they push boundaries and attempt to accommodate their public and private worlds. (Aiston, 2010, p. 1)

History of Women: In the Home

A woman's sphere has long been viewed as the home (Buhle et al., 2015; Goodsell, 1931; Woody, 1929). The family has often been cited as the foundation of the country and women or mothers have been viewed as the ones in charge of the family unit (Buhle et al., 2015; McClelland, 1992). Nonetheless, the specific role women have had in child rearing has changed through the years, resulting from the evolving view society has had towards children and women. During the middle ages in Europe the only attention given to children was for their physical health (Hays, 1996). The middle and upper classes often left this task of providing for their children's physical health to others, including wet nurses (Hays, 1996). Children who were left in the care of wet nurses often died from disease, starvation, or neglect, and even if children survived their early years they would often never see their parents again (Badinter, 1981). The actions parents took were a result of the view adults had for children during this time in history, which was that children were "demonic, animalistic, ill-formed, and physically fragile" (Hays, 1996, p. 22).

So, although historians have argued that parents simply "did not care" for their children during this time period, this cannot be ascertained (Hays, 1996, p. 24). It is likely that parents did care for and love their children, but one would have been reluctant to show any public affection toward, care for, or willingness to play with their young children, since playing with, or being affectionate toward, children who might be demonic or animalistic was not socially acceptable (Hays, 1996).

Another issue from the middle ages was childhood mortality rates. Most children did not survive to their sixth or even seventh birthday. When a child died there was no

public event to mark a period of mourning or grief and headstones were not even erected to mark their graves (Hays, 1996). This high mortality rate of children likely contributed to parents' lack of connections to their children. Why would one invest time and emotions in a being, an animal, that was likely to die (Hays, 1996)? If a child did reach the age of six or seven, then they were viewed as being old enough to become an apprentice in adult work and began contributing to the "family's subsistence, wealth, or status and were enlisted in the armed protection of the family and community" (Hays, 1996, p. 25). As the middle ages ended, the 17th and 18th centuries brought new ideas about both children and women's role in the home.

Early Puritans in the American colonies held beliefs that children were born with sinful natures and required discipline to overpower this sinful nature (Buhle et al., 2015; Hays, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). Children needed to be developed by "physical punishment, religious instruction, and participation in work life" (Hays, 1996, p. 27). The now famous phrase, "spare the rod and spoil the child," which comes from Proverbs 13:24 was used in a sermon by John Wesley during this time period to promote the idea that children's sinful will had to be overcome (Hays, 1996). This would then allow children to learn to be obedient to God, their parents, and work (Hays, 1996). In fact, work completed by children for the Puritans was viewed as an economic asset (Hays, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). Children who were found playing or being idle were punished, just like adults, which included public whippings or confessions (Hays, 1996).

The Puritans used the Bible as a manual for child rearing and this was supplemented by sermons in the church and speeches from community leaders (Hays, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). During this time period, men were viewed as the heads

of households and required the submission of their wives and children (Buhle et al., 2015; Hays, 196; Kinser, 2010; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). Badinter (1981) likens this patriarchal relationship of the family to that of a shepherd, his sheepdog, and his sheep. The men were the shepherds, women were the sheepdogs, and the children were the sheep. A good mother was viewed as a good sheepdog, one who kept the sheep, or her children, in line but followed the orders and directions of her husband, the shepherd (Badinter, 1981).

During the Enlightenment, the philosopher John Locke challenged the Puritan belief that children were born with sinful natures (Buhle et al., 2015). He contended that children learned to be good or bad through their upbringing. Then, the philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau's work introduced the idea that a child was a "sacred, noble, and innocent being" (Hays, 1996, p. 26). He saw the use of wet nurses as abhorrent, was frustrated by the attitude of ignoring children, and wanted parents to recognize the stages of childhood development, instead of simply asking children to be obedient to adult interests (Hays, 1996). His work further developed the idea that children were innocent beings. Native communities, or the Indigenous People to the Americas, also did not share the idea that children were evil, so the "tabula rasa" or "blank slate" view of children came to be recognized (Kinser, 2010, p. 29). One result of this idea was the production of products just for children such as clothing, toys, books, and even caskets for children who died young (Badinter, 1981). As ideas about children changed, so did some ideas about patriarchal control.

Instead of a man ruling over his family with unquestioned authority, the rhetoric changed to voluntary allegiance (Buhle et al., 2015). And this, coupled with the

economic reality that fathers no longer had land or wealth to provide inheritances for all their children, allowed women to have more freedom to choose their own spouse (Buhle et al., 2015), someone who would treat her well, like a friend (Buhle et al., 2015). And, men were encouraged to no longer marry for wealth and beauty; rather they should be looking for a companion who would provide wisdom and patience (Buhle et al., 2015). This type of marriage allowed men and women to share advice, counsel, and consider problems together, and had profound political and personal affects (Buhle et al., 2015). Likewise, as ideas about marriage evolved, so did ideas about child rearing (Buhle et al., 2015). Thus, the new republic form of government put a new emphasis on child rearing and a woman's role in this matter in the home. And the idea of "republican motherhood" or the republican mother was established (Buhle et al., 2015; McClelland, 1992; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014).

Republican motherhood was the view that women, through their mothering role, would support the new republic (Buhle et al., 2015; Freedman, 2002; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). Women would not be able to vote or hold office in the new republic, but they would educate and raise their sons to participate in the new republic and their daughters to support the new republic through their domestic roles as wives and mothers (Buhle et al., 2015; McClelland, 1992; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). This became not only women's duty, but their right in the new republic (Buhle et al., 2015). Men had the right to vote and women had the right to influence (Buhle et al., 2015, p. 71). Then, the view of mothers as teachers came into existence (Buhle et al., 2015; McClelland, 1992). This idea began to change thinking about women's intellect and capabilities, perhaps women were not inferior to men (Buhle et al., 2015; McClelland, 1992). Women had an

incredibly important role, as mother to their children (Hays, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014).

Expectations of Mothers

The criteria which define what it means to be a good mother have changed through the years of course, and these changes are typically connected with other cultural events or changes in beliefs within society. During Luther's Reformation women became valued for their role in the family's religious instruction, which was the foundation for the political movement of the "republican mother" in the new republic (McClelland, 1992). This gave way to mothers being recognized for their moral superiority to men (Hays, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). During this time, children were no longer viewed as sinful beings; instead they were viewed as innocent beings (Hays, 1996; Kinser, 2010; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). In fact, children even became viewed as opportunities of redemption for adults (Hays, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). And as such, lasting changes to American laws (e.g. child labor laws) regarding children were created (Hays, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). Children were no longer viewed as economic assets. Instead, they were viewed as innocent beings who looked to adults, specifically mothers, for their moral development (Hays, 1996; Kinser, 2010; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). The Industrial Revolution had brought changes not only to economics, but to the home as well (Vandenberg-Daves, 2014).

Since women had been established as the ones in charge of the private sphere, this naturally included raising children and moral training for children (Hays, 1996; Kinser 2010; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). "And by the second half of the nineteenth century child rearing was synonymous with mothering" (Hays, 1996, p. 29). The moral mother

ideology had been born (Hays, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). The moral mother was one who developed strong relationships with her children, and this mother-child relationship was imperative to the child's future success (Hays, 1996; Kinser, 2010; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). No longer were the broader actions of family or community responsible for a child's future. Instead, the individual actions of a mother directly influenced children's health, development, and spiritual destiny (Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). As Hays (1996) wrote,

This period marked a critical turning point in the social construction of valorized motherhood and childhood innocence. It also set in place a number of important building blocks for the ideology of intensive mothering. Child rearing came to be understood as a task that was best done primarily by the individual mother—without reliance on servants, older children, or other women. The mother was instructed to bring all her knowledge, religious devotion, and loving capacities to bear on the task, and she was urged to be consistently affectionate, constantly watchful of her own behavior, and extremely careful in guiding the child. Child rearing had become expensive as well: the child not only needed the right toys, books, and clothes but also had to be kept out of the paid labor force and supported through school. It had become part of a mother's duty to keep her children walled off from the market and market valuation. (p. 32-33)

This change in culture was most prevalent in White, middle-class families (Kinser, 2010; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). So, “the building of a child's—and future citizen's—moral character, industriousness, and self-discipline was now the sole responsibility (and blame) of the mother (Kinser, 2010, p. 29).

Moral motherhood was only for those with economic privilege (Hays, 1996; Kinser, 2010; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). Rural populations, working-classes, immigrant, and poor families still functioned with little separation between the public and private spheres (Hays, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). Their children were still expected to be workers and their mothers had very little time to devote to their development, since they themselves were working (Hays, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). As Kinser (2010) wrote,

Working-class and poor mothers and mothers of color, whose family members were relegated to the least desirable and most exploitive of occupations, if they were fortunate to find work at all, were expected by dominant culture to meet the impossible task of offsetting the worst excesses of industry and, as if that weren't enough, to provide moral uplift in the process. Because such a task was insurmountable, they were often labeled "bad" mothers. Here lay the seeds of a dualism of the exalted "good" mother and the scorned "bad" mother that would take increasingly agitating forms in the 20th and 21st centuries. (p. 30)

Then, there was also the existence of servants and slaves who were used by many of the middle and upper classes to perform many parental responsibilities. This produced another paradox within the moral motherhood narrative (Vandenberg-Daves, 2014).

The dominant narrative of the time was a mother who was economically dependent, defined by her relationships with her children who were innocent and impressionable, and a father whose sole responsibility was supporting the family economically (Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). And yet, there were many middle-class and affluent families that hired servants to do the cooking, cleaning, and taking care of the

children (Hays, 1996). Then, there was also the issue of slavery, “the coexistence of slavery with the ideology of moral motherhood reveals divisions of race and class that endure today” (Vandenberg-Daves, 2014, p. 33).

The ideology of a good mother continues to leave out women of color, single parents, low-income, or lesbian mothers (Johnston & Swanson, 2006; Medved & Kirby, 2005). The moral mothering ideology always meant “Protestant, white, northern middle-class women” (Vandenberg-Daves, 2014, p. 44). Those who were not privileged by the dominant culture were labeled as failures in meeting the mothering standards (Kinser, 2010). There is often no recognition for the “structural causes of poverty that shaped different familial norms” (Vandenberg-Daves, 2014, p. 46). Ideologies are produced through

events, actions, and images that we create, and we consume packaged meanings that are perpetuated by societal groups to make sense of the seemingly random behaviors, beliefs, values, and identities that we claim and perform...as such, ideologies do not reflect an objective reality, but rather promote a particular construction of reality. (Johnston & Swanson, 2006, p. 509)

A qualitative study by Johnston & Swanson (2006) revealed that women often selected their work identity (full-time, part-time, or stay-at-home) based somewhat on their mothering ideology, and their mothering ideology then developed to match their work identity choice. Johnston & Swanson’s (2006) study found that “mothers are ironically constructing their mothering identity in ways that *constrain* their range of choices (p. 517). And instead of focusing on the needs of children regarding employment decisions for both mothers and fathers the discussion continued to revolve around the

employment decisions of mothers (Johnston & Swanson, 2006). When will the conversation include ideals about good parenting for children rather than continuing to focus on the ideal of a good mother for children (Johnston & Swanson, 2006)?

Johnston & Swanson (2007) argue that for American women motherhood is viewed as an identity. Women will often answer the question, “Who am I?” with the response, “I am a mother” (Johnston & Swanson, 2007, p. 448). Identity is constructed through a process of negotiating social roles and expectations with personal beliefs (Golden, 2001). Mothering ideology, which is grounded in “beliefs and values about mothering that mothers must either embrace or reject, but can seldom ignore” (Johnston & Swanson, 2007, p. 448) is played out in women’s identities and choices within daily life (Medved & Kirby, 2005). The current ideology of mothering in our culture was first identified by Sharon Hays (1996) from her qualitative study. For her research study she conducted 38 in-depth interviews with mothers who had children between the ages of two and four years old. Her study,

analyzed the history of ideas about child-rearing, attempting to uncover the development and logic of notions of appropriate mothering and to understand the connections between those ideas and the social contexts in which they emerged...[and]...a textual analysis of the best-selling contemporary child-rearing manuals to uncover their underlying themes. (Hays, 1996, p. xi)

Hays, (1996) believes

...the contemporary cultural model of socially appropriate mothering takes the form of an ideology of *intensive mothering* (italics original). The ideology of

intensive mothering is a gendered model that advises mothers to expend a tremendous amount of time, energy, and money in raising their children. (p. x)

This cultural model of intensive mothering developed over time with roots in the ideals of the republican mother, which later changed to the ideals of the moral mother (Hays, 1996). To completely understand how the ideology of intensive mothering took hold of mothers it is important to examine the impact science and the Progressive Era had on mothers (Hays, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014).

Science brought changes to how mothers were supposed to mother their children (Hays, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). Benjamin Spock was very influential during this time in how mothers should mother their children; in fact, his book on mothering was outsold only by the Bible (Douglas & Michaels, 2004; Kinser, 2010; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). No longer were a mother's instincts trusted enough to raise a child (Hays, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). The modern mother should rely on experts to make her a knowledgeable and better mother for her children (Hays, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). This also meant mothers should follow rigid behavioral techniques from science to raise their children (e.g. "cry it out"), and mothers needed to be equipped with such knowledge (Hays, 1996, p. 39). The Progressive Era believed experts or science "could iron out the wrinkles of race and class conflict and could provide technical solutions for all social problems" (Hays, 1996, p. 42). So, mothers were to listen to and follow the experts in all matters related to their children (Hays, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). Mothers who did not listen to the experts (e.g. physicians) were blamed for their child's illnesses and even deaths (Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). Needless to say, the need to rely on experts did not make being a mother easier (Hays, 1996). As scientific ideas like

detached handling, strict scheduling, and behavior modifications lost support, new ideas about raising children emerged that were child-focused (Hays, 1996). Hays (1996) wrote,

With this the conception of a child-centered family takes on a new meaning. Not only is home life centered on children, but child rearing is guided by them. The child (whose needs are interpreted by experts) is now to train the parent. It is at this point, and within this ideological framework, that the recommended methods of child rearing become fully intensified: not only have they become expert-guided and child-centered, they are also more emotionally absorbing, labor intensive, and financially expensive than ever before. All this money, time, and attention has as its goal not economic productivity or the nation's greatness but the protection and preservation of the child's natural innocence, affection, purity, and goodness. (p. 45-46)

This ideology of intensive mothering puts the mother front and center as a child's primary source of "guidance, nurturance, education, and physical and emotional sustenance" (Johnston & Swanson, 2007, p. 448).

Hays (1996) upholds that this intensive mothering ideology has become the prevailing view of good mothering and is in opposition with women's participation in the work force. Hays' research work about intensive mothering continues to be relevant today. The cultural ideology of intensive mothering continues to exist, and is the dominant discourse about motherhood (Arendell, 2000; Arnold, 2014; McHenry & Schultz, 2014). So, if a culture promotes worker identity and intensive mothering expectations, how do women resolve this tension? Johnston & Swanson (2007) argue

this question is important to understand material identity and assist women in their identity development.

Johnston & Swanson (2007), found in their qualitative study that women employed in full-time work did not change the goals of their worker identity or reject the intensive mothering ideals. Rather, they reorganized their work (e.g. changing work schedules) to accommodate both sets of expectations. This was defined by Johnston & Swanson, (2007) as “cognitive acrobatics to manage the tension between intensive mothering and worker identity” (p. 456). Women “used reframing to integrate worker identity and mothering such that contradiction no longer existed: employment made them better mothers” (Johnston & Swanson, 2007, p. 457). In fact, the researchers noted that women employed full-time did not separate their identities of worker and mother, as expected. These women often engaged in a response of “neutralization , a state of perpetual disequilibrium in which they are ricocheted back and forth between dialectic poles” (Johnston & Swanson, 2007, p. 456). It is interesting to note that in their study only a few of the working mothers redefined intensive mothering to include fathers and caregivers (Johnston & Swanson, 2007). Are full-time mothers trapped by intensive mothering expectations, which essentially by definition exclude them from meeting cultural expectations of good mothering, because they are also working (Johnston & Swanson, 2007)? What prevents full-time working mothers from reframing their worker or mothering identities in such a way as to integrate them (Johnston & Swanson, 2007)?

The qualitative study completed by Christopher (2012) found that working mothers were not only reframing the characteristics of a good mother, the women also reframed the characteristics of an ideal worker. These women resisted the notion of

“ideal workers with unbounded work hours” (Christopher, 2012, p. 92). Almost all the women in the study described the benefits they received from “their jobs for themselves: enjoyment, self-esteem, economic independence, and using their educational credentials” and did not relate the benefits of working to the needs of their children (p. 91). They created the good mother narrative to be “extensive” rather than “intensive” (Christopher, 2012, p. 91). The women saw themselves ultimately responsible for their children, even when they delegated tasks like childcare and defended their employment status based on their own personal needs (Christopher, 2012). However, it is worth noting that delegating mothering tasks often ends up with other women, whether these women are nannies, relatives, or child care workers (Christopher, 2012). This shows the continued belief that women are viewed as the ones who are best suited to care for and nurture children. If an emphasis was placed on the role fathers and other family members have in the childrearing process by society this would challenge the perception that women are best suited for this role (Christopher, 2012).

Another study looked “to develop a quantitative scale to assess intensive parenting attitudes and to assess its concurrent and discriminative validity using the Parental Investment in the Child (PIC) questionnaire, the Parenting Sense of Competence Scale (PSOC) questionnaire, and the Beliefs About the Consequences of Maternal Employment for Children (BAMEC) questionnaire (Liss, Schiffrin, Mackintosh, Miles-Mclean, & Erchull, 2012, p. 624). The quantitative study found through the Intensive Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire (IPAQ) that “ideologies of intensive mothering are inter-related and mutually reinforcing” (Liss et al., 2012, p. 632). One interesting finding of this study was that non-mothers scored higher on some of the intensive parenting

scales than mothers, perhaps due to the fact that these women are not currently facing the challenges of being a mother (Liss et al., 2012).

Challenges for Mothers

Gender roles and norms continue to impact the perceived duties of women both in the home and workplace (Sumer et al., 2008). The current social and cultural norms or the ideology of intensive mothering, as defined by Hays (1996), places the woman in charge of child care and rearing, even if a woman is working full-time outside of the home, which creates real challenges for women (Haynes, 2008). The world still deals in binary gender roles (Haynes, 2008; May, 2011). In fact, as cited by May (2011) Simone de Beauvoir believes mothering is “one feminine function that is actually almost impossible to perform in complete liberty” (p. 122). Therefore, many challenges exist for mothers, especially when the mother is also working outside of the home (Carney, 2002; Garey, 1999; Hochschild & Machung, 2012; Loder, 2005; Schueller-Weidekamm & Kautzky-Willer, 2012).

Women are still viewed as the ones who should be in charge of children and home in a patriarchal society, which creates additional pressures for a woman who is also working (Horschild & Machung, 2012; Ennis, 2014; Okimoto & Heilman, 2012). A pressure exists for working mothers to balance home and professional responsibilities (Horchschild & Machung, 1989; Okimoto & Heilman, 2012). In fact, mothers are the ones who end up reorganizing their professional lives, as a result of becoming a parent (Horchschild & Machung, 1989; Sumer et al., 2008). As Horchschild and Machung, (1989) wrote, “Indeed, women more often juggle three spheres—job, children, and housework—while most men juggle two—job and children” (p. 9).

The challenge of balancing motherhood with a professional career includes discourses about these separate roles. One of the discourses surrounding being a working mother is that issues with work and family become either/or dilemmas (Buzzanell, Meisenbach, Remke, Liu, Bowers & Conn, 2005). Women in the workplace also become strategic about whether they bring their mother role into the workplace (Buzzanell et al., 2005). “Of great concern is that motherhood and career appear incongruent because motherhood constitutes disruptions in ‘normal’” (Buzzanell et al., 2005, p. 263). These realities for women impact the notion of balancing their roles of being a mother and being a professional in a workplace.

Balancing the two roles of mother and professional brings its own discourse. Some even wonder if the concept of balance can ever be fully achieved (Cucciarre, Morris, Nickoson, Owens & Sheridan, 2011). The idea of balance is described as a personal experience; one that is addressed by asking the question, “how can I find a balance that sustains me?” (Cucciarre et al., 2011, p. 42). This same question can also be stated as creating a balance one can live with each day (Cucciarre et al., 2011). Marquez (2011) encourages women to write about their “ways of making it in the field to provide a broader account and fuller definition of making it” (p. 76).

Some literature discusses the concept that the workplace should be inclusive of the responsibilities that all people have, as a result of simply being. Bailyn and Fletcher, (2003) argue for integration of identities in the workplace. They believe that instead of the workplace accommodating women the workplace actually needs to look for systemic issues that impact all workers, both men and women (Bailyn & Fletcher, 2003). Their work has found that when places of employment make changes to systemic issues in the

workplace the work does not suffer, in fact, the work actually improves (Fletcher & Bailyn, 2003). “In other words, when work norms were changed to make it easier for people to integrate work and personal life, it benefited not only the people (women and men) but also the quality of the work itself” (Fletcher & Bailyn, 2003, p. 27). The statement, “no single aspect fully represents who I am, and no position, title, or label fully defines me” (Cucciarre et al., 2011, p. 45) articulates this idea of integration well. A 2009 article from *Inside Higher Education*, as cited by Cucciarre et al (2011) discusses the fact that many students have begun to pursue jobs at more “family friendly campuses” (p. 46). How do places become more family friendly? The literature is clear that “institutional and systemic change” is needed to better “integrate and support” families (Cucciarre et al., 2011, p. 52).

There is much discussion about having a balance with one’s professional work and family work; however, the pieces often missing from this discussion are the structures within professional systems that often do not easily allow for this balance to exist. The work-family balance becomes elusive because “people find work structures are hostile to families” (Cucciarre et al., 2011, p. 56). Frequently, there is a focus on individual choices in the matter of work and family; however, most choices are a result of the structures that provide both opportunities and limitations for individuals (Sumer et al., 2008). There are some countries that have begun to create policies more focused on families. (Cucciarre et al., 2011).

Norway has begun making changes to policies, since the early 1990s, as a result of the changing family dynamics (e.g. dual-earner family). Examples of these policies include paid maternal and paternal leave with the arrival of a child, whether through birth

or adoption, as well as the opportunity to work a shorter week without the loss of salary until the child is two years old (Sumer et al., 2008). Another structure put into place in Norway is the ability to arrange one's hours of work (Sumer et al., 2008). "We can adjust the working hours according to the rhythm of the family" was stated by a mother in a Norwegian case study about becoming a working mother (Sumer et al., 2008, p. 370). Another social reality in Norway is that having a child is viewed as a social matter, rather than a private matter (Sumer et al., 2008). In the US and UK, societal pressures still exist for women to be stay-at-home mothers, underscoring the fact mothers are still viewed to be the primary care giver for their children (Arendell, 2000; Buzzanell et al., 2005; Hays, 1996).

Current feminist theory challenges this belief. "Contemporary feminists argue for social and cultural change to support mothering as an empowering rather than oppressive experience" (D'Arcy, Turner, Crockett & Gridley, 2011, p. 31). There should be opportunity for workers, as well as the expectation that the opportunity will be taken by workers, to have paid time off with their families during powerful family experiences (e.g. birth or adoption; care for aging parents) (Cucciarre et al., 2011). To make this happen, feminists view their role as "part of a social movement that requires empowerment and transformation of the structures underlying oppression" (D'Arcy et al., 2011, p. 35). Where does one start to change structures that oppress? Being able to change structures in the workplace can be difficult due to the workplace environment.

There are silences that exist in the workplace. One of these silences is simply "making do", which is what many mothers must do when a structure exists that is troublesome. (Cucciarre et al., 2011). Another silence revolves around institutional

leave policies. Parents should be provided with adequate information about all policies regarding parental leave (Cucciarre et al., 2011). Yet another silence in institutions is asking future employees illegal questions (e.g. do you plan to start a family soon) during the interview process (Cucciarre et al., 2011). Lastly, there is a silence about gaps in employment, sometimes as a result of pregnancy and/or child rearing (Cucciarre et al., 2011). So, how do institutions begin to address these silences that are entrenched structures in the system?

With more dialogue and action these silences can become uncovered (Cucciarre et al., 2011). Fletcher and Bailyn (2003) facilitate these types of conversations with organizations to make the silent visible through their method of Collaborative Interactive Action Research (CIAR). The goal of their work is to “identify practices that have a double negative effect on people’s lives, as well as on the effectiveness of the business” (p. 30). Another result of changing structures allows for the creation of different mothering narratives, which can change both the meaning of mothering and feminism (Green, 2001).

The struggle to find balance or integration between one’s professional and personal life is often a result of structures that confine and limit one’s ability to blend these roles. Marquez (2011), simply states, “These roles inform one another” (p. 81). Marquez (2011), argued for designing a new vision that no longer includes a work-home divide; a vision that includes narratives and scholarship together “as a system of reciprocal relationships that create both complexity and value in the lives of women professionals” (p. 77). Currently, professional lives and personal lives are not viewed as compatible. Total dedication is expected in the academic or working world if one wants

to be viewed as committed and competent. This same statement can be made about being a mother (Hays, 1996; Townsley & Broadfoot, 2008). One way both of these roles can be viewed as congruent is to broaden the definition of success (Townsley & Broadfoot, 2008). Desai, (2014) further explores this idea through a new model, transpersonal motherhood. Desai, (2014) wrote,

I have defined transpersonal motherhood as any enduring felt state or lived experience during motherhood reflecting expansive ways of being and knowing beyond the mother-child dyad, which encompasses all living systems. As such, transpersonal motherhood encompasses a number of dynamic and organized characteristics that arise from within a mother and embody an expanded sense of motherhood. It manifests in three key interrelated themes: identity expansion beyond the ordinary notions of motherhood; integrative living involving a deep sense of wholeness, unity, interconnectedness and interdependence with the universe; and transformation. (loc. 5525 of 6032)

The discourse around being a working mother is tenuous, since the value of working and mothering is not always recognized and valued. Working mothers often stress that their work benefits the entire family, not only financially, but that even their mothering is better as a result of not constantly being with their children (Buzzanell et al., 2005). The reality is that mothering, especially young children, and working are challenging; however, there are also many rewards to the experiences. Mothers want to make a difference not only for their own children, but for the world in which their children live each day (D'Arcy et al., 2011). Mothering experiences can be of benefit to the local community, too.

A feminist belief is that the personal can become political (D'Arcy et al., 2011). How can this belief relate to mothering? Mothers can bring their many ways of knowing into their professional life; again, the personal becomes a way to inform the professional (D'Arcy et al., 2011). We must begin to recognize that one's professional life is enriched through one's home life (Marquez, 2011). Being a mother and "mothering illuminates our roles as teachers, scholars, and mentors" (Marquez, 2011, p. 77). Marquez (2011) wrote about how motherhood does change one's work in academics, but being a scholar and teacher also affects how one mothers. These roles become connected to each other (Marquez, 2011). The challenge becomes recognizing the ways the roles support each other.

Many feminists believe their role is to create social change. This can happen in a variety of ways such as mentoring relationships with professionals who are also negotiating their own mothering role (D'Arcy et al., 2011). Women need to be exposed to more "stories, experiences, and possibilities" for women, so collaboratively women can create the work to bring more harmony to the roles of mothering and being a professional (Cucciarre et al., 2011, p. 52). This relates to the need for more mentors and role models for women (Edge, 2014; Marquez, 2011; Sandberg, 2013; Schueller-Weidekamm & Kautzky-Willer, 2012).

Often mothers may feel that their children demand time they also need to give to their work; however, there is more to life than one's work (Cucciarre, et al., 2011). If every moment was filled with work, mothers would miss many moments in life that can only be enjoyed in a family environment (Cucciarre et al., 2011). The pull between being a mother and professional can be alleviated when work places value the personal lives of

mothers (all employees) and the attributes this life brings to the professional world. The professional world for educational leaders has its own set of expectations.

Expectations of Educational Leaders

The role of the school principal is changing (Crow, 2006; Ediger, 2014; Sahin, 2013). The principal is no longer viewed as just a manager of the school. Rather, the principal is recognized as a leader in charge of teaching and learning for students (Ediger, 2014; Leithwood, 2006; Sahin, 2013) and teachers (Drago-Severson, 2012; Leithwood, 2006). The school leader is also responsible for results on high-stakes accountability assessments (Crow, 2006), ensuring the safety of students in the age of school violence, creating strong college-going cultures, and developing career pathways. Further, these responsibilities must be met in the face of changing student populations, technological advances, and increasing interactions with the school board and community, complicating the list of changes the school leader has encountered in recent years (Crow, 2006). Finally, all of these obligations exist in the context of shared decision-making (DeMatthews, 2014). This complex set of expectations for school leaders presents a picture of the contemporary principalship, underscoring the fact that being a school leader has become more than a full-time job. The expectations can be daunting for today's educational leader.

And what does one mean by leadership? Bush and Glover (2003) define leadership to be:

a process of influence leading to the achievement of desired purposes. Successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values. They articulate this vision at every opportunity and influence their staff and

other stakeholders to share the vision. The philosophy, structures and activities of the school are geared towards the achievement of this shared vision. (p. 5)

It has also been established that leadership is second to classroom teaching in its potential to facilitate school improvement (Bush & Glover, 2014). Most educational leaders have been made aware of this knowledge through their preparation program, so educational leaders know there is a lot riding on their abilities to lead their school campus.

It is worth noting when sustainable change is the goal in our knowledge society that business and educational leaders begin to have much more in common (Fullan, 2002). “Five essential components characterize leaders in the knowledge society: moral purpose, an understanding of the change process, the ability to improve relationships, knowledge creation and sharing, and coherence making” (Fullan, 2002, p. 17). These characteristics which go with seeing the big picture and being able to change the organization through groups and individuals are similar to the expectations of business leaders (Fullan, 2002). In *Good to Great*, Collins (2001) took a closer look at 11 businesses with 15 years of sustained economic growth. The study claimed the effective leader to be one who “catalyzes commitment to a compelling vision and higher performance standards...builds enduring greatness” (p. 20). Fullan (2002) argues that if systemic improvement is the goal, then educational leaders must not only be concerned about their school, rather they need to be concerned with all schools within a district. “Sustained improvement of schools is not possible unless the whole system is moving forward” (Fullan, 2002, p. 17).

The atmosphere surrounding public schools is one of high stake accountability (Crow, 2006). The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation was passed in 2001, which

has raised the stakes for not only the public school but also the school principal (Crow, 2006). NCLB has also increased the public's inspection of public schools and promotes privatization (Crow, 2006). These conditions have placed higher expectations on instructional leadership for school principals (Crow, 2006). These expectations have also impacted the professional norms surrounding the principalship.

A recent study by Leo (2015) investigated and analyzed the professional norms surrounding school development with an emphasis on the principals' pedagogical leadership. Pedagogical leadership was conceptualized by Sergiovanni (1998) and is defined as the need to:

Provide *pedagogical leadership* that invests in capacity building by developing social and academic capital for students and intellectual and professional capital for teachers. Support this leadership by making capital available to enhance student learning and development, teaching learning and classroom effectiveness. (p. 38)

This study, using a web-based questionnaire, found that the three tasks prioritized by the principal, viewing themselves as a pedagogical leader, were presence, quality development, and assessment of students (Leo, 2014). School improvement efforts have conveyed the clear expectation to principals that they are to lead school improvement (Leo, 2014). This expectation may explain the strong showing of presence (being closer to teaching and learning) in the study (Leo, 2014). The results from this study show current cultural expectations of principals are to be more concerned with Sergiovanni's academic capital than with social capital (Leo, 2014). This may be a result of the emphasis in political and societal discussions centered on improving students' academic

skills (Leo, 2014). Pedagogical leadership is not the only model of leadership educational leaders may be expected to use.

There are many theories about leadership strategies for school leaders (Sergiovanni, 1998). Sergiovanni, (1998) discusses bureaucratic leadership, visionary leadership, and entrepreneurial leadership. Another leadership strategy is servant leadership (Shaw & Newton, 2014). Recently Letizia, (2011) further developed the idea of servant leadership to that of “radical servant leadership” (p. 176). “A radical servant leader will use his or her power and position to fight for teachers, faculty and really public education in general” (Letizia, 2011, p. 176). “Radical servant leadership calls for leaders to make the justice of their followers their number one priority and to further inculcate this sense of justice in followers so that they may one day become radical servant leaders themselves and fight for it” (Letizia, 2011, p. 193).

Yet another theory about leadership includes being a leader who leads cultural change in schools. Fullan (2002) believes that instructional leadership is no longer the answer in school improvement. Leaders should be cultural change leaders with the focus to improve student achievement. Educational leaders who are cultural change leaders look to “create a fundamental transformation in the learning cultures of schools and of the teaching profession itself” (Fullan, 2002, p. 18). These fundamental transformations include transforming teachers’ working conditions (Fullan, 2002).

Transforming the conditions of teachers’ work is an important part to facilitate attracting quality teachers to the profession (Fullan, 2002). This should be important to educational leaders, because the teachers in the schools will one day become leaders in

schools (Fullan, 2002). Quality teachers are imperative to one day having quality educational leaders (Fullan, 2002).

A study about best practices of elementary educational leaders by Crum, Sherman, & Myran (2009) found that “leadership with data; honesty and relationships; fostering ownership and collaboration; recognizing and developing leadership; and instructional awareness and involvement” were the common themes of best practices from the participants of the study (p. 54). A focus throughout the data from the study was the importance of using data to make decisions for both the day to day business of school and for as well as determining long-term goals and objectives for the school (Crum, Sherman, & Myran, 2009). Educational leaders also recognized they were the ones who were “ultimately responsible for all building activities and, thus, modeled instructional practices by actively teaching in classrooms, leading data analysis for both the whole school and individual classrooms, and increasing ‘face time’ and interactions with students and teachers” (Crum, Sherman, & Myran, 2009, p. 60).

So, educational leaders face many, sometimes even competing, expectations of being an educational leader. And they know the greatest expectation placed upon them is to improve student achievement. These expectations produce many challenges, especially for women educational leaders.

Challenges for Women Educational Leaders

Many of the challenges that women educational leaders face today are a result of history and the impact of gender in the schools (Blount, 2000). Gender is usually defined by “what it means to be a man or a woman,” which has traditionally been connected to one’s biological sex (Blount, 2000, p. 84). Gender is socially constructed. It is complex

and varied, based on individual and cultural understanding (Blount, 2000). So, in one culture or context something may be considered feminine and in another culture or context it could be considered gender-neutral or masculine (Blount, 2000). The first women to enter the classrooms as teachers were pushing back on gender stereotypes that women should not have public employment (Blount, 2000). Eventually, teaching did shift from men's work to women's work and men entered separate spaces in the schools. Often their positions literally had them working in different locations or spaces from women (e.g. central office; Blount, 2000). As it became acceptable for women to hold public employment, the preference to employ single women as teachers also developed (Blount, 2000). The preference to hire single women was rooted in the idea that single women would "submit to male authority either in their personal or work lives, but for spinsters, the matter of conflict over their primary loyalties was deemed irrelevant" (Blount, 2000, p. 87). Women were expected to marry at some point, because teaching prepared a woman for her role as a wife and mother, so she would leave teaching upon marrying to attend to her husband, children, and home (Blount, 2000).

In the early 1900s, many women had chosen not to marry and were remaining single (Blount, 2000). This caused concerns among critics, because women were not following their script, they were stepping outside of their boundaries, as women who should want to marry and have children (Blount, 2000). Concern then arose that women who were not marrying must be lesbians and therefore should not be working with children (Blount, 2000). This idea encouraged a preference to hire married women as teachers in schools, because being married and having children allowed women to be

better teachers (Blount, 2000). Schools in the United States continue to be a place that is gender-polarized (Blount, 2000). Women continue to face challenges.

Burkman (2010-2011), found that female leaders face unique challenges, which often stem from the conflict between the expectations of leadership and being female. The results of the study found that the number one issue identified by women was the “male dominant culture of leadership” (Burkman, 2010-2011, p. 71). Aside from elementary school, men still control the administrative roles, which produce pressure on women to perform differently than their male counterparts (Burkman, 2010-2011). This also led to another issue identified by the participants in the study, contradictory and unrealistic expectations often placed on them (Burkman, 2010-2011).

Women have acquired greater representation in all types of leadership positions including, schools, businesses, and politics; however, women still face gendered beliefs and biases about leadership (Ellemers et al., 2012). Effective leadership is regarded as focused on task performance and interpersonal relations. As women have been included in leadership positions at the top, the expectation that women will enhance the relational aspect of leadership persists (Ellemers et al., 2012). Both men and women believe in equal opportunities at the workplace and yet differing expectations about how men and women will behave and perform as leaders in the organization continue to work against this belief (Ellemers et al., 2012). The expectation that men will be competitive and women will be relational is an example of a stereotype that works against women and reveals the continuing existence of benevolent sexism in the workplace (Ellemers et al., 2012). These gendered leadership beliefs force women to select between masculine or feminine qualities, instead of developing other leadership behaviors that would benefit

both their career and the organization (Ellemers et al., 2012). A woman is essentially “damned if they do, and damned if they do not” (Ellemers et al., 2012, p. 169).

In 2011–12, some 76% of public school teachers were female, of which 44% were under the age of 40 (National Center for Education Statistics). While the percentage of female principals grew at both the elementary and secondary level in 2008 from 52 to 59% and 22 to 29% respectively (only 19% of the administrators were under the age of 40), there remains a significant gap between the number of women teaching in schools and the number of women leading schools.

A recent collaborative study (Edge, 2014) about Generation X leaders in three Global Cities, London, New York City, and Toronto, found these young leaders are concerned about managing their work along with their life and/or family responsibilities. The study also discovered a great need for mentors and role models (Edge, 2014). Young women leaders expressed the feeling that “few role models for leading and parenting small children exist” (Edge, 2014). And, they said they wanted to find a mentor or role-model to talk to, an individual in whom they could find support for the “less-often discussed parts of the job including work-life balance, parenting and career progression” (Edge, 2014, p. 53).

Adams and Hambright (2004) surveyed teacher leaders in a leadership program at Wright State University in Ohio about their perceptions of the role of the principal, and asked why women from the teacher leader program were not becoming principals. Most of the remarks from the survey were negative in nature. The most prevalent responses cited were that principals were no longer connected to the reality of today’s classroom and the job was “difficult, thankless, and time-consuming” (Adams & Hambright, 2004,

p. 210). A study in Texas by DeFelice and Schroth (1999) tried to shed light on a similar research question, why had so many women obtained their mid-management certification but were not in administration positions? Their findings showed both internal and external barriers existed for women to becoming administrators; however, internal barriers were often the reason women did not pursue administration (DeFelice & Schroth, 1999).

One participant in their study commented, “In the past several years I have observed numerous administrators (male and female) who are over-worked, stressed-out, and unhappy! Who needs it?” (DeFelice & Schroth, 1999, p. 3). Another internal barrier for women included prioritizing family over their professional goals (DeFelice & Schroth, 1999). One participant who had been an administrator, but then stepped back from the role, shared that she would attend administrator meetings and noticed that many of the women were divorced and did not want to end up in the same situation (DeFelice & Schroth, 1999). When her children are older, she hopes to return to administration (DeFelice & Schroth, 1999).

It is also important to note that the findings from DeFelice & Schroth (1999) were the same as the findings they cited from a study by Grady, in 1992, that occurred in the Midwest, and a study in Illinois by Krchniak, in 1977. Findings from these three studies were consistent, regardless of regional influences (DeFelice & Schroth, 1999). Even though over time has passed since these studies, the findings about why women are choosing to not become administrators have not changed much (DeFelice & Schroth, 1999). A more recent quantitative study by McGee (2010) explored the issue of gender and educational leader positions in the state of Florida. The findings from this study

continue to show women delayed entering leadership positions to raise their children first (McGee, 2010). The number one barrier in this study to pursuing leadership positions in schools was anxiety and family (McGee, 2010). So, even though significant time has passed between these studies, women continue to face challenges as educational leaders due to the family obligations and responsibilities.

Conclusion

This literature review examined the history of women in schools, as well as women in the home. The literature was examined for the expectations that educational leaders and mothers are expected to meet and the challenges that develop from these expectations. A gap in the literature exists on how the identities of being an educational leader and mother impact life experiences for women, how the identities of being an educational leader connect and contribute to each other, and how women negotiate their identities of being an educational leader and mother.

III. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to capture the everyday life experiences of women who identify as mothers and educational leaders. To review, the research questions for this study included:

1. How do women make sense of their experiences of being an educational leader and mother?
2. How do the identities of school leader and mother interact, connect, and contribute to each other?
3. How do women negotiate their identities of being an educational leader and mother?

In order to evaluate these experiences, this study used feminist visual ethnographic methods. Feminist studies focus on gender throughout the research process and privilege women's issues, voices, and lived experiences (Hesse-Biber, 2014). Feminist studies aim to bring social justice and transformation, as well as "to redress the many inequities and social injustices that continue to undermine and even destroy the lives of women and their families" (Hesse-Biber, 2014, p. 3). This study looked to understand the social reality of women who are educational leaders and mothers, embracing a tenet of feminist research to understand the social reality of women (Hesse-Biber, 2014).

Feminist researchers have disagreed with the idea of "one essential women's experience" and instead, place value on the plurality of women's experiences (Hesse-Biber, 2014, p.7). As a study that is grounded in feminist post-structural theory, feminist post-structural epistemologies and methodologies were used during the study. Visual ethnography is a methodology that is "concerned with the production of knowledge and

ways of knowing rather than with the collection of data” (Pink, 2013, p. 35). Visual ethnography seeks to offer accounts of life experiences using visual media, like digital photographs, through “which new knowledge and critiques may be created (Pink, 2013, p. 25). “Reality is subjective and is known only as it is experienced by individuals” (Pink, 2013, p. 36).

Within the experiences of day to day living we see images all around us. “Images are indeed part of how we experience, learn and know as well as how we communicate and represent knowledge.” (Pink, 2013, p. 1). Images show us the possibilities of our world. This study will utilize feminist visual ethnography methods to study the everyday life experiences of educational leaders who are mothers.

In order to better understand feminist visual ethnographic methods, I believe it is important to understand features of ethnography, feminist ethnography, and visual ethnography. I begin with ethnography, a method initially developed by anthropologists that continues to be utilized and adapted by researchers across a variety of disciplines, including education (Buch & Staller, 2014).

What is Ethnography?

Ethnographic method originated in anthropology (Buch & Staller, 2014; Creswell, 2013; Hammersley, 2006). Ethnography is often defined by participant observation and fieldwork (Creswell, 2013; Hammersley, 2006). It can also be defined by collecting artifacts and conducting interviews with informants, a now outdated term that was once used to describe the participants in an ethnographic study (Wolcott, 2008). Interviews and collecting artifacts are just two of the ways data can be collected in the field for an ethnographic study (Creswell, 2013; Hammersley, 2006).

A key tenet of ethnography in the field of anthropology was data collection that occurred pretty much around the clock, while the researcher lived within the community of the people being studied, and lasted a long period of time, often a year or more (Hammersley, 2006). This was still common in anthropological ethnographies until recently (Hammersley, 2006). While these are often common characteristics of ethnography, specifically from an anthropological perspective, there are variations in the meaning of ethnography (Hammersley, 2006). Much social sciences ethnography today, including educational research, does not meet the characteristics of ethnography established through anthropology (Hammersley, 2006).

One definition of ethnography is to find and comprehend the social relationships and cultural practices of groups of people and to do this within the larger political, economic, and historical contexts (Buch & Staller, 2014). Another definition of ethnography studies story-telling (Walford, 2009) and yet another examines a culture-sharing group's shared patterns, values, behaviors, beliefs, and language (Creswell, 2013). Pink (2013), defined ethnography in *Doing Visual Ethnography* to be:

an approach to experiencing, interpreting and representing experience, culture, society and material and sensory environments that informs and is informed by sets of different disciplinary agendas and theoretical principles. (p. 34)

Pink (2013) continued,

I understand ethnography as a process of creating and representing knowledge or ways of knowing that are based on ethnographers' own experiences and the ways these intersect with the persons, places, and things encountered during that process. (p. 35)

Pink (2013), brings to light one tenet that is often synonymous with defining ethnography, using the self within the research process. (Buch & Staller, 2014; Creswell, 2013; Walford, 2009; Wolcott, 2008).

The ethnographic researcher uses their self to come to know knowledge and create knowledge (Buch & Staller, 2014). The knowledge that is created during ethnographic research is a result of the researcher's relationships with the participants in the study (Buch & Staller, 2014). Ethnography engages the researcher in relationships, as well as observations to not only record "the social norms, rules and practices that shape diverse forms of human sociality," but to also experience these particulars from a specific group of people (Buch & Staller, 2014, p. 108).

While the definitions of ethnography may differ between scholars, according to Sherry Ortner (1995) ethnography, "has always meant the attempt to understand another life world using the self...as the instrument of knowing" (p. 173). Pink (2013), develops this idea further in *Doing Visual Ethnography*:

I understand ethnography as a process of creating and representing knowledge or ways of knowing or ways of knowing that are based on ethnographers' own experiences and the ways these intersect with the persons, places and things encountered during that process. (p. 35)

In this ethnographic study, the "collaborators" (Wolcott, 2008, p. 96) of the study are both educational leaders and mothers. As the one who initiated this study, I also claim these identities of being an educational leader and mother, and I identify as a feminist; as such, I will be utilizing feminist methods in this study.

What is Feminist Ethnography?

There are three features that define feminist ethnography. The first is that feminist ethnography focuses on women's lives, activities, and experiences or gendered environments (Buch, & Staller, 2014; McNamara, 2009). The second characteristic is that feminist ethnographic methods and writing are influenced by feminist theory and ethics, including reflexivity (Buch & Staller, 2014; McNamara, 2009). And the third characteristic is the analysis utilizes a feminist theoretical framework to focus on issues of gender, as well as other forms of power and difference (Buch & Staller, 2014).

Reflexivity is an important component within feminist research.

Reflexivity is the process by which the researcher will "recognize, examine, and understand how their social background, location, and assumptions" impact their research (Buch & Staller, 2014, p. 2). Thereby feminist ethnography rejects the idea of neutrality (Hammersley, 2006). Pink (2013) stated,

A reflexive approach is thus important in that focusing on how ethnographic knowledge about how individuals experience reality is produced, through the intersubjectivity between researchers and their research contexts, we may arrive at a closer understanding of the worlds that other people live in. (p. 36)

So, being reflexive, "involves interrogating how we are situated with the ethnographic research context" (Pink, 2013, p. 37). My identities of a being a leader and mother will be key pieces affecting how the research is situated, as well as the theoretical framework of post-structural feminism.

During the 70s and 80s, feminist researchers started to problematize many of the traditional ethnographic research methods (Buch & Staller, 2014). A concern of

feminists was that many of the methods of ethnography treated and viewed people as objects to be studied through observation and analysis (Buch & Staller, 2014). Feminist researchers' rejected this idea, instead viewing people as active agents in the construction of their lived experiences (Buch & Staller, 2014). Feminists praised ethnography for "its potential to create interpretative and intersubjective understandings of social lives" (Buch & Staller, 2014, p. 111).

The more feminist researchers became concerned about the practices of traditional ethnographic methods (e.g. people studied were viewed as silent objects) and producing research to have an impact on the lives of women (McNamara, 2009), the more feminist researchers were prompted to seek other methods to accomplish these goals (Buch & Staller, 2014). Nowadays, "ethnography often incorporates multiple methods to gain richer understandings of a context and participants' world" (Hill, 2013, p. 135).

Feminist ethnography continues to focus on the lived experiences of women, specifically the ways gender and sexuality influence social life (Buch & Staller, 2014). The methods used are grounded in feminist theory, privileging women's issues, voices, and lived experiences (Buch & Staller, 2014). The researcher practices reflexivity in order to consider their own personal biases and how their biases could influence their research (Buch & Staller, 2014). And like all feminist research, feminist ethnography seeks to study and address the numerous inequities and social injustices women face that influence their lives and the lives of their families (Buch & Staller, 2014; McNamara, 2009).

As a feminist, I care deeply about women's issues, especially those that impact women each day. This study focused specifically on the issues women face in

motherhood while also being an educational leader. As mentioned previously, these are two identities I claim and are also identities claimed by the collaborators of this research. Feminist ethnography is different in that the focus is about the social reality of women with the purpose of promoting social justice for women. There are also other forms of ethnography that have developed, often by feminist researchers who were seeking to minimize “the deeply ethnocentric assumptions that shaped early ethnographic practice” (Buch & Staller, 2014, p. 111). One of these forms is visual ethnography.

What is Visual Ethnography?

This study utilized visual ethnographic methods. Visual ethnography utilizes images like photographs, films, and social media to study cultures throughout the research process and analysis (Brace-Govan, 2007; Buch & Staller, 2014; Pink, 2008). Visual methods emphasize participation and collaboration throughout the research process between the researcher and participants (Hill, 2013; McCarthy, 2013; Pink, 2008, 2012, 2013). Pink wrote:

Therefore, visual ethnography, as I interpret it, does not claim to produce an objective or truthful account of reality, but should aim to offer versions of ethnographers’ experiences of reality that are as loyal as possible to the context, the embodied, sensory and affective experiences, and the negotiations and intersubjectivities through which the knowledge was produced. This may entail reflexive, collaborative or participatory methods. It may involve participants in the research in a variety of ways at different points of the research and representational stages of the project. It should account not only for the observable, recordable realities that may be translated into written notes and texts,

but also for objects, visual images, the immaterial, the invisible and the sensory nature of human experience and knowledge. (Pink, 2013, p. 35)

This study utilized photographs. There are numerous ways photographs can be used in research design. Typically, there are three techniques to using photographs in ethnographic research. These include (a) researcher-created or collected photographs; (b) participant-centered, existing photographs; and (c) participant and researcher collaboration in the creation of photographs (Banks, 2007). The research design for this study employed the participant and researcher collaboration of creating photographs. This method allowed participants in the study to share their lived experiences about the research questions (Steyn, 2013). As defined earlier, the methodology of ethnography seeks to explain everyday moments within life, so the use of photographs in a study allows for everyday moments to become represented by and explained beyond simply using words through interviews, focus groups, or conversations. Clifford Geertz is known in the field of anthropology for the idea of using thick descriptions, a phrase Geertz borrowed from Gilbert Ryle (Wolcott, 2008) in ethnographic research; the use of photographs in a study helps to facilitate this idea (Hill, 2013).

Visual ethnography uses visual elements within the research design. This study used researcher and collaborator-created photographs. The use of photographs for this study, “becomes a way of arriving at particular types and layers of knowledge or ways of knowing” about the research questions of the study (Pink, 2012, p. 7). As a result, the research design was influenced by the ideas of visual ethnography, as well as feminist ethnography.

Why Feminist-Visual Ethnography?

The research methods for this study used feminist-visual ethnographic methods. These terms used together identify a research method that is reflexive and collaborative in nature that seeks to understand and privilege the lived experiences of women while utilizing visual tools in the research design. For this study the lived experiences under study were being both a mother and an educational leader. How do women experience these identities in their everyday lives? This research question began to uncover the daily inequities and injustices experienced by my collaborators and myself while mothering and being an educational leader.

As previously mentioned, I am an educational leader, a mother, and a feminist. So, the research questions of this study are deeply personal to me, because they are a part of my own everyday experience. I routinely use my digital camera to capture images of my daily life. I recognize that “images are indeed part of how we experience, learn and know as well as how we communicate and represent knowledge (Pink, 2013, p. 1). This epistemological belief has led me to use visual ethnographic methods for this study because “images are thus an inevitable part of the experiential environments we live and research in” (Pink, 2013, p. 1). The research questions of this study have helped to understand the ways knowledge, or specifically the knowledge of identity, is constructed for women who are educational leaders and mothers and also capture their experiences of everyday life, as leaders and mothers. As a contemporary visual researcher, I am committed to developing “engaged, applied or public research agendas and collaboration” (Pink, 2012, p. 5).

Contemporary Ethnography

While ethnography is known to be time-intensive, with long periods often involving a year or more in the field with participants, this study will not employ this characteristic of ethnography. Rather, I was engaged with collaborators in what the sociologist Hubert Knoblauch has redefined as “focused ethnographies” (Knoblauch, 2005). As defined by Hubert, this type of ethnography “focuses on small elements of one’s own society” (Knoblauch, 2005, para. 11) He explains that while data may be collected over a shorter amount of time the amount of data collected is often greater and the amount of time spent on data analysis is more (Knoblauch, 2005). Pink uses the term “short-term ethnography” (Pink & Morgan, 2014, p. 352) to define her use of ethnographic methods in her research design.

She explains that while ethnography did originate in the discipline of anthropology, the practice of ethnography within other disciplines is not always defined by long-term engagement in the field with informants (Pink, 2013). Instead, she describes the informants are involved within

intensive excursions into their lives, which use more interventional as well as observational methods to create contexts through which to delve into questions that will reveal what matters to those people in the context of what the researcher is seeking to find out. (Pink & Morgan, 2013, p. 352)

Pink and Morgan (2013) have identified other qualities of short-term ethnography, as well. One of these qualities is the role of the researcher.

Ethnographers engaged in long-term research design find that they are often hanging out and waiting in the context for action to happen whereas in short-term

ethnography the researcher finds the action and is at the center of this action from the start (Pink & Morgan, 2013). This is also known to the participants in the study from the start of the research (Pink & Morgan, 2013). Another quality identified by Knoblauch (2005) also relates to the researcher. The researcher often has “intimate knowledge of the fields to be studied” (paras. 4, 20). This also allows for intensive and rapid data collection (Knoblauch, 2005). Another characteristic stated by Pink and Morgan (2013) is connected to the idea that “ethnographic research evolves in dialog with theory rather than being led or structured by theory” (p. 357).

Within long-term research studies the dialog with theory often occurs at the end of the fieldwork or at specific points during the study and is often less intense. This is not how the dialog with theory occurs in short-term ethnography (Pink & Morgan, 2013). In fact, the “focus is sharper, the research questions need to be responded to more firmly and data collection and analysis intertwined” (Pink & Morgan, 2013, p. 357). Yet another characteristic is the use of visual media and images in short-term ethnography (Pink & Morgan, 2013; Knoblauch, 2005).

Scholars who utilize the research design of short-term ethnography or focused ethnography do not believe that this design is better than what is often recognized as traditional ethnography; rather the method is another way to produce ways of knowing collaboratively with people (Knoblauch, 2005; Pink & Morgan, 2013). And while short-term ethnographic methods might be influenced by long-term ethnographic methods, they are not just different forms or modified forms of the long-term methods (Pink & Morgan, 2013). Innovative research is often developed through short-term ethnographic research

design. The use of digital technology also creates new opportunities in methods for visual research (Prosser, 2013).

Collaborator Selection

Most research is designed solely by the researcher with almost no ability for the people being studied to make decisions about the kinds of knowledge that will be produced (Buch & Staller, 2014). As a feminist, I reject this idea. Instead, I intentionally involved my collaborative partners throughout this ethnographic research study. For this study, this meant that collaboration occurred at every step of the research process to allow the needs and desires of my collaborators, as well as my own, to be fulfilled (Buch & Staller, 2014). In fact, the collaboration began long before my initial research proposal was developed.

For this study, the collaborators were selected with the assistance of two of my colleagues, who have become close friends, April and Natalie. I met April when I transferred as a teacher to an elementary school. Natalie was hired as an assistant principal at the same elementary campus a couple years later. Our relationships with each other began as colleagues, as we worked together at the elementary campus for student success. The relationship between the three of us changed when we became mothers.

Now, as mothers we have developed a deeper connection to each other. Over a span of three years, we each became mothers, adding yet one more new identity to our definition of self. By this time, we were no longer working together at the same elementary campus. The changes in our professional work (April and I had also become assistant principals) were the result of our own professional desires. Despite new job

titles, we remained close and our friendships continued to grow as a result of being new mothers at the same time and needing the support of each other for our mother identity and our professional identity as educational leaders. We often found ourselves discussing the multiple common challenges we faced. Together we were a source of support and encouragement for each other.

Through the professional networks the three of us have, we identified a short list of other women who met the criteria to be involved in the study. The three of us, together, established the criteria for the research. The criteria for the collaborators of this study were that the women self-identified as an educational leader and mother. The other criterion is that the women of this study were already in a relationship with the other collaborators; whether the relationship was professional or personal did not matter. The most important piece was that the women already had some type of existing relationship with each other. The reason for this criterion was that the research design was focused-ethnography. As such, focused ethnographic methods are data intensive and collected in a rapid manner (Knoblauch, 2005). This is not possible without familiarity between collaborators (Knoblauch, 2005). Therefore, the existing relationships between the women became essential.

These existing relationships between the collaborators were already sources of support for the women in the study. This was important for women discussing issues around their identities, as well as for their well-being during the study, an ethical consideration of the study. As explored in a recent quantitative study about mothers' well-being:

Among the personal support dimensions...four had powerful, unique associations with *all seven* adjustment indices in this study: unconditional acceptance, feeling comforted when needed (henceforth referred to as “reliable comfort”), authenticity in relationships, and friendship satisfaction. (Luthar & Ciciolla, 2015, p. 7)

Another study by Luthar (2015), highlights the importance of “women’s connectedness with other mothers” and to “develop authentic connections...more importantly, with other mothers in their everyday lives, who are deliberately chosen to be their ‘go-to-committees’” (p. 300). This study built on the existing foundation of the relationships or the ‘go-to-committees’ among the collaborators (Luthar, 2015). This foundation allowed for greater depth of knowledge shared with and among each other throughout the study and also prioritized the well-being of those involved in the research.

With the purpose of the research being to more fully understand the experiences of women who identify as mothers and educational leaders, as well as to gain a better understanding of how the identities of mother and educational leader connect and contribute to each other; the number of collaborators was small. While April, Natalie and I had identified other women who met the criteria, only one other woman was able to participate in the research process with us. So, this made the size of our research group four, including myself. To solicit the participation of other collaborators to join this study, I reached out initially in text messages to set-up a time to meet. While I had initially planned to meet each collaborator for a lunch or after-school meeting, I ended up having a phone conference due to scheduling issues during the time frame, which was March 2016, to invite their participation in the study. All four collaborators participated

fully in the research process and no one dropped out of the research once we began the research process.

Data Collection

A variety of data was collected throughout this qualitative study. The data collected included photographs taken by myself and the collaborators, as well as brief captions of the photographs taken by all members of the research group, transcripts of the focus group sessions, text messages sent between focus group sessions, and comments posted to Instagram (IG) and Facebook to the researcher and collaborators about their posted images and captions. The data that were collected are summarized in Table 1. The photographs taken by myself and the collaborators do not hold meanings that can simply be read or discerned from the image.

Rather they create routes through which we can explore in interview how people experience and act in the material, social and embodied elements of their environments. If we understand such photographs as emerging from photographic moments that were meaningful to the people who took them within a particular experiential narrative of events and of movement in a specific environment, one task is to engage with the image to explore these meanings. Yet photographic meanings will be renegotiated and remade in the interview context and this remaking is part of the process of creating ethnographic knowledge.

(Pink, 2013, p. 99)

Throughout the data collection of this research study, the boundaries between life and research blended together. As stated by Pink, (2013) “the work of the visual

ethnographer can thus become part of life, while at the same time life becomes part of the research” (p. 43).

Table 1.

Data Collected

Data	Purpose?	Who?
Individual Interview Transcriptions	To gather individual narratives of collaborator prior to focus groups	Collaborators
Photographs	To photograph places, people, objects, and/or experiences about educational leader and mother identity	Researcher & Collaborators
Text Messages	To capture the dialogue between the researcher and collaborators between each focus group session	Researcher & Collaborators
Photograph Captions	To give the visual image meaning from the photographer & viewer	Researcher & Collaborators
Focus Group Transcripts	To capture the dialogue during each focus group session	Researcher & Collaborators
Instagram & Facebook Comments	To gather ideas and dialogue from others outside of focus group of the images posted and captions written	Researcher & Collaborators

One-on-One Interviews

One-on-one interviews with each collaborator occurred prior to the use of focus group interviews. Creswell (2013) describes steps to follow in the data collection process of interviewing. I followed his outline of steps for the interviews. The first step was to

determine the questions to be answered by the collaborators (Creswell, 2013). I created an interview protocol and sent the protocol to my dissertation chair for feedback prior to using it. After I received feedback on the interview protocol, I set up individual interviews over the time frame of a week, toward the end of March 2016, with those who had met the criteria of this study. This is another step outlined by Creswell (2013), identifying those to be interviewed. The next step outlined by Creswell (2013) is to determine the kind of interview (e.g. telephone interview, focus group interview, etc.). The type of interview utilized was a one-on-one interview between me and each collaborator, and then focus group interviews took place following the completion of the individual interviews. All the interviews, both the one-on-one and focus group interviews, were audio recorded for transcription.

The final few steps of Creswell's (2013) guide for interviewing include: pilot testing, determining a place for conducting the interviews, providing a consent form to participants, and following good interview procedures. The one-on-one interviews with each collaborator functioned as the pilot test and this interview also provided more information to help guide the subsequent focus group. I also provided each collaborator with a journal during their one-on-one interview. In the end, the individual collaborator journals were not used. The one-on-one interviews occurred at a place chosen by each collaborator: one interview occurred in her office mid-day during a school day, one at a local Starbucks early in the morning on a holiday, and one was even held in my home over lunch during a school day. A consent form was given to each collaborator that described the purpose of the study, amount of time needed for all the interviews (one-on-one and focus groups), and how the results of the study would be used.

Finally, good interview procedures were practiced during the one-on-one interviews, as well as the focus group interviews. This included completing the interview within the timeframe specified; not offering advice; staying with the questions of the interview protocol; and most importantly, being a good listener, not a frequent speaker, during the individual interviews and focus groups. After one-on-one interviews with each collaborator, the focus group interviews began.

The purpose of utilizing focus group interviews for the study was the benefit this type of interview is able to provide; focus groups create a space to more “effectively explore emotional experiences” (Tracy, 2013, p. 167). First, the group interaction provided more insights into the everyday experiences of being a mother and an educational leader, because the collaborators showed less inhibition, the existing relationships greatly helped in this regard. And, each person’s sharing in the conversation linked to another collaborator’s sharing (Tracy, 2013).

The everyday experiences of the women collaborators in this study were “validated, extended, and supported” by each other (Tracy, 2013, p. 167). We not only listened to each other, but we also were able to learn from, support, and encourage one another during the focus group sessions, as well as in-between the focus group sessions through our text messages (Tracy, 2013). The experience was transformative in many ways for all of us, as we raised our concerns about mothering and leading and we began to explore new ideas of how we could not only further support each other, but other women who are mothers and educational leaders (Tracy, 2013).

Another benefit to the use of focus groups is that they lend themselves to creative types of data-gathering (Tracy, 2013). Participant created or collaborator created

photographs are the foundation of the data collected in this study, so it made sense to use focus group sessions to talk about the photographs and our experiences. Artistic approaches give access to different types of knowledge and the creation of new knowledge (Pink, 2013; Tracy, 2013).

First Focus Group

Since our primary data collection tool was photographs taken by all collaborators, our first focus group meeting was to determine the aim of the photographs taken throughout the research process. Subsequently, the photographs were discussed at each session. The first focus group session was set-up through group texting. We met at a local restaurant that was convenient for all the collaborators at 6:30 pm on Monday, April 11th. Food and drinks were enjoyed during the first focus group session. This first focus group centered on the research questions or the purpose of this study, and was intended to help us understand:

- How we make sense of our experiences of being an educational leader and mother?
- How do are identities of being an educational leader and mother interact, connect, and contribute to each other?
- How do we negotiate these identities each day?

The research questions were open for discussion, but no changes were made by the group. After the research questions were finalized, the collaborators and I determined the topic of focus of our photographs for the next group session. The topic determined by the group was the challenges of being an educational leader and mother, as well as glimpses into a “day in the life” of being a mother and educational leader. We also determined that

we would set the subsequent themes at the conclusion of the focus group. During this first session we will also set expectations of each other during the study.

Expectations for Collaborators and Self

In order to determine the expectations to be followed by the collaborators and myself during the study, the following questions were discussed and answered, as a group:

- How will we ensure each voice in the group is heard during our focus group sessions?
 - We agreed to make sure all our voices were included in the dialogue by taking turns and asking each other to contribute if someone had not shared in a while during our focus groups.
- How will we create a space that respects different opinions and ideas?
 - We agreed that we all felt comfortable sharing with each other, but also agreed to let me know if that changed at any point during our research.
- How will we share our photographs with each other?
 - We agreed to texting our images to the group text and using Instagram to post our images if we wanted, as well.
- How will we support and encourage each other throughout the study?
 - We agreed that by texting our images to each other in-between our focus groups sessions that this would also allow us to encourage and support each other during the research process.

These expectations helped with the group dynamics when we met for the remaining three focus group meetings, although there were no issues that arose from

these expectations. The greatest issue or struggle during the research process was finding a day and time to meet for each focus group sessions.

The challenge of coordinating schedules between all the collaborators lengthened the anticipated time frame of the study by a month and a half. The focus groups began on April 11th, 2016, and the fifth or final focus group occurred on June 22nd, 2016. The date range of each focus group session was discussed at the conclusion of each session and the date, time, and location were finalized through group text messaging. All collaborators had iMessage on their cell phones, which made it easy to share texts and images in-between focus group sessions and retain the shared texts and images in the format created by the user. These were a source of data for the study.

Second Focus Group

The collaborators and I had determined the focus of photographs to be taken should reflect the challenges we faced from being a mother and an educational leader, as well as sharing some glimpses into our daily routines. This decision was made after reviewing the research questions that were finalized in our first focus group session. To prepare for the second focus group I printed all the images that had been shared in the group texts on 4x6 matte finish paper and placed the printed copies in a photo album, using two photographs per page. I purchased a photo album for each collaborator and printed copies of each image, so that each of us could have all the images collected in our own photo album. The photographs were organized in each album according to the order in which they were shared in the group texts. This provided each of us with identical albums. We started the focus group by looking through the photo albums and began with the question: what did we notice about the images we had shared? This question started

our dialogue about the topic we had determined to be the theme of our images: challenges in our identities of being a mother and an educational leader.

During our focus group time together we shared our reflections about the images we had collected as well as personal stories, or the background story for some of the images that were shared in the group text messages. We answered internal narrative questions that included: “what do I intend this to be a picture of? What am I excluding from the frame?” (Banks, 2007 p. 74). Throughout the focus group we asked each other questions or posed questions to the group as a whole. During the focus group, we also enjoyed snacks and drinks, since we had decided to meet in the home of one of the collaborators. (The location of her home allowed the distance traveled by each person in the group for the focus group meeting to be more equalized.) The second focus group reflection and questioning lasted an hour and 45 minutes. The entire group reflection and questioning was audio-recorded and transcribed by a transcription service. (This is true of all the focus group sessions.)

At the conclusion of the second focus group meeting, the group collaboratively determined the next theme for the photographs to be taken before the third focus group. The group selected these two questions to represent our theme: What are the expectations we believe we have for being a mother? What are the expectations we believe we have for being an educational leader? As a group we decided the next date of our focus group would be in a week and a half. The date, time, and location of the session was determined by group texts as the time frame we had discussed neared. While I had initially planned for collaborators to write ideas and thoughts in the journals they were given at their one-on-one interview, at the start of each focus group session and in-

between the focus groups sessions, but the group decided that the text messages were the best way to share their thoughts and reflections, so the journals were not used. Group text messages were also determined by the group to be the best way to share not only images with each other, but to continue the dialogue and reflections with each other between the focus group sessions.

Third Focus Group

The third focus group session followed the same format as the second session: a time to look over the new photographs placed in the photo albums (again, the images were placed in the order they were shared in the group text messages, printed in matte finish and 4x6 in size) and a time for reflection and questioning. The photographs showed how the collaborators situated themselves in their identities of being a mother and education leader (Pink, 2013). Again, each session focused on a statement of focus determined by the group and was audio-recorded for transcription. The third focus group focused on the expectations we believe we have as mothers and educational leaders.

While we did agree to use social media platforms, specifically Instagram and Facebook, to post our images and captions labeled with the hashtag determined by the group (#leadingmamas), only 20 of the images from the group texts were placed on Instagram and Facebook. In fact, all of the images, except for one, were posted by me. Between all the focus groups meetings we shared 161 images through group text messages. Facebook included the same posts to Instagram, since accounts can be linked for posting; however, there was one image posted by a collaborator to Facebook that was not posted to Instagram and that was a picture of the women in this research study, simply captioned with the hashtag #leadingmamas. The use of Instagram did allow

others outside of our research group to post comments and reflections about the images and captions posted to Instagram and Facebook by the collaborators. This provided an opportunity for us to reflect on how others perceived the images and their captions. Also, we reflected on how the comments by others impacted our own reflections, especially when the images and captions shared challenged the hegemony of mothering and leadership. The dialogue through Instagram and Facebook was another source of data collected for the study.

Fourth Focus Group

The fourth focus group followed the same format as the previous sessions: a time to look over the new photographs placed in the photo albums, and a time for reflection and questioning. The fourth focus group was centered on the joy we find in being mothers and educational leaders. This fourth session also connected learning gained from the experiences of the research process, and made connections between the previous sessions. The timeline for the focus groups began upon conclusion of the individual interviews, which was in the beginning of April 2016, and concluded at the end of June 2016. The specific dates of the focus group sessions were decided collaboratively, so that the needs of all the women were considered and taken into account when we planned each focus group session. The focus of the photographs was determined collaboratively at the end of each focus group session and became the topic discussed at the subsequent session.

Final Focus Group

At the conclusion of the four focus groups we set a final session to occur within two weeks. During these two weeks, I developed a list of emerging themes from the data

we created to be discussed at this final focus group session. During the final session together, the collaborators and I looked over the emerging themes from the data we created and collected; specifically, we looked through our photo albums together and discussed images we believed to convey the emerging themes of our data. Each collaborator had also captioned all the photos in the photo album with a word or phrase next to each image in the album. Together, we discussed how the emerging themes from our collected data were representative of our lived experiences as both mothers and leaders. This final focus group session was the longest session, lasting just under two and a half hours.

Analysis

“One of the strengths of visual methodologies in particular lies in the inevitably open-ended nature of the inquiry. Resisting single interpretations, images can give rise to a range of alternative paths of inquiry” (Banks, 2007, p.60). Recognizing this strength of visual methods allowed the study to provide new insights into the lived experiences of women who are educational leaders and mothers (Banks, 2007). “Precisely because images can sustain multiple readings, depending on the viewer’s social and personal context, they permit multiple forms of analysis” (Banks, 2007, p. 120). An approach outlined by Pink (2013) is “based on the premise that the purpose of analysis is not to translate visual evidence into verbal knowledge, but to explore the relationship between visual and other knowledge or ways of knowing” (p. 144).

So, one of the first steps I took in my data analysis was to discuss the data, emerging themes, and my questions of the data with my dissertation chair. The dialogue between us began during the earliest stages of the data collection, the individual

interviews, and continued through writing my findings. We texted, talked, and met to facilitate sensemaking of the data (Tracy, 2013). Much of this dialogue was around deconstructing the systems and structures in play for the women as mothers and leaders.

For example, one of the text conversations we had was around a response I had given in the group text, after an image had been shared by a collaborator. The essence of the image shared was an inspirational quote that years spent mothering young children are the best years of a woman's life. (See Figure 2) I shared with my chair that I texted the group that I did not buy that inspiration, that I have never wanted to leave an identity—being a mother—as much as I want to leave being a mother some days and yet, it is also an identity that brings me an incredible amount of joy—joy that I had never experienced until I became a mother. And I also shared that the relationship I have with my mother is one that I look forward to having with my own children one day. I shared with my chair that I after texted those thoughts to the group, one of the collaborators texted back: “You say the things I think.” And I texted back, “That makes me feel good. And less crazy!” And this prompted my chair and me to continue our text conversation, discussing how mothers are not even able to say aloud their thoughts and feelings. What does it mean when a mother feels like she cannot voice her true thoughts and feelings? So, what kinds of new structures and systems could be created for women to provide them a place to be their full self? These text conversations, our phone conversations, and the face to face conversations were invaluable to me, as I thought about the data and made sense of the data.



Figure 2. Motherhood.

And while I began further analysis with the steps I had outlined in my proposal by using open coding to analyze the data (Creswell, 2013; Gibbs, 2007), which was my attempt to “read reflectively to identify relevant categories” (Gibbs, 2007, p. 50) in all of

the data, including the photographs. (See Table 1.) I continued with the next step of axial coding.

Axial coding is when the “categories are refined, developed and related or interconnected” (Gibbs, 2007, p. 50). Axial coding brings together and links data that were taken apart during open coding (Tracy, 2013). Next, the process of selective coding occurred. Selective coding is where the “central category that ties all other categories in the theory together into a story is identified and related to other categories” (Gibbs, 2007, p. 50). The themes that emerged from data were connected to the theoretical framework of the study (Creswell, 2013).

So, while I had identified themes from the study through my coding steps, I also began to think more about the context of the data collected, in light of Fraser’s (1990) discourse analysis. As Pink wrote, “The key to successful photographic research is in understanding the social relations and subjective agendas through which they are produced and the discourses through which they are made meaningful” (Pink, 2013, p. 102).

The theory of discourse helps us to better understand four interrelated ideas, as identified by Fraser (1990).

1. How social identities are created and change over time
2. How social groups are formed and unformed through collective agency, often under conditions of inequality
3. How the process of cultural hegemony in “dominant groups is secured and contested” (p.83), and
4. “Emancipatory social change and political practice” (p. 83)

Fraser (1990) also states that the “right kind of theory would counter the disabling assumption that women are just passive victims of male dominance and would help us understand how, even under conditions of subordination women participate in the making of culture” (p. 86). St. Pierre describes the hardest work is “being willing to think differently” (1990, p. 478).

So, “being willing to think differently” about the data, I read, reread, and reread again, the data: transcripts, texts, comments on social media, and photograph captions, and perused the photographs. Throughout this rereading I began to think about the “different types of knowledge produced and ways of knowing that may be understood in relation to one another” (Pink, 2013, p. 144). Even with the use of photographs in the research process it is impossible to “record complete processes, activities, or sets of relationships visually” (Pink, 2013, p. 147). So, we look to “how we might understand images as emerging from relationships and intentionalities” (Pink, 2013, p. 147). This allowed my analysis to also be comparative, because each collaborator was able to explore the focus statement determined by the group in their own way (Pink, 2013). Therefore, in addition to coding for themes through the use of open and axial coding, I also reflected on the narratives of the images in terms of academic discourses (Pink, 2013). This reflection adds another layer of meaning given to the photographs by the collaborators and myself during the research process (Pink, 2013).

Through my reflection I recognized the ideology of intensive mothering in the collaborators and my photographs, as well as the transcriptions, text messages, and social media posts. I also recognized an ideology that mirrors intensive mothering, the ideology of intensive leadership. Intensive leadership is a model that advises leaders to expend a

tremendous amount of time, energy, and money in leading their school. These ideologies were woven throughout the stories shared by the women, as well as the images. But, I also began to recognize how these ideologies could be viewed in light of the theory of discourse, and how the use of images from the collaborators and me, as the foundation of this study, were able to

provide more accurate or authentic representation of reality; all research data needs to be analysed in terms of the context in which they are gathered, the social relationships among the participants, and the methods (whether linguistic or visual) that are employed. All research created positions from which it is possible for participants to speak, to perform, or to (re)present themselves. (Jotham, 2012, p. 98)

The photographs then became a piece of data that allowed for different meanings: both the collaborators given meaning, or the local meaning of the photograph, with academic meanings, or meanings I ascribed to the photographs (Pink, 2013). This creates a linking of contexts between the research process and the analysis (Pink, 2013). And most often photographs could not be placed in one single category or theme (Pink, 2013). The same image was “given different meanings in different, but often interconnected, situations each of which has ethnographic significance” (Pink, 2013, p. 153). This was evident when each collaborator texted their image in the group texts, then when we discussed the images in our focus groups, and finally when each collaborator provided a caption to all the images shared in the text messages. Pink believes, that “to place an image in a single category denies the richness of its potential for facilitating and communicating ethnographic understandings (Pink, 2013, p. 153). An image “alone reveals nothing, it is

given ethnographic meaning when linked to other types of knowledge” through analysis (Pink, 2013, p. 153).

Trustworthiness

Feminist qualitative researchers attend to validity, which is also called trustworthiness (Olesen, 2013). For qualitative research there are many validation methods a researcher can utilize to “document the accuracy of their studies (Creswell, 2013, p. 250). For this study, I used a few validation strategies to measure the dependability of my research. The first method I utilized was triangulation.

Triangulation is utilizing different sources to corroborate the themes that have emerged from the study (Creswell, 2013). Ellingson, (2013) defines a postmodern take on triangulation, built upon Richardson’s idea of the crystal, as a metaphor to contrast the positivist image of the triangle. Ellingson, (2013) has termed this “postmodern-influenced approach to triangulation” as “crystallization” (p. 432).

Crystallization combines multiple forms of analysis and multiple genres of representation into a coherent text or series of related texts, building a rich and openly partial account of a phenomenon that problematizes its own construction, highlights researchers’ vulnerabilities and positionality, makes claims about socially constructed meanings, and reveals the indeterminacy of knowledge claims even as it makes them. (Ellingson, 2013, p. 433)

The following five principles are a part of crystallization, as defined by Ellingson: (2013, p. 433)

1. “produce knowledge about a particular phenomenon through generating a deepened, complex interaction”

2. “utilizes forms of analysis or ways of producing knowledge across multiple points of the qualitative continuum”
3. “include more than one genre of writing or representation”
4. “features a significant degree of reflexive consideration of the researcher’s self”
5. “avoids positivist claims to objectivity and a singular, discoverable truth and embraces, reveals, and even celebrates knowledge as inevitably situated, partial, constructed, multiple, and embodied”

At this time, the use of term crystallization is not often used; however, some qualitative researchers are practicing research that shows these principles (Ellingson, 2013). For this study, crystallization was accomplished through utilizing the five principles of crystallization during the collection and analysis of data from the study.

1. “produce knowledge about a particular phenomenon through generating a deepened, complex interaction”
 - The data collected (Table 1) generated depth and complexity to produce knowledge about the phenomenon of being a mother and an educational leader.
2. “utilizes forms of analysis or ways of producing knowledge across multiple points of the qualitative continuum”
 - The analysis utilized coding; an analytic method. Some of the data (photographs and IG posts) are artistic or creative in approach, which is at a different point on the qualitative continuum.
3. “include more than one genre of writing or representation”

- Text and photographs were used to represent the findings from the study.
4. “features a significant degree of reflexive consideration of the researcher’s self”
 - I participated with my collaborators throughout the study.
 5. “avoids positivist claims to objectivity and a singular, discoverable truth and embraces, reveals, and even celebrates knowledge as inevitably situated, partial, constructed, multiple, and embodied”
 - I recognize that there can be multiple realities of lived experiences; however, with this belief I also recognize that statements can be made about knowledge and from this knowledge, recommendations can be made for improvements and theory developed.

Another validation strategy that was utilized is member checking (Creswell, 2013). The collaborators themselves reviewed the developed themes from the data. This occurred in the final focus group session. This validation strategy allowed the collaborators to question, change, or challenge the developed themes from the research (Creswell, 2013). This strategy also helped to make certain that the data had accurately captured the meanings of the stories and experiences shared by the women. In any research study there were limitations and delimitations. As the researcher, I acknowledge this and have identified the following limitations and delimitations for this study.

Limitations and Delimitations

Ethnography does not utilize representative sampling, so there is great difficulty in making generalizations to groups of people based on the data collected. Ethnography does allow studies to be compared, so what is shared between diverse groups of people

and what is unique to diverse groups of people can be reflected upon (Buch & Staller, 2014). Another limitation to ethnography is the difficulty associated with replication. Due to the nature of the relationships that are formed during the research process this becomes almost impossible to replicate in future studies with other researchers and participants (Buch & Staller, 2014). Lastly, limitations of this study also include the cultural, economic, and college educated status of the collaborators and me. We would all identify ourselves as middle-class and three out of four are White. I recognize the privilege this provides each of us in our everyday life experiences as mothers and educational leaders.

There are also delimitations to this study. The first is the number of collaborators in the study, four including myself. The collaborators all had prior relationships with each other, although not necessarily with everyone in the focus group. These relationships all began and developed in a professional context; however, many of the relationships have since developed into closer personal relationships. This is purposeful in that the collaborators will be able to share more openly and honestly with each other due to these existing relationships, which also supported the women's well-being during the research (Luthar, 2015). The size of the group allowed for deeper dialogue and more opportunities for each collaborator to share their reflections and ideas.

Researcher Perspective

I identify as an educational leader and a mother, so the purpose of this study was very meaningful to me in both my professional and personal world. As a mother and educational leader, I have lived experiences that I believe are important to explore and share with others. The other women in this study who identify as educational leaders and

mothers also have lived experiences to be shared and be learned from. The purpose of knowing these lived experiences allows for the possibility of change to occur in local communities that is better for not only women within the community, but for the community as a whole.

As a feminist, I believe there is a difference for women's lived experiences, as a result of their gender, that influences other forms of power and difference in the socially constructed world for women (Buch & Staller, 2014). In most research the researcher determines the agenda, questions, methods, analysis, and how the knowledge produced from the research will be used (Buch & Staller, 2014). As a feminist, I wanted to be collaborative in the research process with my colleagues and allow for the use of participatory methods, which is why the visual ethnographic methods were selected for this study (Buch & Staller, 2014). I selected methods that allowed my collaborators to be actively involved in representing their own identities (Prosser, 2013). While I may have already thought about research questions, methods, and analysis, I allowed the study to be collaborative, so that their voices, needs, and interests were addressed through the study (Buch & Staller, 2014). Together we aimed to develop changing relationships with each other through the research process and built our capacities to be researchers in our own local communities that will create change (Buch & Staller, 2014).

IV. FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to more fully understand the experiences of women who are educational leaders and mothers, through the use of visual ethnographic methods, specifically digital images, captured by the participants and me. The captured images convey meanings of our life experiences as women who are educational leaders and mothers.

Introducing the #leadingmamas

To begin exploring the research questions of this study, I completed individual interviews with each collaborator. The educational histories of the women as well as their perspectives about their mother identity were discussed in their individual interview. The individual interviews helped to guide the initial focus group discussions. Before sharing the findings from the study, I believe it is important to share pieces of each woman's individual story to help one better understand the context of the collaborators and myself. Interestingly enough, there are many similarities between the collaborators and myself in our educational histories. I begin with April's story.

April

April sees herself as a teacher. When asked, how do you respond to someone new who asks what you do, she said, "I'm a teacher." She also commented that this is always her initial response, to go to her professional identity; but, then she feels guilty afterwards, because

I'm a mom and a wife and I think all of those other things that I feel that, really kind of, are the meat of what I really am, but for some reason, that's funny that you ask, I automatically thought I'm a teacher. That's what I am. I'm a teacher.

April also has always viewed herself as an educational leader, even from the beginning of her first day, as a classroom teacher. She said, "I've always been a leader." When she went to college she had planned to become a social worker, but through her work experiences came to realize that she "could make a really good connection with kids, they listened to me, we respected each other, so after the social work course I knew that wasn't for me and I decided to go into education after that." She views her philosophy of educational leadership connected to her philosophy of being a teacher.

I really do feel like, kind of in the classroom, too with kids you have to build relationships and make connections and if you don't do that, yah, kids can learn, yet; but the learning is so much deeper and richer if you have a connection and you make a relationship with the kiddos. You keep trying, even with kiddos who are hard to make a connection with, because, so I transform that over into a bigger system. You had your classroom system and then when you become an educational leader, it's a bigger system, looking at the entire campus, it's not just making relationships with kids and forming bonds with their parents and becoming a unified front in that aspect, it's also looking at the teacher, because when you can form a relationship and make a connection, they trust you that much more to really become that instructional leader for them, instead of that manager. And it really transitions that whole piece that you're not just their supervisor, you're their instructional leader and you can give them good information. For the past two years that's something I've really worked hard on, because I've been at two different campuses is building trust with teachers, so they don't see me as a supervisor or a manager, that's not why I went into

leadership for. Leadership for me is really about building relationships and community, so I would say that my philosophy is building community, having mutual respect, and it's not just about one person making decisions. It's about the whole team.

April was a Teacher Fellow at Texas State following graduation from the undergraduate elementary education program. After graduating from the Teacher Fellows program, she needed to move to a campus closer to the home she and her husband were building on their family land, so she accepted a teaching position in another school district at an elementary campus. After teaching at the campus for five years, she became one of the assistant principals. During her time as the assistant principal at this campus she became pregnant with her first and second children, both boys. April took maternity leave after the arrival of each of her boys. She desires to be a good mother and a good educational leader, but sometimes she is not sure she is doing anything right.

I definitely have high expectations and there are several days that I look in the mirror and I think that I'm doing it all wrong. And, it makes me teary eyed.

[Voice catches-pauses-tears up] Did this happen to the others? [Laughs]

April is also at a point of transition in her life; does she remain an assistant principal while her children are young or does she seek a principal position? She believes she is ready professionally for being a principal of a campus, but is not sure she is ready, as a mother.

I think that's why sometimes I feel like in these interviews that I have where I've gone to the superintendent's desk twice; I was like "Do you think I'm sabotaging

myself?” Because I’m just not sure, I know that I’m ready to be there professionally, like I know that I’m pretty sure that I could run a school, but do I want to be there right now? You know, personally. And I know I do. I think my kids are starting, they’re getting older. Like Hudson is going to school next year, it’s a different ball game. But, she was like “You know, you are young. You have plenty of time. You have plenty of time and I am going to guarantee that you’re going to get there. I know you’re going to get there. If not next year, like soon enough. It’s just so funny how and then I wonder, when she left I started thinking like if a man would have come into my office, would he have the same message? Do you know what I mean? Would he have noticed my sweet little babies and newborn pictures; you know? And had that conversation with me? I didn’t even have to ask her about the balance, like I ended up telling her of this focus group and stuff and she was like “you keep doing that, you all keep meeting, you all stay close knit, she was like because that’s what’s going to help you get through this, is have people around you”.

One of her texts to the group at the beginning of our research process described more of this uncertainty, and she wonders if her male colleagues even think about their families when they make professional decisions.

I just had a meeting, she ended up coming to me. The first thing she started talking about was babies. (I have newborn pics of both my boys in my office.) Without asking she shared some of her journey of growing with a family as a leader, balance, and feeling guilty...I think it’s something on all women’s minds. My wonder is...is it a struggle in a male leader’s mind?

For April her view of being a mother is similar to her view of being a teacher. She said, “Being a mother is a lot like being a teacher to me, too. It’s just about unconditional love that you have for this little person.

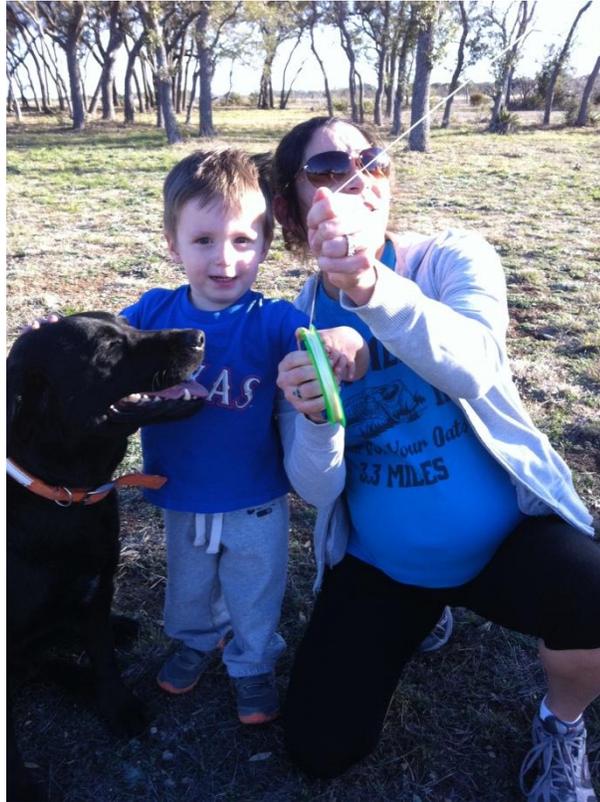


Figure 3. April being a mama with her first son and expecting her second son.

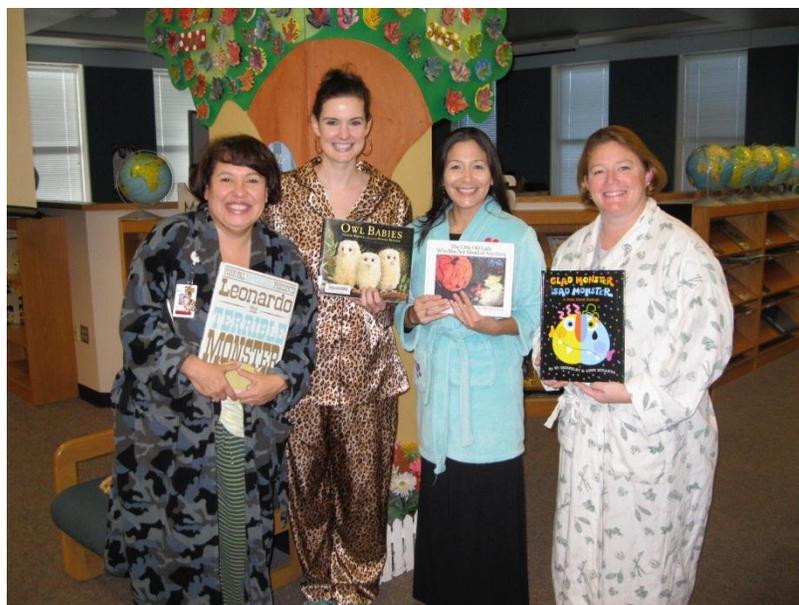


Figure 4. April being a leader along with some other teachers at her school.

Natalie

Natalie sees her primary identity as a mom. When asked, how do you respond to someone new who asks what you do, she said, “I’m a mom.” She was the only collaborator to answer this question by saying she was a mom. The other collaborators responded by saying they were teachers. This may likely be due to the fact that Natalie is currently working limited hours as an educational leader in the capacity of a university supervisor to student teachers and spends much of her time in her mothering identity. Natalie had been a kindergarten teacher and educational leader (assistant principal) before leaving the profession to stay-at-home with her first born. This had not been her plan when she became pregnant with her first born.

For me at the time, you know I was never going to stay home when I have this baby. It’s going to come out and I’m going to go back to work. I didn’t have any concept of what being a mother meant either or how I was going to respond. But I also didn’t want to not be there. Because, that was like my baby.

When her son was only three weeks old, the childcare professional she had lined up for him (an in-home daycare) called her to let her know she would be closing her in-home daycare. This left Natalie to scramble (as a first time mama, with a newborn) to find a new place to provide care for her son, so she could return to work when her leave would end in nine short weeks. She was able to make alternative arrangements for her son and returned to work when her maternity leave (the twelve weeks of the Family Medical Leave Act, FMLA) ended; however, shortly after returning to work, her son was exposed to whooping cough from another child in the childcare setting and everything changed for Natalie.

Natalie: So, I remember it was around TAKS, too; and my mother-in-law took a week off of work and came and stayed with him, because he was so sick. And I didn't have any time. So then I felt like that guilt, because I couldn't be home, because I needed to work and I needed to be there and then, I was mad because my mother-in-law was there and I couldn't be there. And then driving in that next week and it was better and I was like I can't drop him off. I don't want to drop him off. So, that must have been April because I was preparing for the second round of TAKS testing, because the beginning of May was the second round of testing. And, I made Scott take him on his way to work. It was right by Round Rock and Scott worked downtown. I was like; I need you to take him for a few days, just so you can see. I need you to drop him off, I need you to see. Like I need you to drop him off and he was like I can't do it. I don't want to, because

he didn't have to see it every day. He didn't have to go and pick him up and have that interaction.

April: So, he never did it?

Natalie: He did. But he did and he was like I can't. Basically, saying that you probably need to stay home, because we don't have a place for him. I can't do it and I don't want to drop him off. So, then my mom and Pat came and they switched until the school year ended for me. If I had had a place where I felt comfortable, I'd probably still be working; because, I really didn't have a desire to be home. I just didn't want him to be there.

Natalie continues to find ways to be an educational leader in the schools, especially now that her own children are school aged; her youngest just started kindergarten this year. She, like the other collaborators, has always viewed herself, as an educational leader. She took additional leadership responsibilities when she was a classroom teacher not only on the campus where she was teaching, but also leadership opportunities within the school district. So, after a few years of teaching, Natalie enrolled in the educational leadership program at Texas State and became very excited about the thought of impacting more than just the 20 students she had in her care when she was a teacher. Being a leader would give her the opportunity to make a difference for more students.

Natalie's mother was an elementary teacher, so Natalie had tried to stay away from becoming a teacher herself when she went to college, but after a tutoring experience in her undergraduate education she felt like she was making a difference, even though she said it "sound[ed] silly" to say as much from the tutoring experience. So, she changed

her major and never looked back and continues to find ways to be making a difference for the students in her community.

Natalie has found herself in another season of transition with her youngest child entering kindergarten this fall; both her children are now at school during the day. She is considering other part-time opportunities in local school districts, along with the part-time work she does for Concordia University Texas, as a university supervisor.



Figure 5. Natalie with her children, after school pick-up.

Tracie

Tracie sees herself as a teacher. When asked, how do you respond to someone new who asks what you do, she said, “I’m a teacher.” The follow-up question asked by others is usually about the grade level she teaches and she responds by saying that she is the principal at an elementary campus. This usually leaves people unsure how to respond to her statement about being a principal, so she said, “that’s usually it, then”. Tracie

always saw herself becoming a teacher just like her mother. Her mother was a physical education teacher and eventually became an administrator when Tracie was in high school.

So, Tracie set off for the teacher's college near her hometown to become an elementary teacher; she went to Texas State for her undergraduate education. Upon graduation, she was accepted into the Teacher Fellows program at Texas State and in that program had the opportunity to take a few electives. She wanted the electives to matter or count toward something, so she took courses in educational leadership. At this time, she was not sure she would go in the direction of leadership; however, now that she looks back on her experiences she sees that she has always been putting herself in leadership roles. She started the club volleyball team at Texas State, as an undergraduate student, and participated in student government opportunities. So, like the other collaborators in this study, she has always viewed herself as a leader.

After Tracie married, she decided to go back for more graduate education since the Teacher Fellows masters was more of a general education master's degree. She began to pursue a master's in educational leadership and at this point was still not sure she would end up becoming a principal, as she had fallen in love with instructional coaching during the supervision course of the master's program. While going to graduate school, she continued to teach in the school district she had been placed in for her Teacher Fellows position. Her first position upon graduating with her master's in educational administration was as an instructional coach, which at that time was a new position in the school district. She then became an assistant principal in the school district where she had begun her teaching, as a Teacher Fellow, and after only 18 months

of being an assistant principal, she was named the principal of an elementary campus in the same district.

While Tracie was an instructional coach, she became pregnant with her first child. When her son was born, she and her husband were faced with challenges they had not expected while preparing for his arrival. Their son, Ryan, was born with a heart condition that needed monitoring and eventually two different surgeries. Many of the medical services they needed were not available to their son in the Austin area, so they ended up going to Houston to receive the medical care their son needed during his first few months of life. Shortly before their son's first birthday, he passed away. Tracie shared during one of the focus groups that this experience of not only having a special needs child, but then losing a child, has given her life experiences that many at her age do not yet have, and perhaps never will have in their lifetime. Tracie and her husband have had two daughters since losing Ryan, which presents new challenges for her when discussing her family.

Tracie: I'm probably a different 34-year old, you know what I mean? It changes you. You know what I mean? You just appreciate things better. Well, maybe not better but differently.

April: What you experienced was huge.

Tracie: Yes. I can sit in an ARD and talk about it and I do. Yeah, it is hard. This medical stuff is scary. It's the hardest thing. When do you say it—when do you not because I don't want to ever, like how many kids do you have? Well, I have three. And I don't want to make people to

feel bad. Oh, one's in heaven. 'Cause I mean, that's not a common experience.

Sarah: Right.

Tracie: But, then how do I not give him? That's what I struggle with. It's like the fucking Christmas card, what do I do?

Natalie: Yah.

Tracie continues to figure out how to navigate being a mother and also being a mother who has lost a child, as well as being an educational leader in her role as campus principal. She believes she is responsible for growing more leaders and this is one of the ways she is giving back to make a difference.

I think I am where I am, because I had some influential people in my life to help push me and guide me where to go, so I hope to have really have each teacher find the potential within themselves and to give the best that they can. Some days we do really good with that and some days are a struggle, but I would say and that everybody can learn. A very inclusive background; I always taught the inclusion class with Special Ed. That's how Kimberly and I met and so, very much including everybody, as much as we can.

She also commented during her individual interview that she wants to “do everything and do everything well, as a mom, too; so, I'm running into a conflict. I'm hoping you're going to be able to help me.” *[Laughs]*



Figure 6. Tracie's first born, a son, Ryan.



Figure 7. Tracie's daughters.

Sarah (me)

When asked what I do, I almost always respond with my professional identity, being a professor at Concordia University, Texas. And I usually quickly follow this statement by then saying I am also a mama to four amazing children, often giving their ages. Our oldest son is eight, our twin boys are six, and we added a little girl to our family 19 months ago. A typical response to this information is, “Wow. How do you do it all?” My answer is always that I do not do it all and that I have a partner, my husband, Minor, who is an active participant in raising our children and all the chores that come with having a home and family. But, even with all the help that my husband provides, I still feel like the sole responsibility of our children rests with me. It is not a responsibility that the world views as being shared; rather the responsibility is mine to bear.

When I entered my undergraduate education, I wanted to become a children and family minister in the church. (Within the church body I grew up in, the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS), this position is called Director of Christian Education DCEs.) As I began to take courses to become a DCE, I realized a few things about myself. First, it was noted by my peers in the program that I was not as Christian as them. They told me that I was not leading Bible Studies on campus; instead I was leading the dance team and working off-campus as a special needs recreational leader for an after-school program. These were not activities I should be engaging in if I was going to be a DCE major. So, I quickly began to feel like I did not belong in this group and began to explore other options for my degree. As I investigated other options, I also came to note that DCEs were not necessarily spending their days with children and

families, because children were attending school during the day. This realization pushed me into seeking a degree in elementary education.

Like the other collaborators of this study, I found myself in leadership roles as a teacher. Leadership opportunities at the campus level (team leader), as well as at the district level (curriculum representative). I entered graduate school for a master's in educational leadership dreaming that someday I could eventually teach at a university. My desire was to impact teacher education, because I saw the weaknesses of my own preparation and I wanted to make changes to teacher education so that teachers would be better prepared for the profession and better able to make the needed changes in the school system.

During my graduate school experience, I became pregnant with our first child, a son, Sawyer. I secured an internship as an assistant principal when Sawyer was only five months old, but I have vivid memories of the unexpected hurdles I faced to secure the internship position. These barriers were related to the fact that I was now a mother. In fact, in a journal that I kept in my first qualitative course for the PhD program, as I was just beginning to explore the idea of mothers and school leaders, I wrote an entry about the difficulties I experienced with the interview process. As I reflected on the experience of securing the internship position, I realized that incident was the first time I experienced conflict between my two identities. I was now a mother and being a mother was going to have consequences for my professional goals. Interestingly enough, the experience occurred the first week back from my 12 weeks of maternity leave (given through FMLA), after having Sawyer.

As a mother, I experience daily joys and struggles in my role as a mother, as well as my role as a professional. Returning from maternity leave with Sawyer was a day I'll never forget. I felt so different, so changed from having him although I wasn't able to fully put into words the changes that had occurred in me or the feelings that I was having. I remember feeling like no one else cared about this experience I was having. I recall feeling isolated and alone, even though I was around many of my close friends, who were also my colleagues. Another pivotal moment was when I was trying to get an interview time slot for the assistant principal pool. I had been offered time by HR; however, they were all during the school day. There were three other people on campus also invited to the pool interview, so the principal had declared that to go to your interview you needed to take a half-day off. Having just returned from my maternity leave, I no longer had any days to use. This would mean I would be taking time without pay, an idea that didn't sit well with me. I recall going in to the principal's office to share my concerns and frustrations to only be more frustrated by her and the assistant principal's lack of care and concern for me and my situation. Instead, they seemed more interested in eating the cinnamon and sugar that had fallen off the cinnamon sticks they were having with their lunch. I remember leaving her office almost in tears and feeling like I had never before been torn between two worlds I loved, being a mother and wanting to challenge myself professionally. (October 30, 2013; my research journal)

Since this experience, I have given birth to twin boys and a daughter, and sadly, this first experience of discrimination has been followed by many others where I felt my

identities of being a mama and an educational leader were at odds. And, what probably bothered me most was that no one seemed to care that this was an issue in our schools; even other women who were also mothers did not seem to care or they seemed to just have accepted that this was just how it was, so of course no one was really talking about how we could make schools better for mothers. But, whenever I was brave and shared how I was feeling and talked with other mothers about my struggles, most of them could relate to my experiences, but there was never much discussion about what could be done to change the systems and structures that were oppressing our identities; there were just comments made that they often felt the same way. Many had resolved that this was just the way the world worked for mothers who wanted to be professionals, too.

And then I would also listen to my students, future teachers and leaders, during class discussions or read their writing about their desire to be mothers and teachers, to be women who could do both. In fact, this was often one of reasons some of my students gave for wanting to be a teacher: they could be a mother and have a career. And every time I heard them discuss this idea or write about this desire, I think to myself 'if only you knew, if only you knew the challenges that really exist'. And that led to my questioning why we do not spend time talking about this in teacher education. Why do we not discuss the way gender impacts schools for teachers and students?

I am thankful that the collaborators of this research have used their voices to share their personal experiences of how they negotiate being a mother and school leader, how they make sense of these identities, and how the identities interact, connect, and contribute to each other. My desire is that this research will be the first of many similar research projects, so that not only will women in schools feel heard and valued, but that

change, real change, will be implemented so systems and structures can be created in our schools for women.



Figure 8. Mama to four.

Table 2

Participant Profiles

Name	Years as Educational Leader	Years as Mother	Current Leadership Position	Part-Time or Full-Time
April	8	5	Assistant Principal	Full-Time
Natalie	9	7	University Supervisor	Part-Time
Tracie	6	5	Principal	Full-Time
Sarah (me)	8	8	Assistant Professor Liberal Arts University	Full-Time

While these individual stories of the women help us better understand their unique context, more importantly they begin to frame the story of the women together as educational leaders and mothers who are trying to figure out how to be the best educational leaders they can be for their schools and be the best mothers they can be for their own children. Through the application of Fraser’s (1990) theory of discourse, I saw in the data the women’s expectations of themselves as educational leaders and mothers, the challenges they faced as a result of the expectations they believed about these identities, and the conditions of inequality they faced in their identities. Together these factors create a desire to bring change in their everyday life experiences. I have organized the findings from the study in four sections or themes: superwoman, double agents, intensive leading and mothering, and change agents.

Superwoman

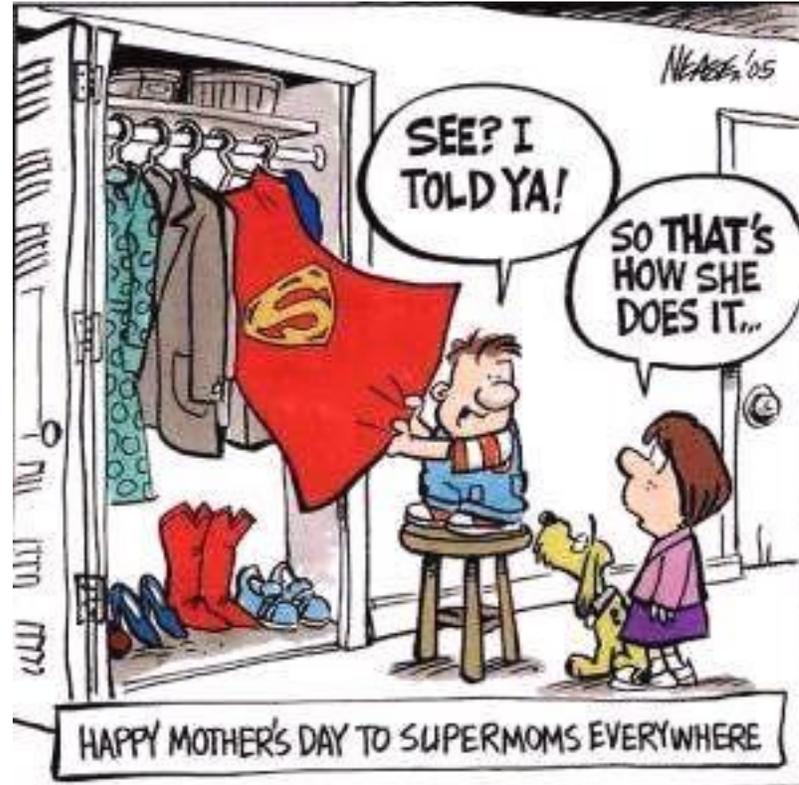


Figure 9. Superwoman Comic.

The cartoon above was one of the images shared between us (the collaborators and me) in our group text messaging threads. It was sent to the group during the time we were focusing on the expectations of our identities as educational leaders and mothers. It just so happened this focus coincided with Mother's Day. The theme of being a superwoman was woven throughout data: images shared in group text messages, individual text messages, and our focus group discussions. During our final focus group session, when we discussed emerging themes, this was also one of the images that was brought up as an image that exemplified the theme of being a superwoman for the women.

There was that one comic that I thought would be good, because I feel like that just being in the media was even, what gives us the idea, you know, like I think it's supposed to be a fun one right? But it's still the same idea that we can achieve that right?

This superwoman expectation that exists for women who are mothers is an expectation that tells us as women we are the ones who are in charge of the home space, which includes children. So, we expect ourselves to keep our homes neat and tidy for our family (Okimoto & Heilman, 2012).



Figure 10. #leadingmamas need to keep the home clean and organized.

We expect ourselves to be engaged with our children, all the time (Garey, 1999; Johnston & Swanson, 2007; Wall, 2013). And, we expect ourselves to enjoy the play time with our children, regardless of the time of day the play is happening, even in the early hours of the morning.



Figure 11. #leadingmamas get up early, even on the weekend.

We expect ourselves to be in-charge of our children's learning and extracurricular activities because we believe our children's development depends on our interaction, a mother's interaction, with them (Johnston & Swanson, 2007; Rich, 1986; Wall, 2013).



Figure 12. #leadingmamas need to provide learning opportunities.

We expect ourselves to buy organic foods and prepare healthy, homemade meals for our growing children, because their development also depends on this from us (Johnston & Swanson, 2007; Wall, 2013).



Figure 13. #leadingmamas need to cook healthy dinners.

While we know it is not realistic to achieve these expectations each day—it is simply unattainable—nonetheless, as women who are mothers, we still aspire to be a superwoman, a woman who does it all and does it all really well. We are left feeling incompetent when we fail and continually fail to meet the superwoman expectations, as mothers.

Sarah: Yeah. Which was like, creates our feelings of inadequacy. I already feel inadequate already.

Natalie: Which is I think, our number one challenge.

There is a part of us that believes if we could just be better in our identities (mothering and leading) by working harder, creating better systems and routines, and being more organized that we could become a real superwoman. Because, these are the expectations we believe the world has of us, as mothers. During the individual interview, April discussed the expectations she believes the world has for mothers.

I think it's kind of conflicting, because sometimes I think the expectation is I have to do everything for my kids. I have to be there for my kids, I have to make sure, you know, I'm the one who is the biggest care giver, and but then, there's also the professional side of me, too. And there are expectations there, a little bit different... So, I think the world views a mother as you're the person who is the first kind of like line in contacting anytime there's a situation, anytime the kiddo is ill or sick or not feeling well. So, that's hard. That's hard when you're a professional to make sure that you're meeting that expectation, but then also meeting the expectations of your career and your job duties.

Natalie also discussed the expectations of mothering.

Oh. Well, I think Pinterest and Facebook and all those worlds have made mothering so much harder. I feel like that technology is great, because it's given us so much information, but it's terrible, because it's given us so much information. It's great, because I can look up anything I want if there's a problem, but then I can also see how everyone I feel like is doing it better. So, I feel like, again, probably some of this is probably mom guilt, I don't know if anyone has an expectation of me in general, because I even have that expectation of myself that Scott wants me to do certain things and then, he's like what are you talking about. So, I feel like a lot of it comes back to me what I think the world thinks I should be doing. I think the world thinks that we should all be happy all the time, and have this five, four course meal every night, and that we should, everything be hunky, dory and that's just not really reality. [Laughs] I think the reality is that it is hard and fast and the years go by fast, but sometimes the days go by long and fast at the same time, if that makes any sense.

Natalie also shared during a focus group how the expectations of being a mother influenced her decision that she would need to leave her position as an educational leader, after she realized the chasm between how she had hoped it to be and the reality of what it would be for her and her husband.

Basically, that my life at work wasn't going to change when I had kids and my husband's wasn't; but, yet I was going to have to figure out drop-off and daycare and if he got sick, I would be the one that took off. So, I just feel like it's skewed. Like there's so many more teachers that are women and there's so many more men that are superintendents and are principals. So, I just feel like why is that?

Like is it because we don't feel as moms we can do that yet or do both, because we're being torn in two places and the men are like well, then I'll just still work. So, like a work mindset you know because they still have a wife even if the wife is working to take care of the kids. I don't know.

But, then as we gain experiences in our mothering identity we do recognize that the expectations from those around us are not always the right expectations to have about our identities. And we may even begin to reject expectations to some extent, because there are expectations placed upon us from the very beginning of becoming a mother.

Sarah: Well, and that makes me think, again, thinking-connecting back to when we were talking earlier, the comment Tracie made about the birthing list, you know everything we need to take to the hospital, right. So, we think motherhood can be the same thing, we think we know.

Natalie: Oh, we don't know.

Sarah: and we get in and then after your first and then, when you have your second, you're thinking 'what in the world was I thinking' Yah. This hospital list, you know like all the things you're supposed to bring and now with Phoebe, I'm like we don't need all this stuff.

Natalie: I think there's a difference with people who have multiple children compared to one.

Tracie: Do I need a bag?

Natalie: Yah. Scott. I'll just wear your t-shirt.

[Laughter]

Tracie: There's a lot of how to.

Natalie: Right. Who tells us we have to do that stuff with our kids? Who tells us we have to play with the kids during the day?

Tracie: Nobody.

Natalie: Well, my daughter. Can you play baby-sitting for me? But I think that's part of it too. Again, we make expectations that we're putting onto ourselves.

However, even when we reject some of the expectations placed upon us, because we find them to be unrealistic, as women we still experience a tension between meeting the expectations and failing to meet the expectations, tension between the ideal and reality. And when we fail to meet the superwoman expectations in our mothering identity, often it is the result of our educational leader identities competing for our time and attention, too.

April: I wish I had my phone close last night...Right before bed Cole said, "come play with me" which lead to Keith and I on the floor playing cars until 7:17!! Totally past bedtime and then me reading about the 7 habits with them and falling asleep in Hudson's bed. I got NO work done! Eeck...I needed to finish walk through feedback.

Sarah: The tension is so there, all the time for me. Too many nights of falling asleep with the boys and it makes my days crazy busy. I had just started doing that with them, but I would fall asleep and be unable to get work done that I need to get done. The guilt is real.

This tension exists when we feel we are making a choice between our identities, and we choose our educational leader identity over our mother identity. April described this tension between her identities when the daycare for her children would be closed on a day that she had to be at work; it was a school day for her district and therefore a work day for her.

You're closed on a Friday, so I am going to have to take a half-day, which I really shouldn't have to take, which makes me feel guilty that I have to say that. That makes me feel bad. That makes me feel bad that I have responsibilities at school that I'm feeling are more important than taking care of my kids. Does that make sense?

So, we keep questioning ourselves and searching for ways to be a superwoman to meet the expectations in our mothering and leading. We keep trying to find the answer, believing that it is out there to be found. We believe we just have not found the answer, yet.

Tracie: That's the question that we first asked, is there a way to do both? I'm sure the answer is yes on some capacity, but like I think for me, I think my expectations of myself is to be the best principal that I can be, to be the best mom that I can be, to be the best friend that I can be. And maybe that's stupid. But, that's me. I wonder. There's no possible way for me to be that all, every day. [Laughing]

We recognize that the superwoman standard is quite impossible to attain and yet, we want to be a superwoman in our life. And then, we feel guilty when we do not meet the superwoman standard.

Sarah: Yeah, both ways. Like we're never doing enough, even though I feel like, all of us are doing enough as mothers, you know. I guess, I'm wondering, does the guilt ever go away? How does the guilt go away? Or does it just stay with us?

Natalie: According to my mom, it doesn't go away. [Laughing]

Tracie: I think this is the piece that the guys don't have. I think that's what it is and as ourselves. You're kind of like, what's the expectations? We put the expectations on our self, like working so much, but I want to be good at what I do and I enjoy it. And all of those things. What's the balance? Balance is a stupid word. But I feel guilt about not being a good principal, maybe I'm not a good mom, wife, sorry buddy. Or even to yourself or whatever.



Figure 14. #leadingmamas feel guilt when others help out.

Sarah: It made me think of the day that I took– which was just this week – I took that picture of Phoebe, you know, feeling like I feel guilty for that, but then you all were like, 'Go girl! That's great, that's great!' And sometimes it just makes me think we're harder on ourselves.

Natalie: Oh, totally.

Sarah: And so I just wondered like, where does that come from though? Where does it come from that I feel guilty about letting my 8-year old feed Phoebe in the morning?

Natalie: Mommy Guilt. It's the whole article I sent you guys.

Sarah: So, where does the article say mommy guilt comes from?

Natalie: I think it's just in general mommy guilt because, here's my mom who has guilt for herself, but at the same time will tell me how on a Saturday morning she would take glasses of milk and put them in the bottom of the fridge – she taught my brother to pour them into cereal, so that she and my dad could sleep in on Saturday morning. She taught my brother how to work the remote to turn on cartoons and she's like 'you need to teach your kids to do that, so you and Scott can sleep in'. So you know what I mean? She would applaud that – absolutely sleep in and teach them that, forgetting her own guilt is that. But she doesn't teach me that. She doesn't give me that guilt. That I have. It is in all of us – I don't know where it comes from.

These feelings of guilt were very evident in the data, even in the individual interview data from each collaborator. Natalie articulated the guilt to always be there, every day, in all the decisions she makes throughout the day for herself and her family.

Well, I think there's huge mom guilt; with every decision that I make. Do I clean house or do I go outside and play ball? Do I make a healthy dinner or do I go play babies upstairs? Do I clean the kitchen? I think it's just little things or big things. Do I work full-time next year when my kids are in school or do I just work part-time, so I can be you know at school with them and do school parties? So I think it's in everything. There's not a wrong way necessarily to do it, but for me I feel like I'm constantly thinking about it. So, from really little things to big things, it's just kind of always there. Guiding me, too; I don't know. I don't know if everyone feels that way. I don't feel like my husband feels that way. But I feel like I feel that way. And I feel that way with him, too. Like if he's going to, when he gets off work go into the garden, I'm like you should be upstairs playing with them; they're only going to be little once. I don't know if that's just mom guilt. Or we just think about that. Mothers and fathers have different roles. I don't know if it's because I'm at home all the time. But, I feel like its constant in my brain.

As women we are partly to blame for putting these unrealistic expectations upon ourselves and then trying to meet them. But, the expectations also come from others around us. Often our own mothers tell us what we should be doing in our mothering identity from their own mothering experiences.

My mom feels like she wasn't there. 'Cause she worked, always and she'll bring it up in random conversations that I should stay home more. And I'm like 'why –

you didn't stay home?' She says how she regrets it and she wishes she did, but they couldn't afford it. But I never – there's no memory about when she wasn't there. I tell her that all the time, 'you were there ... you were at everything there ever was!' And she was there. I just find that so interesting that she has that perspective. Because she was in education, because she was a teacher, she was able to be there for us. Summers and after school – and I remember going to her classroom and helping her with bulletin boards when I was older and coloring and I feel like that was part of who she was.

Tracie also shared a similar story about her mother, that her mother still feels guilty over missing a volleyball award ceremony because she had to attend to her administrator responsibilities the night of the award ceremony.

She will never let herself live it down. She missed parent night at volleyball, at one of my volleyball, like senior night or whatever. There's a picture of me and dad. And I'm like mom; I don't even remember that, it's okay. But, I have the same, I'm already freaked out what am I going to do when the kids have stuff that I'm going to have to take them to.

So, we make decisions to attempt to meet the expectations of being a superwoman. During one of our group text conversations the image below was sent to the group, as an image of encouragement for us during a busy time of the school year; there were only two weeks left in the school year.

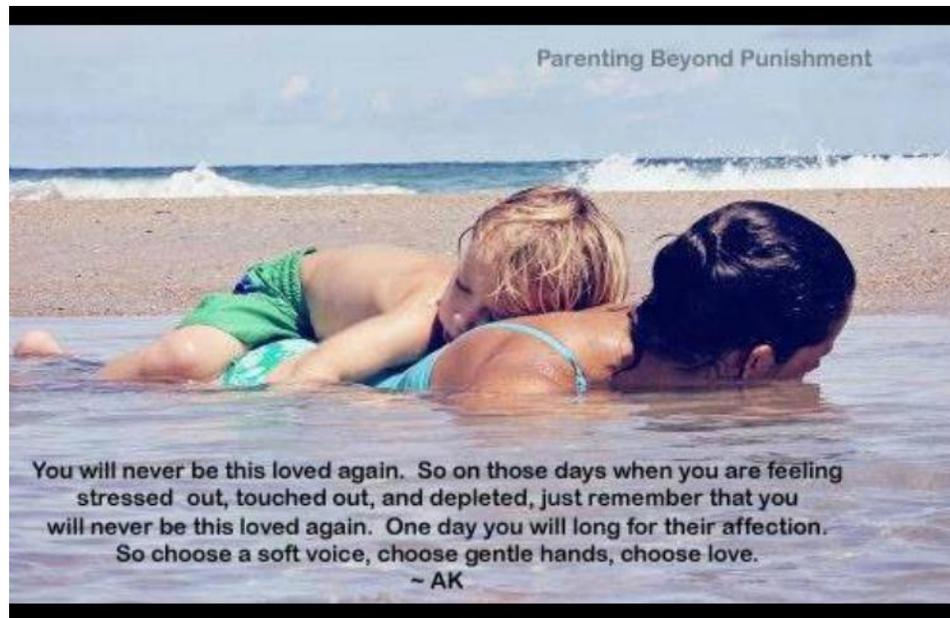


Figure 15. Quote about mothering young children.

The following texts were sent between some of us, as we processed the image.

- Sarah: I love this and yet, it makes me call ‘bs’. I think I love my mom more deeply than I did when I was younger and I still need her, the thought of her not being here (loss my grandpa in March and the realization of losing my parents one day crept into my consciousness more) scares me greatly. I think those pictures/sayings are supposed to make us feel guilty.
- Natalie: They do a good job...ha!
- Sarah: Because, some days I want to run away from my kids. In fact, I’ve never wanted to run away from anything more than being a mother. And writing that makes me feel like an awful mother. And yet, being a mother is also an identity that brings me joy, love, I have a hard time finding the words to even describe what being a mother is to me. It’s everything.
- Tracie: You say the things I think! [Emoji]
- Sarah: That makes me feel good. [Emoji] And less crazy!



Figure 16. #leadingmamas are superwomen.

Being aware of, and understanding, the superwoman expectation is important if we want to support women in their identities of being educational leaders and mothers. The superwoman expectation that emerged from the data connects to Fraser's (1990) theory of discourse about social identities being created and changing over time. It is also important to realize that the literature reviewed about expectations of mothers for this study mirrors the lived experiences of the collaborators of this research. If schools want to better support women in their identities of being educational leaders and mothers, then it becomes important to understand the expectations that women believe are put upon them as educational leaders and mothers.

Double Agents



Figure 17. #leadingmamas are double agents.

Another theme that emerged from the data was the idea of being a double agent. This theme emerged from our focus on the challenges we face as educational leaders and mothers. The following description from Natalie during a focus group clearly describes the challenge of being a double agent: someone who always sacrifices for the sake of others and puts their needs aside for the needs of the family.

It cracks me up a little bit. I just feel like, we're like double agents, kind of. We live these double lives. And I'm like oh, this is me, and a lot of this is me having to put my life, which I'm air quoted, on the back burner for like the thing, like the moments, I remember, Reese wanted to play playdough, but I have all this stuff

that I needed to do, it's just one of those times. Soon after our last talk, so I think that also made me, like, "I need to stop" and play playdough, because she wants to play playdough, but I need to do all these other things. So that's what I think is maybe harder. I don't know with some women if it's different or some men it's different, but I feel like, in our household at least Scott's life is not on the back burner, as much as mine. Because I feel like, I also do that same thing with him, like holding the ladder. 'Cause he wanted to garden that day, I was in the middle of doing something, but he was like "I need you to come and do this." I feel like their needs are like more immediate and then okay there are mine. So, I'm like "Okay, well then I'll do that." But then I think, okay, well what's more important, the laundry can be on the back burner or we won't cook dinner for tonight, or lunch, we went to Chick-Fil-A or, I don't have to necessarily do that for work, cause I'll do that tomorrow, but I do feel like, I'm always kind of like more backed up because, like hence the books on the counter. You know, like, that doesn't seem to happen, but then I'm like well they're only going to be asking me to play playdough for such a short amount of time. They're only going to be asking me to come to school, like, come to Aiden's little thing at school to have burgers and he wanted me to come, I didn't think he'd care. So, I'm like he's not going to want me to be at school much longer, because I'm going to be embarrassing. Soon there's going to come a time that I'm going to be that mom, so it's also like, it's okay at this stage of our lives, for my life to quote, unquote, be on the back burner because, you know.

The image of Natalie helping her husband by holding the ladder, (captured by one of her children) as described in her narrative of being a double agent, is worth looking at a bit more closely. Natalie's explanation that as mothers we are double agents, one who sacrifices their own needs or puts their "life on hold" for their family, is reflected in the image. Her husband is above her in the image, his needs, along with the needs of their children are above, or more important, than her own needs. Fraser's (1990) theory of discourse helps us to investigate the norms which unquestioned, continue to oppress and control women (St. Pierre, 2000). The image illustrates how "women and men tend to lead different lives and have different experiences living within patriarchal cultures and societies" (Green, 2001, p. 7).

Tracie: That's my struggle in working out and stuff like that. I need this for me, to be better. But that means, getting up at four or four thirty in the morning.

Natalie: So, it doesn't affect everybody else. It affects you. Yes.

Tracie: But, Mark can go play his soccer game, once or twice a week.

Natalie: Yah. It's hockey here.

Tracie: And we've talked about it and that it's fine, that's why I have to leave today, 'cause he has a game. But, also a healthy lifestyle is important and that's his, you know, like, it's a balance. I think, I always feel like I'm making a sacrifice. Whereas, have we had this conversation about guys? All you have to do is ask and they'll do it, but you have to ask.

Natalie: Yes.

Tracie: But, you're like I don't want to have to ask.

Natalie: Yah. Or I think if I were to bring up that I feel that way, he'd be like
"Well, then why? Why do you feel that way?"

Tracie: Yah. What's wrong with you?
[Laughter]

Natalie: Yah. "Why?" or "I didn't know you wanted to do that or go and do
that and I'll do this."
[Laughter]

Tracie: Yep.

Natalie: But, yet I just do it automatically. You know? So, I do think it's that
and I don't know if gender plays a role or if its personality. If I'm
more like just like, you know, same with Minor going to do his bike
rides or if Scott's going to go play hockey or he's going to go to Home
Depot, it's just more, they just, I don't think they ask, because they
don't feel like they need to necessarily and I think they feel like we
should be the same way, we should just go and do. But, I feel like I
have to ask permission kind-of [Laughter], can I go do this or can you
do this for me? Well, maybe that's, if I ever do, he's like, okay.
There's no push back. It's just me, internally.

Tracie: But, you feel like you should do it all. Why?

Natalie: I don't know. [laughter]

Sarah: And see, I'd say this is part of the conversation Minor and I have had
too; he asks, like "Can I go for a bike ride at this time or can I go with
the guys at this time, we're going to look for whatever for the bikes?"

Whatever it is, whatever he's asking to do, but I have told him, we've gotten to the point where we've had the arguments, but I tell him that I feel like when you ask, I can't say no.

Tracie: Yah.

Sarah: So I feel like, when you ask, I can't say no. I'm like the nagging wife if I say no; you can't do that because I really need you to do this or whatever. And so then, I don't ask 'cause he'll say the same thing, like, "You didn't ask" or "I didn't know" or "If you'd ask, you can go". Let's just communicate about this.

Natalie: Yah.

Sarah: But I feel like, I can't ask because I know, everything else that needs to be getting done and if I go, then I know that stuff doesn't happen or puts me further behind in other stuff, so I put that off until I'm like imploding and then it's like, you know. Go leave. You know?

Tracie: Yah. You need to go. [laughter]

Sarah: Yah. [laughter] Yeah. So, I think for me, I think about is it how we are socialized as women?

Natalie: Yah.

Sarah: We're supposed to be the ones.

Natalie: Yah. My mom is the same way. So I'm like, what came first, the chicken or the egg? I don't know.

Tracie: Right.

Sarah: And then yeah, do you watch that as you're growing up? You know, I watched that with my mom, too, right?

Natalie: Yah.

Sarah: She always puts herself behind all of us. But, then I've also seen my mom really struggle now, when kids have launched. You know?

Natalie: Yah. And then she's there. Yah.

Tracie: What's that balance of making them your whole life which is, like even what you said, I feel so guilty, when I need a break from my kids. Because it sounds ridiculous, I go to work every day and I get a break. You know what I mean?

Natalie: Yah. Well, because you get, you feel like you get judged, too. I felt that way when I went on my trip.

Sarah: Yah. Right.

Tracie: And I feel bad, because what do I have them for, like three hours every night and that's it. They're healthy, they're alive, you know, what I mean.

Natalie: Yah. And they're happy.

Tracie: So, I should be all about them.

So, we accept the challenges that come with being a double agent and as a result spend our days trying to balance our educational leader identity and mother identity. As we shared pictures in the group texts we recognized the idea of balancing our identities, of being a double agent in many of our images; images that we took in the moments of our everyday life experiences.

I think balancing act, you know. It made me more mindful of what we were doing. My mom laughs, because she talks about how my grandmother throughout her life would always share with everything that she did that day, because she stayed at home. So, she'd say, 'oh, I mopped the floor, I did the windows, I ironed this or whatever and it would drive everybody crazy, because we were like 'we don't care what you did today'. But like, my mom now gets it, because she was trying to have purpose for her day. This is what I did all day. And I was really busy. So, I laugh now, because taking the pictures and doing stuff, everything has a purpose even going and picking up my kids. Just those, I don't know mundane and I'm trying to just balance everything doing work, kids, mom, Scott's gone, my husband is gone during the week, most weeks, so doing that, it's just different.

As mothers and leaders, we find ourselves always trying to balance the expectations and challenges of our identities, of being a double agent in our everyday lives, as we navigate the challenges we face in our identities. But, we want to solve the dilemmas we face. We want to eliminate our challenges, so we are always looking for solutions to the challenge of balancing these identities and believe that the solution can be found; we have just not found the solution, yet.

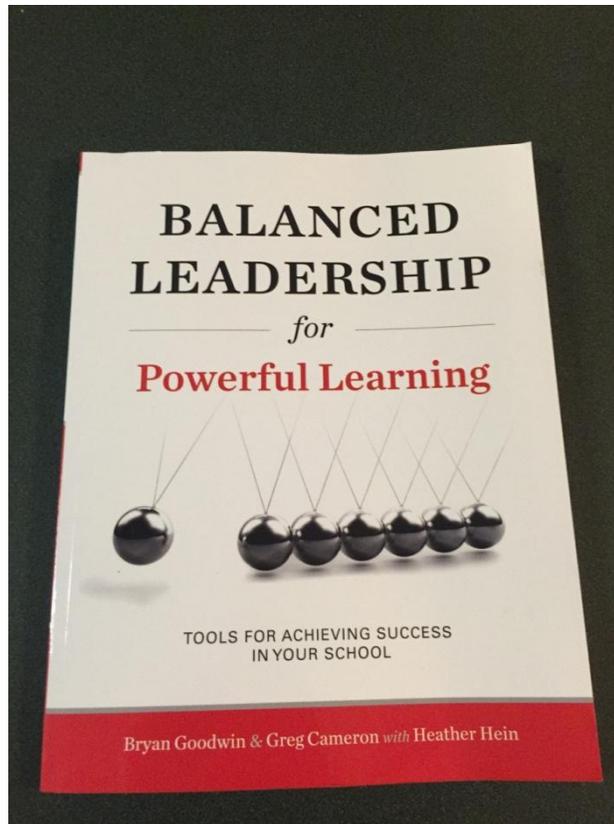


Figure 18. A book being read by one of the collaborators.

Sarah: I was actually thinking that we all, and I think this came in the individual interviews – we're all very similarly wired and like we're high achievers, qualify ourselves as perfectionists.

Natalie: Who me?
[Laughter]

Sarah: We've always, one of the ideas that came out of the interviews is that we all see ourselves as leaders, we all put ourselves in – even when we were teachers we put ourselves in leadership positions. So I was thinking even when April was just saying now about being organized and there's a system, and it just made me think that I think about this

balance thing, I think that's one of the things I still think. Like if I just have a better system in my day.

Tracie: Yes! So, I keep buying calendars and checklists and pin shit on Pinterest.

[Laughter]

Natalie: I have a new one, if you want to see it! I just got it at Target in the dollar section.

[Laughter]

Sarah: I was just having part of this conversation with Minor and I guess part of its within our own marriage that, it's one of our "marriage struggles", because, I'm always like, 'it'll get better, but I just need this time to pass' and then this to pass and then I can be more connected to you or focused on whatever and he's always reminding me, this is life.

Tracie: Yes!

Sarah: This is just how it is. There's never going to be a perfect time. If it's not this, it's going be something else and so I just wonder

Tracie: It's that, It's that perfection is attainable.

Sarah: Yah. And what is that?

Natalie: We're not smart enough to know that.

[Laughter]

Sarah: And yet we're all trying to be like, is that part of the struggle with the balance too 'cause we just think if we just had one more checklist, have one more...

And I think I had a realization even this Fall with the kids. The frustrating thing with my own children is that I can be planned out, organized and have our morning is going to go like this and then it gets derailed and I think, 'But I got up early and I had this prepped and I did this'. You know? It's not what I had planned.

April: The same thing, not only in motherhood and in raising your children, but it's also in a school day.

Tracie: Oh, absolutely.

April: This is what, I have my whole calendar; this is what I'm gonna do. I mean, my day is always planned out for me.

Natalie: and then a kid throws a pair of scissors or whatever

April: Yah. The shit hits the fan somehow and whatever happens, happens. Parents come in. I mean.

Tracie: Yes, I'm readily available to meet with you.

April: Yah.

Natalie: Absolutely.

As we continued the conversation about the challenge of balancing our identities as mothers and leaders, April suggested we look at the word balance differently, that we take a different view of what being balanced can really mean to our identities.

April: I think it's about control but I think it's also about understanding as much as I keep talking about how I want balance and how I need balance and how am I going to balance, balance this and balance that. It's really about I don't think a day can be balanced. I think there are

some days where I'm not going to get home when I wanna get home. It's going to be a little bit later, there's some kind of crisis at school and I'm not going to be able to make it. Like Saturday I'm not going to make it to Hudson's game because we have job fair and I have to be there. Like, sure I can probably say I'm not going to be there, but I want to be a part in hiring the teachers that we need on our campus. I'm not just gonna, not go. So I think looking at each 24-hour block is not fair for us. It's not fair to say I balanced my day between work and school or work and home. But looking at – this is how I kind of fixed it in my head – looking at the month. How many days of the month have I gotten home at a reasonable hour, did bath, ate dinner with my kids, did bedtime, talked about our day, our ups-and-downs, had the weekends, most weekends I don't have to work but if I do, I try and do it during nap time, so I think it's really looking at the chunks of time, then a 24-hour time frame, because that's not fair. It's not fair to us. And that's where I think we fall into that pit of the guilt – I'm not there for my kids. And it's about everybody else's kids but mine. 'Cause sometimes I think that way – oh, yah. What's best for the kids, except for my kids.

Sarah: Right.

April: And then that can put you in a crappy place, but we can't be in that place, so when I think of balance like now, I guess I just came to this

realization in the past week or so, I can't look at it, it's not fair to me.
That's not fair to me.

Tracie: Like every day, I'm disappointed with myself, somehow in some fashion because I didn't x, y, or z.

April: Yah.

We feel the pressures of our mothering and leading and recognize the challenges we face as we try to balance the identities in our lives; being a double agent. The image below captures the pressure or struggle we face in balancing our identities. The text that followed the image was "Where do you focus your time?!?"

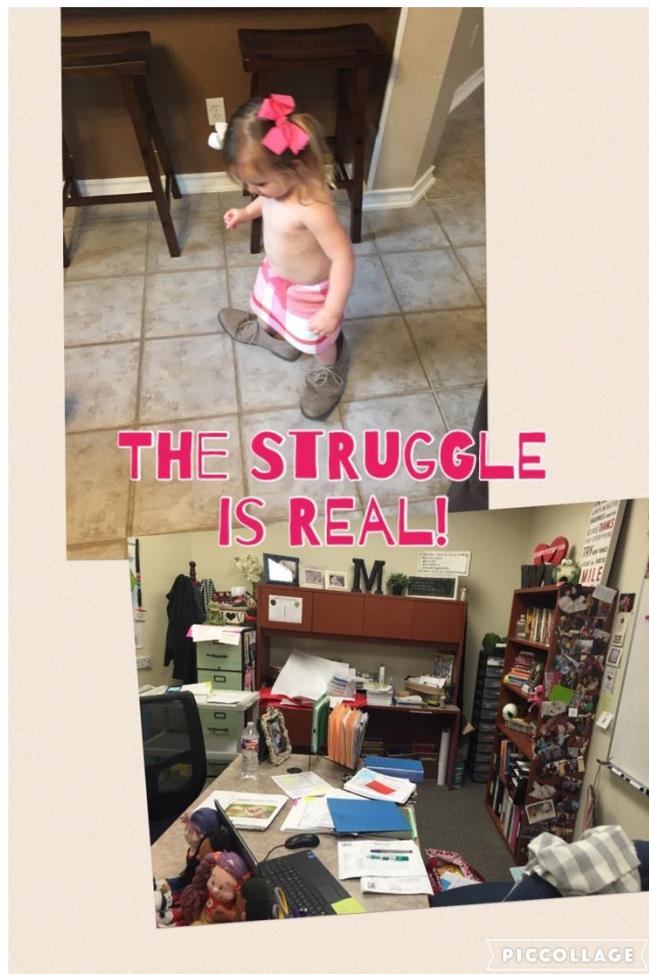


Figure 19. Where do you focus your time?!?

No answers were given to the question in our group texts. We are still searching for the answer. Our children's needs constantly change as they grow, so we constantly have to adjust and change to meet their needs. And working before kids was certainly different. Natalie discussed this in our focus group when we recalled what work-life was like before kids.

Natalie: Before I had Aiden I didn't have any reason to go home. Even when I was teaching like I stayed through Thursday night television through ER, you know.

Sarah: You could just turn on the TV and go pick up dinner.

Natalie: Yah. And I would work because I was single and didn't have kids or whatever and then even when I was with Scott dating and/or married. He didn't leave downtown until 5:30 or 6 because he's in his job doing that, so like there was zero reason for leaving to get home.

One of the biggest hurdles to our focus groups was finding a day and time to meet. Because, as one text to the group stated: "Just trying to map out time. #everyday" This is our reality, as mothers and leaders. We feel short on time to accomplish all that we need to do in our identities.

The images that follow are two that were shared during our focus on the challenges we faced. They show the struggle to balance our identities as mothers and leaders; to accomplish all that we believe we need to accomplish to be good mothers and leaders during the day. The text that followed the image is included to convey the meaning of the image given by the collaborator.

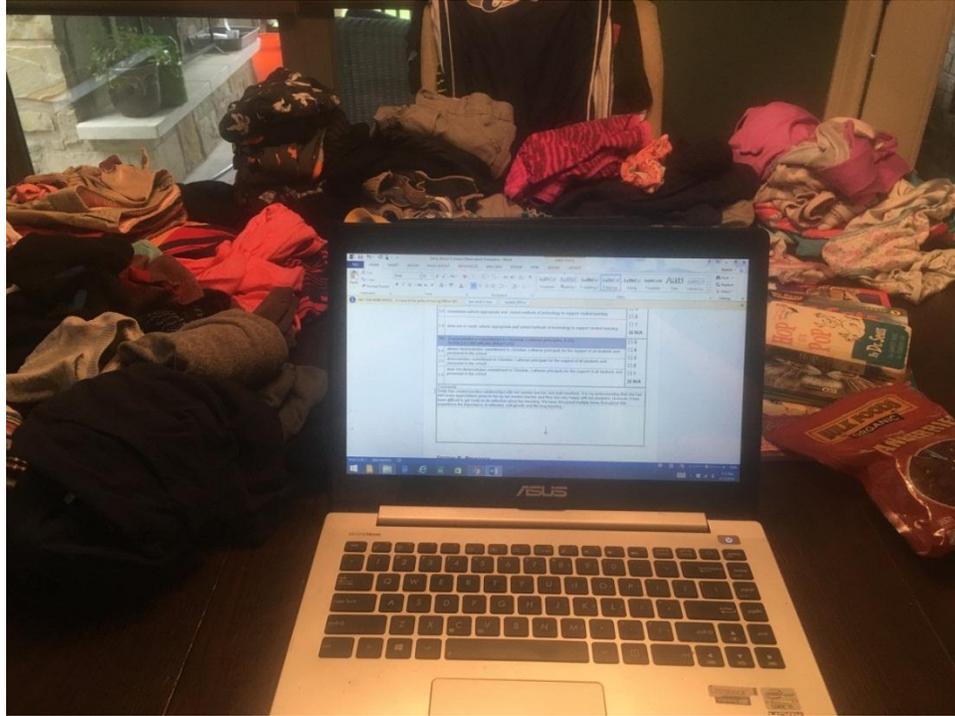


Figure 20. Laundry and student teacher evaluations [Emoji].

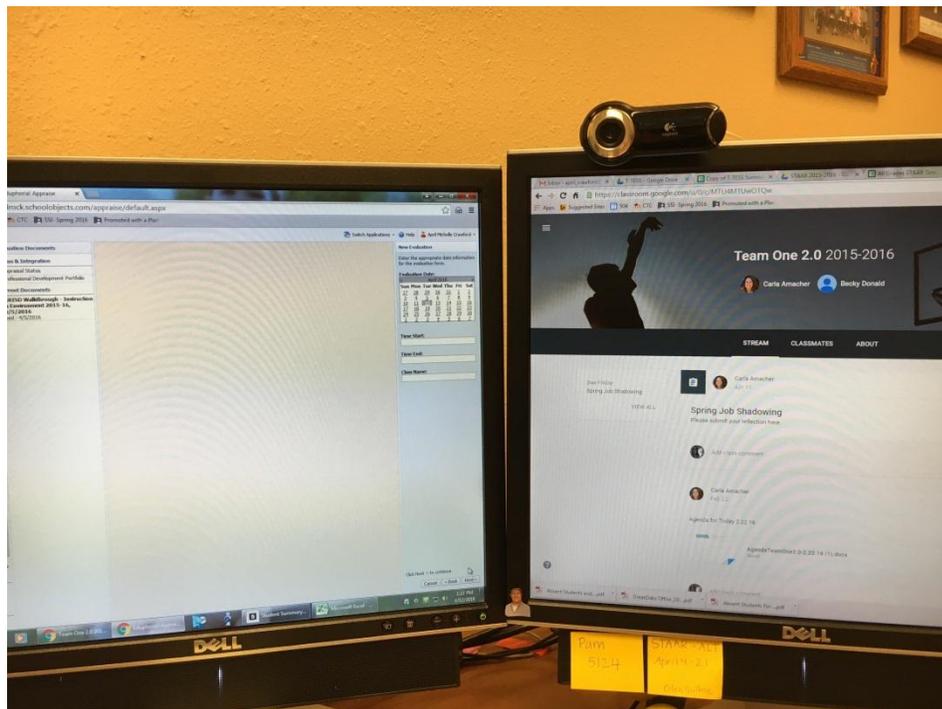


Figure 21. Trying to decide...Evaluations or District Leadership...Both require sitting behind a computer. I think I'll do walk throughs!

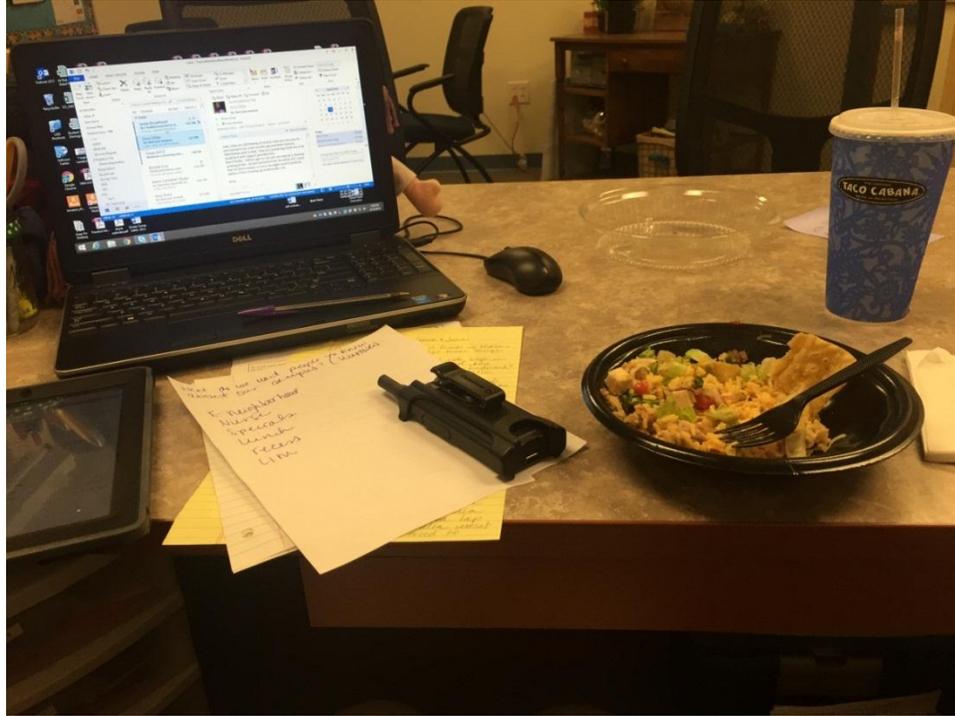


Figure 22. Healthy lunch (ha)...investigations, student leaders, and parent phone calls,
woohoo!



Figure 23. Sick baby snuggles.



Figure 24. Love nighttime snuggles.

This photo prompted the following comment from April: *Concession stand hotdog for dinner...Quick bath...ONE book (They weren't happy about that) and in bed by 7:54. Way after bedtime for us! No pic...In the rental! [Emoji]*



Figure 25. So, Phee is already asleep. I'll get one of her another night. And no stories tonight (we actually read after-school today together), because we had family friends over for dinner. (She just had a miscarriage last week, so we wanted to support and encourage them.) The boys started wearing their clothes to bed at some point this year, so they can just get up in the morning, eat breakfast, & head to school. Who am I to argue with their plan?! Recently, I had been taking turns snuggling with each one at bedtime, but I would fall asleep & it made the rest of the night more challenging for me. So, after-school (when I'm home) or morning snuggles work better.

And in a later text to the group during the research process April shared a link to an article from *Suburban Turmoil* about the P&G Olympic advertisements, highlighting some of the statistics shared in the article on *Suburban Turmoil*.

Nearly all moms (98%) admitted that they did not anticipate the demands of motherhood with nearly two-thirds agreeing that they needed to develop greater emotional strength once they became a mom and the majority of moms (91%) want their children to feel the impact of their parenting when they are not together, and for US moms, integrity, hard work, and determination are some of the most important values to instill in their children. (Suburbanturmoil.com, 2016)

The message of the P&G advertisements is that “it takes someone strong to make someone strong, thank you, mom.”

These advertisement messages remind us, as mothers, that it is our responsibility to raise our children, and how our children turn out is a direct reflection of our mothering abilities (Johnston & Swanson, 2006, Pederson, 2012; Taylor, 2011). No matter the challenges presented by our mothering identity, we are to overcome the challenges, regardless. The narrative we have learned, as women, is we just need to do a better job of balancing our identities (Taylor, 2011). So, as mothers we have internalized this message and believe it to be true. This is the cultural hegemony of intensive mothering in the United States.

Intensive Leadership & Mothering

The themes of intensive leadership and intensive mothering were also intertwined throughout the data of this study. “The ideology of intensive mothering is a gendered model that advises mothers to expend a tremendous amount of time, energy, and money in raising their children (Hays, 1996, p. x). In other words, “childrearing should be child-centered, it should be done by mothers, and it should be done by mobilizing countless resources of time, money, and energy (Taylor, 2011, p. 898).

The ideology of intensive leadership mirrors intensive mothering. Intensive leadership is a model that advises leaders to expend a tremendous amount of time, energy, and money leading their school. In other words, the educational leader, often a principal, should be the sole leader of a campus, and there is work that only the principal should be doing. The ideologies of intensive leadership and motherhood are often reinforced through the policies and praxis in our schools. The policies and praxis get in the way of being able to fully integrate our identities, so the policies and praxis create either/or dilemmas for us to solve (Buzzanell et al., 2005).

One of these dilemmas for us to solve begins before we even have the baby: how much maternity leave do you take, after the birth? The women in the group all had made different decisions about their leave, some taking leave for a longer period of time than others; but, the structures influencing the women's decisions were often similar across different contexts. We discussed our experiences with leave during our first focus group.

Tracie: I put a lot of pressure on myself, because I wanted to take five weeks. Not because someone was like you need to get back to work. I needed to get back to work.

Sarah: So, why did you feel like you needed to get back?

Tracie: We talked it a little, but like there's only one person then to do the job. I had no substitute. I had no anything.

April: So, why wouldn't you have a substitute?

Tracie: I think that it's not extremely typical for principals to be pregnant. You know what I mean? Like I can think of one other person that was pregnant, there was a principal, because you know she had a daughter

named Ryan and we had Ryan. We were pregnant together. But I was an instructional coach at the time. And you know I don't think that they were, we were equipped for that, like I don't think that people have had babies being principals. It's interesting. It's been interesting seeing the secondary people get it, like one of the directors. One of them came from a high school, so I was like 'oh', I was joking with him are you going to take my spot when I'm on maternity leave. Yeah, I just realized that there's nobody else. At middle school and high school, you have more APs, but at elementary it's just us. There's an AP and principal, so I just think that, and it was my first year, so I think that played into it...And it's not about trust, it's about leaving the workload to somebody else. It's my workload. That's where I'm type A. I don't want someone having to pick up my slack. I think it's probably what it was. So, I really, I can't even say that it was, I think I could of taken twelve weeks, if you wanted. And if you wanted, but I also feel like that was, there's been several Aps who have been pregnant which I think is relatively new, also taking twelve weeks and I've seen, I think I've seen the toll it's taken on the principal or vice versa.

Natalie: Well there was a sub for me, but I only took, I took six weeks with Aiden.

Sarah: You only took six weeks with Aiden?

Natalie: Because TAKS was coming and I promised my principal I would be back and she did not ask me to come back it was never an expectation, it was not. I did not want anyone touching my stuff. I had those binders and I had

those meetings and by God nobody was going to, you know what I mean?
It was a big deal and it was like my first, well only second rodeo.

Sarah: But, that was your first baby, too.

Natalie: Oh, yeah. I had no idea what I was doing. I was like, I'm going to go back to work and work is going to be great. And then I came back and I was like it's terrible. For me at the time, you know I was never going to stay home when I have this baby it's going to come out and I'm going to go back to work. I didn't have any concept of what being a mother meant either or how I was going to respond. But I also didn't want to not be there, because that was like my baby, too.

Tracie: That's the hard part.

Natalie: Yes, because I couldn't not not come back. I just had so much to do.

We had so much to do, because we felt like we were the only ones to do the work. As Tracie discussed, there would be no substitute to take her place during her maternity leave. Our views about what it means to be an educational leader are entrenched before we even take a leadership position and then, they are confirmed by others when we accept the leadership position. Tracie recalled another principal telling her when she got the principal job that it was a "24-hour job". And April shared principals feeling like they have "to do everything". These beliefs about being an educational leader foster the intensive leadership ideology. One of the images that especially highlighted the ideology came toward the end of the study when we were focusing our images on the joys of leading and mothering, Figure 26.



Figure 26. High School Graduation 2016.

As leaders, we know that people, students and families, are depending on us. We know and believe that the work we do each day can and will make a difference for students and families, so how can we not be at work? The stakes seem too high. Student success is the result of leading well (Leithwood, 2006). As mothers, we just wish that our own children were also viewed as an important part of our work, that our own families were considered when decisions were being made, decisions that influence being able to do our work to the best of our abilities.

I think that the big thing right now that's happening in our district is-it's more of a parent issue, parenting and being in a leadership position, then as your role as a parent, because it's kind of both ways. Most districts say I know this is my district's big thing like we put kids first. But what I feel when it's like, when

you're in a leadership role, we put kids first, but not yours...Or families first, but not your family.

This was echoed by another collaborator, "Well it's just that fact of like grow one of your own, if you want good people and you want good people to work with you, why would you not give these benefits for them? And for teachers, as well." These are the contradictions that exist between what is said and what is done for us, as leaders. The contradictions also exist for us, as mothers.



Figure 27. I wish!

As mothers, we know that the world expects us to always be there for our kids (Pederson, 2012), even when this notion is challenged, as in the image above. The collaborator who shared this during the research study said it best in the accompanying text message, "I wish." There is more acceptability in delegating in our leadership

identity. In fact, it is encouraged and supported as a best practice in leadership (Fullan, 2002). But, it is not something we feel as comfortable doing in our mothering. We discussed the value of delegating in our leadership positions, but we do not feel comfortable delegating our work, as mothers, to others.

April: That's more like, it comes into the delegation.

Tracie: Yep.

April And, the principal I am with now, feels like he has to do everything. And I have conversations with him, you have to build autonomy too, you have to give people autonomy. You have to give them the chance to be, to show you that they can do things. And sometimes it might suck, but at least you didn't have to do it and then, it creates a sounding board. So, okay, so, now what do we have to do to make it better for next time....It's all about delegation, too. And I think that's what I'm trying to teach at my new campus, 'you can't do it all on your own'.

Tracie: Yah. I'm just not good at delegation. It's hard to when you delegate and people don't, you know.

April: You're right. You have to find your trust.

Tracie: 'Cause it ends up taking more time. I've had to make myself a list, too. I'm good with follow through, but not follow-up. When I ask you to do something, I expect you to do it and its done, but then here comes two weeks later and I'm like.

April: it's not done [laughs]

Tracie: So, like I now have a list of follow-up.

Sarah: It makes me think... do we delegate in our mothering roles?

Natalie: I was actually just thinking the same. My brain went there, too.

Sarah: Like I know I sometimes don't, because I feel like, maybe it's part of the guilt about not being there when I feel like I'm supposed to be there in the day. So at night and things I'm like, 'No, I'm gonna do this' – but also it comes back to where I'm kinda like the martyr with my husband. 'Like, look what I'm doing now', you know? So, then I feel like it plays into our relationship, that piece too; but I think part of it is that it's hard for me to delegate in my mothering role, because I think that's my responsibility, so I shouldn't be delegating. But at the same time...

April: So what's your responsibility?

Sarah: [sigh] It is a good question.

Natalie: I know.

Sarah: I mean I feel like my responsibility is, I feel like just how my kids look during the day, like today. Sawyer came home and he was like, 'Mama, you need to do this note. I can't go on the field trip if you don't bring this note back' and I was like 'Shit!' I took the field trip note, I put it in a to-do stack and just like other papers got on top. I didn't even read the date. So I feel like that's on me, now that was me. Whereas, I should have just told Minor when that note came in, 'Hey, can you take care of this, can you just write the check or walk up to the school today when you're home' because our schedules are a little different this year. But, I feel like that's my responsibility. I guess I feel the school perceives it as

my responsibility, too. Like when those things don't get done, they're not saying – Minor, they're not calling the dad or pointing the finger at the dad ...

Natalie: They're telling the mom she needs to do this.

Sarah: Exactly. It's what the teacher says, so I feel like it becomes, it's on me, you know? Because I get judged on how the boys look,

April: Yes.

Sarah: if they're late to school I feel like it's-its 'mom didn't get you to school', you know, even if I wasn't home that morning and Minor was the one responsible for getting them to school, I still feel like it, even if I'm not there, but we still blame the mom. We don't blame a dad for that. We don't blame the family for that. So, I think that's why it's also probably hard for me to delegate.

Natalie: Yah. 'Cause people just do that.

April: Can't we get better at that?

Sarah: And I think that's the thing.

Tracie: My husband says, 'Tracie, just tell me'. Guys can't read our minds, but we want them to. We want them to want do the dishes. And he's like 'Who wants to do the dishes?'

[Laughter]

We know we cannot do it all, and we need support from our partners, but we also need the structures that exist to change, structures that support the ideologies of intensive leading and mothering. Changing structures means changing the way people think about

leading and mothering. But, we know that language is “where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social consequences are defined and contested. Meaning is constituted through language” (Elvin-Nowak & Thomsson, 2001, p. 408). So, as leaders and mothers we recognize this idea and therefore seek to be change agents in the system, which leads us to the final theme from this study.

Change Agents

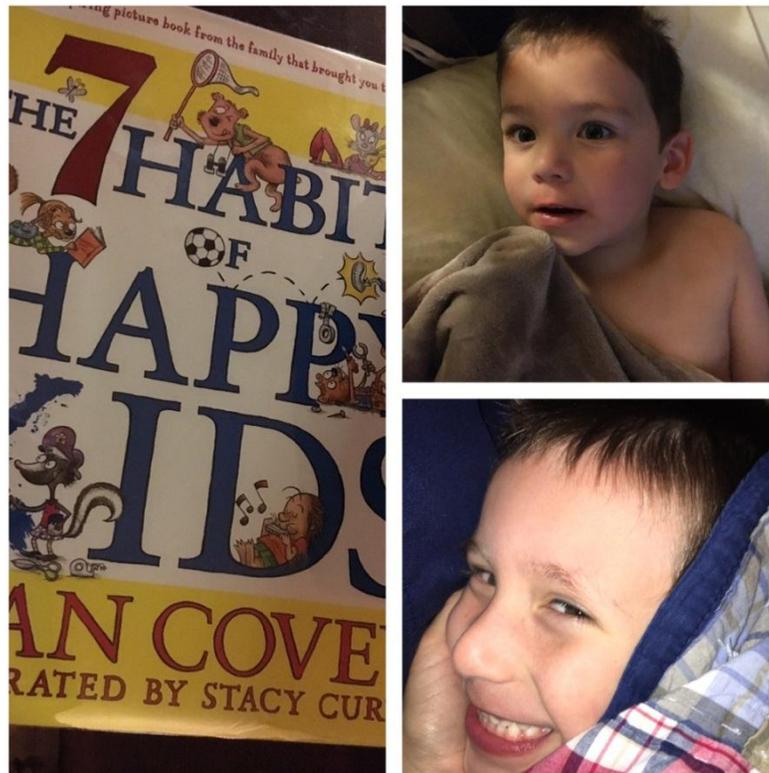


Figure 28. I know I'm both.

In the data the theme of being a change agent and desiring to make lasting and impactful change for students and families, teachers, and the communities we invest ourselves in each day was shared by all the collaborators. We want our work to matter and we believe our work in schools does matter, but we also know the work that we do within our own family matters. We want our mothering identity to be embraced and

celebrated in our workplaces, schools. We also want to lose the guilt that we carry around with us most days. We want to be leaders and mothers. We want to be both and do both well, which means we need to work towards changing how we view the work of leaders and mothers.

Connecting to Fraser's (1990) theory of discourse, in that "emancipatory social change and political practice" is a possibility when the "right kind of theory would counter the disabling assumption that women are just passive victims of male dominance and would help us understand how, even under conditions of subordination women participate in the making of culture" (Fraser, 1990, p. 86). The women in this study began to challenge beliefs about leading and mothering that are taken-for-granted, the binary of being a good leader or a good mother, that is created through language that celebrates uniformity and neglects differences within people (St. Pierre, 2000). As a group, we began to "make different statements about their [our] lives" (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 486). We were deconstructing, rebuilding new views of being leaders and mothers (St. Pierre, 2000).

This text from April to the group came during a time when we were focusing on the challenges we face as mothers and leaders. And it was one of the first texts that prompted us to begin thinking differently about our identities (St. Pierre, 2000).

Who am I? Teacher or Mom?

Hudson: does S-I-X spell 6?

Me: Yes

Hudson: I knew that because when I say six slowly I can hear the sounds. I need to just teach him to read. I've been holding off. He can read A books but we haven't gone any further on purpose.

I know I'm both. [Emoji]

We recognized that the work we are doing each day is challenging work. The following texts were sent towards the end of the study from me in the group text.

During my walk this morning, I was reflecting on the last few texts over the past few days & thinking an expectation is that I make a difference! That I make meaningful changes in a broken system that are better for kids & families.

Thinking you all may feel the same, desire to be a change maker.

And yet, it's so challenging & frustrating to be a change making leader some days.

Just like being a mama is challenging & frustrating to me some days.

And yet, I wouldn't want to do anything else for my vocation, I love teaching & leading & I love being a mama.

A collaborator responded, "word". And then texted,

A friend was named a principal of another elementary school and I am so excited!! I think back to my former principal and told her "she should be so proud"! There are 3 of us that are principals already that grew under her, I can't wait to be able to see that growth...that is my passion! #growingleaders

There were also texts about knowing when to take a stand on issues, being a change agent, and bringing light to issues that need changing. While we may want many

things to change, we cannot do it all at once, and we have to be mindful about how we go about bringing light to issues that need changing in our schools.

The principal viewed me as one of the ‘crazy parents’, never mind the fact that I was bringing up legit concerns over instruction, but I realized that with his belief that I was the ‘crazy parent’ I’d never get anywhere with any of my concerns. He viewed anything I said as ‘crazy’. So, how do you balance speaking up (when no one else will) about important issues like quality instruction, equity, and educational access for all & sometimes just letting it go, we don’t live in a perfect world, right?

A collaborator responded to the text with her text,

This was my exact struggle last year and will always be, I think, as an educator and parent bc we know too much. For me, I kept going back to what I was told years ago, what hill do you want to die on? You can fight every battle or raise a stink always bc then you will be seen as ‘crazy’ even if it’s totally legit. But, you do and should bring up matters that you think are super important or your ‘hills’ so to speak. So that’s my radar. I don’t love everything about this year but my hill was last year and now I will be quiet until my next hill surfaces. Ha ha!

As leaders who want to be change agents we recognize practices in schools often do not reflect best practices or research.

Sarah: I was just talking to my students about this this week as we were wrapping up the semester. I had my last class with them and then I was talking about this. I feel like there is disconnect between theory and practice. We know what theory says, we know what best practice is, but then when it

comes out to implementing and putting it into practice, it doesn't happen in schools or we're doing things that are providing inequities in our schools for kids, you know? So, there's this disconnect, but we don't talk about this disconnect enough in schools. I don't think as a leader – we don't talk about how our actions are really sometimes different than the theories or how we would like things to be in our schools.

Natalie: I don't think they see it that way either. Or at least the student teachers don't, because the minute they get into the classroom – especially with a mentor – they do exactly what that mentor teacher does and it's like they have forgotten everything they're taught. Karin and I talked a little about that. Part of me is, 'I'm not in Concordia so I don't know what you're teaching', but I know you enough to know what you're teaching.

We desire to be change agents and yet, we do not often recognize or even know the history that impacts the world we lead and mother within each day. Figure 29 was sent to the group from me. It, in turn, prompted these texts.

My view when I came home from work today & I thought a few things-

- I hope these are the moments, dada playing a game of street hockey with them, that our kids remember & turn into their favorite childhood memories.
- I'm missing out on the memories, because I was at work. Will my kids remember that I was there for them?! Or will they remember me being at work?!
- Why am I so hard on myself?! It's okay that I'm not always there, because, I'm there enough. I'm a good mama.

- Why do I still, after eight years of being a mama have such conflicting feeling about working & being a mama?! I think I have peace with my choice & then, I see this today & I wonder if I've made the right choice.
- Where did I learn the expectations I have for myself?



Figure 29. After-school with dad.

One of the collaborations responded,

Love your post. And yes, you are always enough. And I too hope my kids remember the good times and not the times of me losing my shit like I did today when I walked upstairs to find that it was trashed...uh...need to find patience in those moments and still make them correct it but without yelling.

During our next focus group, I mentioned how history continues to influence how woman are viewed in the world. The response again, is the desire of the women in this study to be change agents.

Sarah: I would say there are some things which are put on us based on historical things that have happened and so for me it's really interesting when I

listen to our conversation because of what I've read about it and it's just that it's there in our lived experiences, but like it hasn't come out of nothing. You know? It just makes me think again, how do you change what's been socialized in people? That's where I start thinking about it. You know?

April: What kind of conversations can we have that change that?

Conclusion

This study brings to life the everyday experiences of women who are educational leaders and mothers. Through the women's stories and images, they have explained the tension between the expectations of their identities, the challenges with balancing the expectations, policy and practices, that interact and interfere with their identities, and their desire to be change agents, to create a better place for the students, families, and communities they serve, and for their own families.



Figure 30. #leadingmamas.

V. CONCLUSIONS

This study reveals the everyday life experiences of four women who are educational leaders and mamas. Many of the life experiences discussed through texts, images, and the focus group sessions highlighted the metanarrative around mothering, that women are the ones responsible and held “accountable for her children’s health, the clothes they wear, their behavior at school, their intelligence and general development” (Rich, 1986, p. 53). This belief is well-established in the literature (Brown, 2014; Douglas & Michaels, 2004; Huisman & Joy, 2014; Kinser, 2010). Data collected also showed the metanarrative around schools: leaders are the ones responsible for the success of their schools, “...leadership has very significant effects on the quality of the school organization and on student learning” (Leithwood, 2006, p. 182).

The majority of the findings from this study came from the women’s mothering identity. We discussed our mothering identity more during the focus groups than our leadership identity. The fact that more of the findings were centered on our mothering becomes important to note. As mamas we often do not have a place where this part of ourselves can be shared openly with others, a place that recognizes the expectations and challenge we face, as mamas. One would think that schools would be a place that leadingmamas could more fully integrate their identities; however, even schools do not allow leadingmamas to fully integrate our identities. This part of our identity is not to be brought into the school workplace, even though schools are places for children and families.

The images especially highlighted the meatanarratives of mothering and leading, as we shared images around the challenges, expectations, and joys in being a leader and

mama. And through the research process we found community and deeper connections with each other by sharing our everyday experiences of being a leadingmama.



Figure 31. Healthy lunches for proper health and development.

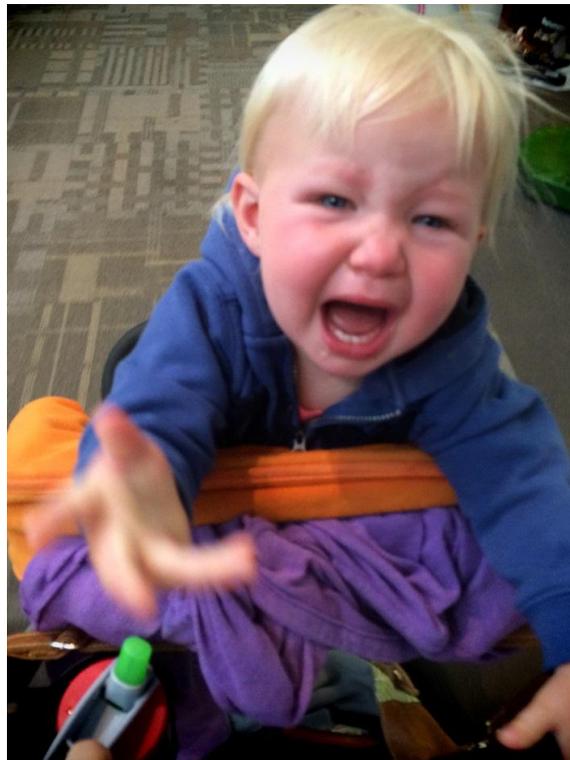


Figure 32. Children's behavior is a reflection of their mother's abilities to mother.

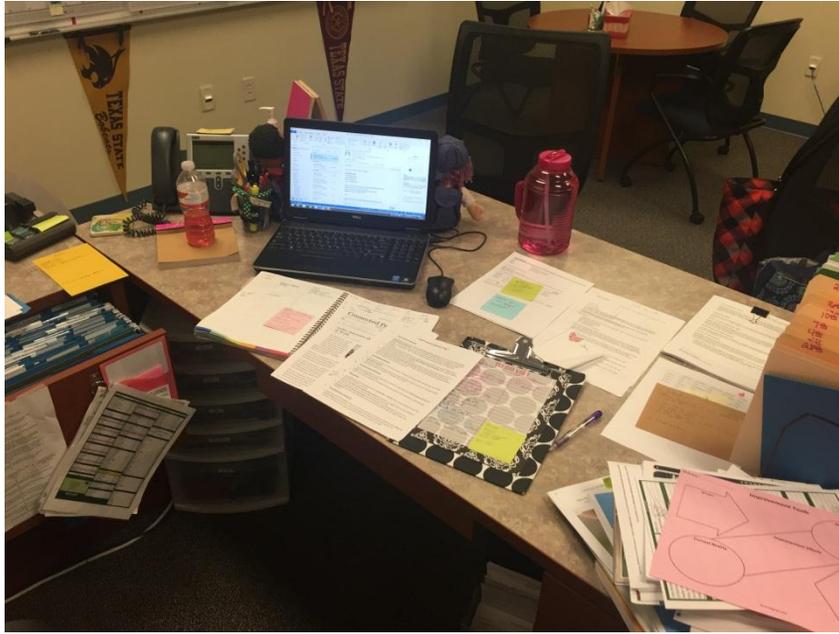


Figure 33. School Improvement results are a reflection of the leader's ability to lead.

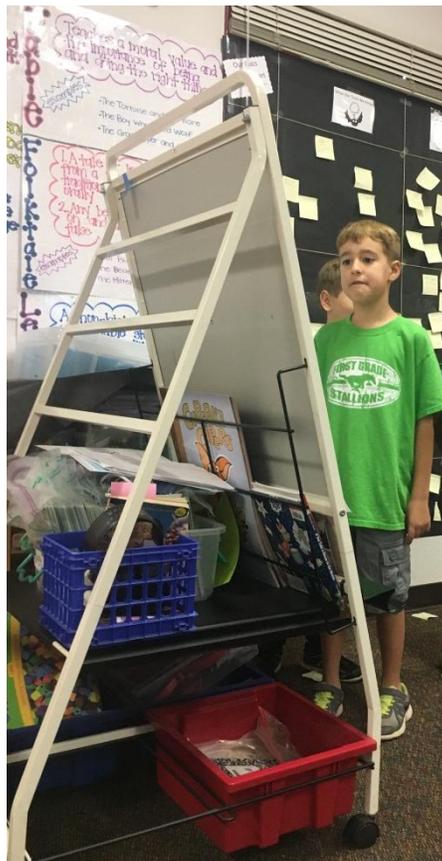


Figure 34. Increasing student learning is a result of leadership.

April asked, “What kind of conversations can we have that change that?” This was her question to recognizing that we have been socialized into our roles of leader and mama, especially being a mama. And, that being a mama is not always natural for us as women (Douglas & Michaels, 2004; Huisman & Joy, 2014; Kinser, 2010; St. Pierre, 2000; Walker, 2014). One of the first ways we can do this is to begin to think differently about our identities, which begins to allow for the creation of different mothering narratives (Green, 2001). This was part of the research process that all the collaborators connected with, the opportunity to broaden our views of being a leader and mama.

During the first focus group Natalie remarked about “waiting for the texts and pictures” and that “it was super fun and I enjoyed it all week.” Tracie echoed this sentiment by saying, “I don’t have a lot of friends that have the same lifestyle that I am in right now in the same position, so it was neat to share with you, you know, that we’re in the same season.” The images shared and text messages became a way to support each other in being a mama, which in turn allowed mothering to become “an empowering rather than oppressive experience” (D’Arcy, Turner, Crockett & Gridley, 2011, p. 31).

Sarah: Yeah, I think that was the other thing that I thought about when was I was seeing the pictures which kind of like echoes what Tracie, I think what you were even saying in the beginning. It was really fun to be able to see – like I felt that even as I was putting them all together, I was like ‘oh, we’re all on our computers’, like it would be the same images, and there was bedtime for all of us. We’re all doing these same activities and in the same space, but I feel like these aren’t the pictures that I sometimes have in my head, that being a mom or being

a leader is about, right? Like when I get on Instagram, this isn't always the picture, you know?

Natalie: Well, it's not a Christmas card.

Tracie: That's Instagram.

Sarah: So again, are we censoring?

April: Well, that's your everyday Christmas card.

Natalie: Oh, absolutely.

Tracie: Well, it's not Facebook – this is more real, like I wouldn't post most of this stuff on Facebook.

Natalie: Am I going to post my pile of laundry? [Laughter]

Sarah: So, it brings up the censoring again. Why are we not, why aren't we posting these images? For me, when I was last week – and this is speaking for me when I was getting pictures, it made me feel not as like alone or less guilty, right? Like even the picture of, again, going back to the breakfast. I was like, ok, I shouldn't feel guilty about that. That's ok that that's happening. But then that makes me wonder 'Why aren't we telling this story? Why aren't we, what are we telling?'

Tracie: Because, we have our Facebook life, you know the articles about Facebook like vs. real life.

Douglas & Michaels (2004) have extended the idea of intensive mothering to include the belief that women are not complete unless they have kids, and motherhood has been so romanticized that “the standards for success are impossible to meet” (p. 4). McHenry & Schultz (2014), argue that the additional belief, the belief of performance

and competition between mothers, has been added to the ideology of intensive mothering. Women are competing with each other in their mothering role. Intensive mothering has become the ultimate female Olympics, or is sometimes even coded as a war between groups of women (Douglas & Michaels, 2004; McHenry & Schultz, 2014). This is likely the reason, as women we do not post the images we felt comfortable texting to each other on Instagram or Facebook. The established relationships and the collaborative nature of the research with each other allowed us to feel more comfortable sharing our authentic selves, because we were already a part of each other's communities (Luthar, 2015).

But, as April's question suggested, we need to have conversations about these ideas, especially in public schools where 76% of school teachers are female, and 44% are under the age of 40, placing them within the recognized period covering child bearing and child raising years (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). As women, we are often complicit in making our identities, reinforcing the gender expectations put upon us of what it means to be a mama and woman leader (Chowdhury, 2009; Douglas & Michaels, 2004). We are not "just passive victims of male dominance" (Fraser, 1990, p. 86). One of the texts from my chair, as I processed through writing the final chapter of this dissertation stated, "We are definitely actors in the script." We play the role defined for us; we marginalize ourselves, as women.

Tracie: I don't feel gender bias at all right now with where I am at. If I went and looked are there more males in the upper, you know, yes. And my husband took off two days with our last kid.

April: And I don't feel that at all. I don't feel like there's a gender bias. I look at the directory, I did just today. There is just as many female

high school principals as there are male. There are just as many middle school female principals. There are more APs I would say administrators across the board. I would say in elementary school there are more female principals across the board, out of all 34 campuses there's like two male principals. I mean that's huge. And I don't feel the bias in my marriage. I mean I did that purposely, like I chose that person on purpose. But what's interesting is that the first principal-ship that I interviewed for and was one of two where I came home and told my husband that I didn't get it. He was very relieved. And that kind of upset me because, 'why didn't you tell me you were having second thoughts about me moving up'. We had a sixth month old baby and he was like 'I'm so sorry you didn't get it, but oh my gosh. I know we would have made it work but'. So, that kind of made me think like, so now like every time I go and talk with a principal. I ask them about when you made that change from AP to principal what was that balance change? What did that change in your home life and your family life? And it's really interesting because they all say. Like one of them, she was like well I didn't become a principal on purpose until I was like 45. And I did that purposely.

Tracie: Or you can be stupid and get pregnant while you're a principal.

[Laughter]

April: And then another principal I saw the other day she was like 'there is no balance. When I'm with my family, I'm with my family. I leave

every day at this time on purpose, because that's my family time. I don't do crap over the summer, because that's my family time. Go to this conference or that, nope, that's my family time. I get three weeks, 15 days, those are my days with my family and I'm not going to give or take on that.' So, it's really interesting. She's a little more hard core. Then, there's another principal and she like kind of sways. It's interesting.

It is interesting, because we contradict ourselves in our thoughts and actions all the time, as women. And many of these actions result in marginalizing ourselves as women and even have us competing with other women. The discussion above during our focus group highlights the thinking that there is no longer a gender bias in education and yet, it also supports that gender bias in fact, still exists for women in education. One principal said she purposely did not become a principal until she was older; she waited until her responsibilities at home had diminished. Women still make professional decisions based on their family situations, because women are still the ones who are in-charge of the home (Faircloth, 2014; Huisman & Joy, 2014; Perderson, 2012). And, we judge how other women perform within their identities of being a mama and leader: "she's hard core," or "she like, kind of sways".

We have just accepted our roles as mamas to be *natural*, to believe that we are the ones who are best suited for raising and caring for children (Huisman & Joy, 2014; Walker, 2014).

Early childhood *is* a period of high emotional and physical dependency. This is not just an invention of an "intensive parenting" culture...The problem is not the

fact of this requirement but rather that meeting this need has come to rest exclusively, and in isolation, on the shoulders of biological mothers. (Faircloth, 2014, loc 3401 of 6032; emphasis original)

And yet, there are very few structures in schools to support the families of those who work in the schools, let alone the mostly female workforce where many also identify as mamas. During one focus group, we discussed our failure to even question the system; obviously, we believe this is the way it must be, that schools are workplaces where we cannot integrate our identities.

Sarah: Because we don't even really ask the question. You know, what would we need to be in place better. I even think about your issue, which I agree teachers are going to have to be out and be pregnant and that influences the class. But at the same time it's the freaking 21st century, women get pregnant, we all got pregnant. So why don't we have better systems in place, so every time a woman gets pregnant we're not like acting like our heads are cut off and were running around like what are we going to do? what are we going to go? We don't even plan for it in the system. We don't even just hire like were going to have this teacher on this campus or these teachers in the district, so that we have quality long term sub teachers, then so you knew you're getting someone, instead of feeling like you were losing.

Natalie: Yah, so the district already has them ready.

Tracie: Yah. Or maybe retired teachers.

Sarah: Yah. Or whoever that might be.

Natalie: They're like retired teachers who are amazing and want that.

Sarah: Or maybe it's just, I don't know, maybe someone like you who wants to come in every once in a while. I don't know. But, again every time someone gets pregnant we act like it's something new.

Tracie: Right. It's so crappy.

Natalie: I mean a friend was on Facebook wanting recommendations, off Facebook and I thought to myself she's on Facebook asking about a long term sub, because hers quit, which of course I can totally relate to because Aiden's child care did the same thing. I mean I totally get where she's coming from.

Sarah: But, it shouldn't be her responsibility.

Natalie: No. And to have that on your shoulders at 8 or 9 months pregnant is like, oh my. You feel for her as well in that space of why don't we have this.

Sarah: So, again I feel like we've set up this impossible choice. And then there's the thought that make you feel like you have been at school until 5 or 6 every day, which you don't have to be there until 5 or 6 every day.

April: No, you don't.

Natalie: And well, could you grow more leaders if there was a space in your school for your kids to be there, because I know you've kept this space that you've kept because of family situation with child care. I know I would still be working if we didn't have the situation we had with

Aiden with daycare and whooping cough and etcetera. If there was a space there where they go and I don't know I just feel like, it could be right there, you have a whole building.

April: It's like we're working backwards.

No matter the topic of the focus group discussions and images, expectations, challenges, and the joys in our roles as mamas and leaders, the idea that these pieces of our identities were linked to each other was evident throughout our dialogue. We desire to be good leaders and we desire to be good mamas (Douglas & Michaels, 2004). We cannot imagine not being mamas or leaders, we want to be leadingmamas. Tracie said, "I love both; I don't know how I'd ever just be one." It is the conflict we live with each day. April later commented that part of the conflict is feeling like no matter the decision you make, "you can't win, you just can't win" when we discussed a recent news event that blamed a mother for what happened to her child. This is a reminder that "Theory is not an abstract intellectual activity divorced from our life, but is intricately linked with it" (Chowdhury, 2009, p. 32).

Conflicted Mothering

So, where is the theory that discusses this space we experience as leadingmamas? We need a new model for our mothering so we can recognize how one's professional life is strengthened, as a result of their home life or mothering (Marquez, 2011). I suggest Desai's (2014) transpersonal mothering, a more feminist perspective, as well as a more holistic view of both the mother and child (see table 3, loc. 5682 of 6032). But, before we can arrive at this new model of mothering, transpersonal mothering, we need to be able to name the lived experiences of leadingmamas, the conflict that leadingmamas

experience in their identities of being a leader and mama. Naming the conflict helps us arrive at transpersonal mothering.

The conflict experienced by the leadingmamas is woven throughout the findings. It is characterized by Natalie feeling that she had no choice in her desire to be employed, but to stay home with her first child when finding quality child care became a barrier. It is signified by April feeling like she may not be ready for a principal position, because she has young children and they are her responsibility. It is denoted by Tracie feeling like she cannot share that she experienced the death of an infant. And it is symbolized by me still feeling conflicted, after eight years about my desire to work outside of the home, because this may not be good for my children, even if it is good for my well-being. We do not want to be women who are confined by the intensive mothering ideals and yet, when decisions or conflicts arise, we fall back on those ideals to make decisions. I have added conflicted mothering in the space in-between intensive mothering and transpersonal mothering. The domains in the chart were developed by Desai (2014). I have added to Desai's chart (see Table 3.) by adding the tenets of conflicted mothering for each domain.

The collaborators and I texted about a word or term that captured the space we live in each day with our experiences of being leadingmamas. We texted about the following terms: ambivalent mothering, paradox mothering, and conflicted mothering. While the definition of ambivalent connected to our experiences, we felt how the term is viewed, that one does not really care, did not capture our experiences as leadingmamas. We care deeply about being leadingmamas. Paradox mothering also did not seem to fit well with our experiences, because we do not see being leadingmamas as being opposite

identities- we see these identities being connected to each other. We decided conflicted mothering was the term that captured our lived experiences as leadingmamas. As Natalie said in her text, “I think as a mother I am always conflicted...because I’m trying to do the best I can but have never done this before.”

Why are we conflicted about our mothering? Did the women’s movement in the 70s, which at its core critiqued “how existing models of marriage and motherhood trapped millions of women in lives they found frustrating and in economic arrangements that were deeply unfair,” not provide change for women? (Douglas & Michaels, 2004, p. 14). So, why do we feel conflicted about our mothering, still? Hochschild & Machung, (2012) discuss the stalled revolution for women. The “strain between the change in women and the absence of change in much else leads me to speak of a stalled revolution” (Hochschild & Machung, 2012, p. 12). “Women have changed. But most workplaces have remained inflexible in the face of the family demands of their workers, and at home, most men have yet to really adapt to the changes in women” (Hochschild & Machung, 2012, p. 12). This stalled revolution contributes to the conflict we experience as leadingmamas, because our workplace, schools, has not made changes to structures or systems to support our work as leadingmamas.

A society which did not suffer from this stall would be a society *humanely* adapted to the fact that most women work outside the home. The workplace would allow parents to work part-time, to share jobs, to work flexible hours, to take personal leaves to give birth, tend sick children, and care for well ones...a stalled revolution lacks social arrangements that ease life for working parents and

lacks men who share the second shift. (Hochschild & Machung, p. 12, 2012; emphasis original)

When taking a leave of absence to have a baby is still an issue, there is a problem with structures and systems. When working part-time is not ever considered a viable option, there is a problem with structures and systems. Schools continue to use structures and systems that put us in a place of conflict about being a leadingmama. We also experience conflict as leadingmamas in our feelings toward our decision to be a mama.

We wanted and still want to be mamas; it is an important part of our identity. We also want to be leaders; it fulfills other parts of ourselves that being a mama is not able to satisfy. But, we have difficulty expressing these feelings out loud to others, because when we fall back on intensive mothering ideals, we believe we are to love being a mama all...of...the...time. And if we do not find ourselves loving the experiences of being a mama, then there is something wrong with us. So, we do not share these feelings out loud to others and we often even try to suppress these feelings to ourselves. We do not want to acknowledge they exist, so we ignore them.

None of us find it easy to truly accept that we both love and hate our children.

For maternal ambivalence constitutes not an anodyne condition of mixed feelings, but a complex and contradictory state of mind, shared variously by all mothers, in which loving and hating feelings for children exist side by side. However, much of the ubiquitous guilt mothers endure stems from difficulties in weathering painful feelings evoked by experiencing maternal ambivalence in a culture that shies away from the very existence of something it has helped to produce.

(Parker, 1997, loc. 397 of 4403)

Conflicted mothering was also evident in some of the photographs and texts we shared during the study.



Figure 35. Celebration: nap time. This guy is so cute but don't let those baby blues fool you. The 3s are kicking my a\$\$!!



Figure 36. She wanted up. And I came home from work feeling crummy, I have a cold!
[Emoji] These are moments being a mama is really hard, I just wanted to rest and she could have cared less how I was feeling.



Figure 37. Success: ironing done...With a slight consequence [Emoji].



Figure 38. Proud of this boy for his Caring Citizen award. I feel like I'm doing something right. :)

Table 3

Types of Mothering

Domain	Intensive Mothering	Conflicted Mothering	Transpersonal Mothering
Employment	Stay home to care for child; work only if income is needed; non-employed is ideal	Makes decision to not work, even though would like to work	Mother may or may not work depending on a myriad of complex circumstances and mothers' own aspirations
Responsibility	Childcare is mother's responsibility	Recognizes and wants equal support from a partner, but the conflicts to this desire result in mother being solely responsible	Responsibility of both parents supports by family, friends, and community
Protection	Protecting children from outside influences is mother's job; Mother is ultimately responsible for how child turns out	Acknowledges myriad of factors that influence children's development, including the child's personality/genes; but, still feels responsible for how child turns out	Responsibility of everyone including parents to protect all children from outside negative influences and environments
Self-Sacrificing	Mothers should always place children's needs before their own	Understand importance of self-care, but continues to consistently put children's needs before own needs.	Mother's wellbeing is intimately intertwined with child's wellbeing so it is important for mother to attend to her own needs as it is for her to attend to her child's needs
	Being a mother is the most important thing a woman can be	Being a mother is a part of the self, along with other identities, but feels guilt with identities	May or may not be

Before we can attain the ideology of transpersonal mothering, it is important to recognize the conflict that leadingmamas experience in their everyday lives. As women, we recognize our privilege: we are educated, middle-class women who have opportunities and access that others do not. If we find conflicted mothering to be an issue in our everyday lived experiences, as leadingmamas, then women who earn less, work at even less flexible, steady, or well-paid jobs, and are limited in finding affordable child care options must find mothering and working all the more difficult (Hochschild & Machung, 2012). We need to recognize conflicted mothering if we want to arrive at transpersonal mothering. And part of this recognition is noting how the inflexibilities of the structures and systems in organizations continue to push against our desire for transpersonal mothering.

Transpersonal Mothering

Transpersonal mothering also recognizes other influences on child development, such as child temperament, peers, and the media (Desai, 2014). This recognition alleviates the burden of having to be a *perfect mother* and being solely responsible for the child's wellbeing, because the complexity of child rearing and the imperfections which are a part of mothering are acknowledged (Desai, 2014). No longer are the mother-child dynamics the only focus of raising children (Desai, 2014). As Kristin van Ogtrop so eloquently wrote, "I will love my children, but my love for them will always be imperfect" (p. 169). Just as importantly, "transpersonal motherhood enhances this recognition that we are dependent on each other and on the environment for our survival and wellbeing. This reflects a shift from I to We" (Desai, 2014, loc.5534 of 6032).

This shift from I to we, recognizing our dependency on each other would then, transfer to our workplaces, schools. One of the findings of the study was the challenge of balancing our identities or being a double agent.

When I became a mom, I thought I could do this, be a mom and a leader, I'm going to be able to do both of these jobs and be doing both really well. And it's been one of the biggest, 'what was I thinking,' you know?

Developing better policies and practices in our schools is needed, so leadingmamas can be supported, integrate their identities, and no longer need to compartmentalize parts of their identity. Desai (2014), stated

By integrating various parts of her identity, the mother opens herself up to an experience of self that has expanded beyond the personal ego (I self) and the roles she plays (expansion of identity). The focus has shifted from these individual pieces to a synthesis until the whole is experienced. (loc. 5534 of 6032)

Changing policies and practices in our schools will not only support teachers, leaders, and staff within a campus, it will also create schools that are more connected to students and their families within the school community. Transpersonal mothering creates new dialogues and new views around the challenges faced by parents.

In this sense, from a transpersonal mothering perspective, parenting challenges that are encountered are not problems to be fixed or tragedies to despair over but are opportunities to access the greater potential within. Such a transformation often corresponds with the development of transpersonal values such as intuition, creativity, mindfulness, compassion, altruism, and forgiveness. These values

reflect deeper awareness and connection to self, to others and to nature.

Cultivating these values over a

lifetime promotes a sustainable and compassionate evolution of individuals, society, cultures, and the natural world. (loc. 5545 of 6032)

Transpersonal mothering recognizes motherhood is a multifaceted experience, and acknowledges mothering is a life-changing, transformative experience (Desai, 2014).

Implications

This study revealed several implications for school districts, policy makers, and researchers about how women negotiate and make sense of their identities as leadingmamas. The women discussed many experiences as leadingmamas, including conflicted mothering. There are implications for school district leaders to create better systems and structures of support for leadingmamas. Some of the challenges experienced by the leadingmamas could be lessened with different systems and structures, as well as district policies. Colleges of educational leadership programs and even teacher education programs can learn, from this study, how to better prepare individuals who will one day be leaders in the schools. The implications of this study would result in changing the everyday experiences of leadingmamas.

School Districts

One of the implications of this study is that school districts need to do a better job of recognizing and acknowledging the challenges and tensions faced by leadingmamas, as a result of conflicted mothering. Just acknowledging the challenges and tensions is the first step to begin making changes to systems and structures that can better support leadingmamas. One of the first changes that should be made is associated with how

maternity leave policies are enacted across a school district. How do we create a system that allows a woman the opportunity for her body to heal, and the ability to care for her newborn infant in the first few months, after a birth? Some of the women in this study did not feel they could take all the amount of leave time available to them. Such a system is long overdue in our schools to support women through the birth of a child with quality substitutes. The result of making changes will not only benefit leadingmamas, they will support all families (Cucciarre et al., 2011).

Another implication of this study for school districts is to allow leadingmamas to more fully integrate their identities in schools, so that they do not feel like they are choosing between their two identities: mama and leader. Both identities are valuable to each other and inform each other (D'Arcy et al., 2011). How might this look in schools? Maybe it involves more flexible work schedules. Or maybe it means child care is provided within our schools. To best meet the needs of leadingmamas, women should be able to work collaboratively to consider possibilities that will create more harmony between their identities of mama and leader (Cucciarre et al., 2011).

Academy

Programs designed to prepare leaders and even programs designed to prepare teachers do not explore issues of gender in schools. The academy needs to address the issue of gender and leadership explicitly in programs to disrupt the meta-narrative about leadingmamas. As Natalie stated, “I had no idea what I was doing” referring to what happened, after the birth of her first child. And, for most of us in this study, we had very little knowledge about how our gender influences our leading, as well as the history that continues to impact today’s schools for leadingmamas.

History is important, as history continues to influence the present. A greater understanding of the history of how schools were developed in the United States, as well as the changing views of women and mothers through history is also important. This knowledge would allow leadingmamas to be better equipped to not only meet the challenges they will face as leadingmamas, but to also reject the meta-narrative and create new possibilities, as leadingmamas.

Policy Makers

Policy makers need to realize that those working in schools also have families and responsibilities to their families. Policies should provide the opportunity for workers, as well as the expectation that the opportunity will be taken by workers, to have paid time off with their families during powerful family experiences such as birth or adoption, or caring for aging parents (Cucciarre et al., 2011). Leadingmamas are not the only ones with family responsibilities.

Policy makers should also recognize how policies could be more family friendly, since most people find work place policies to be unwelcoming to families (Cucciarre et al., 2011). Frequently, there is a focus on individual choices in the matter of work and family; however, most choices are a result of the structures that provide both opportunities and limitations for individuals (Sumer et al., 2008).

Future Research

Additional research needs to be done to continue the conversation about intensive mothering, ambivalent mothering, and intensive leadership. This research could include women in different leadership positions within a school district (central office, for example), as well as teachers. I suspect a group of teachingmamas would have similar

results to this study; that they would also experience the superwoman expectation and the double agent challenge, too. Perhaps many of the teachers would have even made a decision to continue being a teacher and not pursue other opportunities (e.g. graduate school) due to the expectations from intensive mothering.

While this study was intentional in not including men who were fathers in leadership positions at schools, I do think it would be important to understand the everyday experiences of fathers, in order to for schools to become family-friendly workplaces. As the child-centered lifestyle has become the norm, fathers have also felt increased pressure to be active parents and caregivers (Palladino, 2014). Fathers, too, face tensions between their work responsibilities and home responsibilities (Palladino, 2014). Their experiences are likely different, but nonetheless it would be helpful to understand them to facilitate creating family-friendly workplaces in schools.

Finally, I think more research could be done across different mother groups including socioeconomic class, culture, sexual orientation, age, and/or disability/illness to more fully understand the lived experiences of leadingmamas. I do agree with Desai's (2014) belief that

mothers in different cultures are more similar than different joined by the humanity they share and the desire to provide the best possible environment for the child to grow and the majority of mothering experiences are as universal as love and grief. Such similarities in no way reduce or erase the uniqueness of the mothering experiences in each mother and in each culture. (loc. 5726 of 6032)

Recommendation

The images in the world from media advice, marketing, and programming shape how we feel about ourselves as mothers and it also shapes how we mother (Douglas & Michaels, 2004). Through the years the message has become clear to mamas: only you, as the individual mother, are responsible for your children's wellbeing; "the buck stops with you, period, and you'd better be a superstar" (Douglas & Michaels, 2004, p. 7). The images we shared during this study echoed this idea and yet, we wanted more, we wanted change. We wanted to feel good about being a leadingmama. And, we knew that we were good leadingmamas.

We want to challenge the meta-narrative of being a leadingmama. Because, "the personal is political, in other words, that the frustrations and ambivalence they [we] felt about their [our] lives had their roots in larger social issues, and that those issues could be addressed through social action" (Kinser, 2010, p. 89). During our focus groups we realized that we could not find any online resources specifically for women who are mamas and leaders in schools. There are websites for women business leaders and *mompreneurs*, but we could not find websites online dedicated to women and mamas who work in schools that address the challenges faced by leadingmamas. This was something that we wanted to change. We want to create a place where our authentic selves and stories can be shared.

It is the primacy of women relating to women, of women creating a new consciousness of and with each other, which is at the heart of women's liberation, and the basis for the cultural revolution. Together we must find, reinforce, and validate our authentic selves. As we do this, we confirm in each other that

struggling, incipient sense of pride and strength, the divisive barriers begin to melt, we feel this growing solidarity with our sisters. We see ourselves as prime, find our centers inside of ourselves. (Radicalesbians, 1997, p. 157)

As leadingmamas we “are looking for ways to create a new consciousness of motherhood, which as Radicalesbians suggests, is at the heart of women’s liberation” (McHenry & Schultz, 2014, loc. 5462 of 6032). And, because mothering is not “the exclusive domain of biological mothers; it is a product of one’s disciplined, focused, and persistent effort” (Kinser, 2010, p. 20).

Each of us, of course, has her own individual history as a mother, her own demons and satisfactions, her own failures and goals. But motherhood is, in our culture, emphasized as such an individual achievement, something you and you alone excel at or screw up. So it’s easy to forget that motherhood *is* a collective experience. We want to erase the amnesia about motherhood, we do have a common history, it does tie us together, and it has made us simultaneously guilt-ridden and ready for an uprising. Let’s turn the surveillance cameras away from ourselves and instead turn them on the media that shaped us and that manufactured more of our beliefs and practices than we may appreciate, or want to admit. (Douglas & Michaels, 2004, p. 25; emphasis original)

We believe we can create a space for women to encourage and support each other and to raise our consciousness around issues related to being a mama and a leader in schools. We can create our own culture around being a leadingmama (Kinser, 2010). We, the collaborators and I, intend to create a website (www.leadingmamas.com). The website will be a place that can start the conversations in local communities around being

a leadingmamas, to inspire groups of leadingmamas to gather together and work collaboratively to create change in their local community. Schools leaders are also faced with distinct challenges in their leading compared to business leaders. For example, an elementary school principal often leads as many as 70 faculty and staff, in addition to supporting the learning needs of hundreds of students. As a committee member of my dissertation stated, “Schools are the only business that sees all their clients, every day, and at the same time.” This reality for school leaders creates expectations and challenges that are exclusive to school leaders. So, the creation of a website for leadingmamas will uniquely support and encourage leadingmamas in their lived experiences as leadingmamas.

The theorist and feminist writer Patrice DiQuinzio has identified six points of concern to consider for a mother’s movement to be successful at empowering women (2006).

1. Resist mass media’s tendency to use stereotypes that divide mothers and create “the mommy wars” and work towards “coalition politics”, which would build bridges across differences and find consensus (p. 64-65)
2. All mothers must be included, “especially those mothers who are perceived to deviate in some way from the idealization of motherhood” (p. 65)
3. Reject the dualism of the good/bad mother and “highlight the economic, social, and political supports that good mothering requires, thereby showing that all mothers should have such support and that such support could prevent many of the failures of mothering for which mothers themselves are usually blamed” (p. 66)

4. Include young women in the movement, so they can understand how motherhood (whether they want to be mothers or not) shapes their view and others' views of them as women and they can "join in the work of creating more and better options for mothers" (p. 67)
5. Create alliances with those who do care-work (day care and child care workers, nurses, home health aides, other medical professionals, and teachers) , paid or unpaid "to argue for the economic and social value of all care giving work" (p. 67), and
6. Articulate a political agenda for reproductive rights (p. 67).

These ideas will be important to consider as we create the website for leadingmamas. One of the purposes of the website will be to disrupt the hegemony of motherhood through images, because images convey meaning (Stanczak, 2007). The images will challenge the "one narrow, homogenized, upper-middle-class, corporately defined image of motherhood" (Douglas & Michaels, 2004, p. 22), to provide glimpses into the real and everyday experiences of leadingmamas, to discuss the conflict we experience in our mothering. We cannot arrive at a new model of mothering without acknowledging our current condition as leadingmamas.

Conclusion

The final image and caption below were posted to Instagram and Facebook on May 29, 2016, during data collection for this study. It is one of the images from the study that resonated with all the findings of the study: superwoman, double agent, intensive mothering and leading, and change agent, as well as my conflicted mothering. Many may look at the image and think 'she's a superwoman.' But I know, in this

moment, I was working hard at being in the moment with two of my children and not being frustrated that they needed my attention, because I still had not been able to shower and I had a list of other things I needed or wanted to do (including working on this dissertation!). I was a double agent in action, putting the needs of my children before my own on this morning. I was living the theory of intensive mothering and leading in this moment, thinking *I can do it all!* And then, after I posted this image with its caption to Facebook, I was reminded, through the comments I received, that I am a change agent. By sharing my story, I am helping others share their story, and think differently about our possibilities of being leadingmamas. I also look at this image and have feelings of conflicted mothering; I am a woman, a leadingmama, in the kitchen with my children. The irony of the image does not escape me.

That is the heart of conflicted mothering, of being a leadingmama for me and the other women in this study. Some days we may want to *run away* from our kids and yet, we cannot imagine not being mamas, not being leadingmamas.



Figure 39. #leadingmama.

I asked Sawyer to snap a picture of this moment yesterday morning. Jack wanted to help me make the scrambled eggs, so we were working together. I'd model, then he'd try. He still needs more practice at cracking eggs, it was more like smashing eggs, but he'll get there with practice. It was a good moment, especially considering the laundry drama had occurred shortly before this scene.

I keep looking at this image and thinking I need the boys to snap more images of our life. For starters, I'll be in the frame more. This can make me feel uncomfortable, because when I look at the image I initially see all the work I believe I still need to do. In other words, this perfectionist sees her imperfect self. But, through the dissertation process (getting closer to finishing every day!) and reading, and reflecting on @brenebrown work I've been reminded that daring greatly brings me greater joy.

This picture is a reminder of that joy. This moment is an [#unfiltered](#) image of what life is like in our home these days. A babe who would rather be carried than walk, brothers who are growing bigger and seeking new learning. This moment combines with others to create my story and their story.

Stories that will always be connected, home is where your story begins. Here's to capturing more moments that share our stories. [#leadingmamas](#).

REFERENCES

- Adams, K. L., & Hambright, W. G. (2004). Encouraged or discouraged? Women teachers becoming principals. *The Clearing House*, 77(5), 209-211.
- Aiston, S. J. (2010). Women, education, and agency, 1600-2000: An historical perspective. In S. Spence, S. J. Aiston, & M. M. Meikle (Eds.), *Women, education, and agency*, (pp. 1-8). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Arendell, T. (2000). Conceiving and investigating motherhood: The decade's scholarship. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62(4), 1192-1207.
- Badinter, E. (1981). *Mother love: Myth and reality*. New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Bailyn, L., & Fletcher, J. K. (2003). Work redesign: Theory, practice, and possibility. *Diversity Factor*, 11(1), 27-31.
- Banks, M (2007). *Using visual data in qualitative research*. London, UK: Sage.
- Beauvoir, Simone de. (1989, c1952) *The second sex*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Blount, J. M. (2000). Spinsters, bachelors, and other gender transgressors in school Employment, 1850-1990. *Review of Educational Research*, 70 83-101.
- Brace-Govan, J. (2007). Participant photography in visual ethnography. *International Journal of Market Research*, 49(6), 735-750.
- Brown, S. (2014). Intensive mothering as an adaptive response to our cultural environment. In L. R. Ennis (Ed.), *Intensive mothering: The cultural contradictions of modern motherhood*, (loc. 488-849). Bradford, ON: Demeter Press.

- Buch, E. D., & Staller, K. M. (2014). What is feminist ethnography? In S. N. Hesse-Biber (Ed.), *Feminist research practice a primer* (2nd ed.; pp. 107-144). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Buhle, M., Murphy, T., & Gerhard, J. (2015). *A concise women's history*. New York, NY: Pearson.
- Bulckaert, B. (2010). Self-tuition and the intellectual achievement of early modern women: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607-1678). In S. Spence, S. J. Aiston, & M. M. Meikle (Eds.), *Women, education, and agency*, (pp. 9-26). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Burkman, A. (2010/2011). Gender related issues in elementary school leadership. *National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal*, 28(2), 64-78.
- Bush, T., & Glover, D. (2003). *School leadership: Concepts and evidence*. Nottingham, UK: National College for School Leadership.
- Bush, T., & Glover, D. (2014). School leadership models: What do we know? *School Leadership and Management*, 34(5), 553-571.
- Buzzanell, P. M., Meisenbach, R., Remke, R., Liu, M., Bowers, V., & Conn, C. (2005). The good working mother: Managerial women's sensemaking and feelings about work-family issues. *Communication Studies*, 56(3), 261-285.
- Carney, W. K. (2002). Motherhood and management. *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering*, 6(2), 17-26.
- Chard, R. (2013). A study of current male educational leaders, their careers and next steps. *Management in Education*, 27(4), 170-175.

- Chowdhury, A. (2009). Historicizing, theorizing, and contextualizing feminism. *The ICFAI Journal of English Studies*, 4(1), 28-39.
- Christman, D., & McClellan, R. (2008). "Living on barbed wire:" Resilient women administrators in educational leadership programs. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 44(1), 3-29.
- Christopher, K. (2012). Extensive mothering: Employed mothers' constructions of the good mother. *Gender & Society* 26(1), 73-96.
- Clifford, A. M. (2002). *Introducing feminist theology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Collins, J. (2001). *Good to great: Why some companies make the leap...and others don't*. New York, NY: Harper-Collins.
- Cremin, L. A. (1976). *Public education*. New York, NY: Basic Books, Inc.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Crow, G. M. (2006). Complexity and the beginning principal in the United States: perspectives on socialization. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 44(4), 310-325.
- Crum, K., Myra, S., & Sherman, W. (2009). Best practices of successful elementary school leaders. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 48(1), 48-63.
- Cucciarre, C. P., Morris, D., Nickoson, L., Owens, K. H., & Sheridan, M. P. (2011). Mothers' ways of making it-or making do?: Making (over) academic lives in rhetoric and composition with children. *Composition Studies*, 39(1), 41-61.
- D'Arcy, C., Turner, C., Crockett, B., & Gridley, H. (2011). Where's the feminism in mothering? *Journal of Community Psychology*, 40(1), 27-43.

- DeFelice, M., & Schroth, G. (1999) *Women in Texas who are certified but not employed as administrators*. Reston, VA: Education Resources Information Center. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED443787)
- DeMatthews, D. (2014). Shared decision making: What principals need to know. *Principal Matters, Spring* (100), 2-4.
- Desai, F. (2014). Transpersonal motherhood: A practical and holistic model of motherhood. In L. R. Ennis (Ed.), *Intensive mothering: The cultural contradictions of modern motherhood*, (loc. 5498-5833). Bradford, ON: Demeter Press.
- DiQuinzio, P. (2006). The politics of the mother's movement in the United States: Possibilities and pitfalls. *Journal of the Association for Research in Mothering* 8 (1/2), 55-71.
- Douglas, S. J., & Michaels, M. W. (2004). *The mommy myth, The idealization of motherhood and how it has undermined all women*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Drago-Severson, E. (2012). New opportunities for principal leadership: Shaping school climates for enhanced teacher development. *Teachers College Record*, 114, 1-44.
- Edge, K. (2014). The new generation of school leaders, transforming outlook, practice, and expectations. *Professional Development Today*, 17(1), 48.
- Ediger, M. (2014). The changing role of the school principal. *College Student Journal*, 48(2), 265-267.

- Ellemers, N., Rink, F., Derks B., & Ryan, M. (2012). Women in high places: When and why promoting women into top positions can harm them individually or as a group (and how to prevent this). *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 32, 163-187.
- Ellingson, L. L. (2013). Analysis and representation across the continuum. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*, (4th ed.; pp. 413-446). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Elvin-Nowak, Y., & Thomsson, H. (2001). Motherhood as idea and practice: A discursive understanding of employed mothers in Sweden. *Gender and Society*, 15, 407–428.
- Ennis, L. R. (2014). Intensive mothering: Revisiting the issue today. In L. R. Ennis (Ed.), *Intensive mothering: The cultural contradictions of modern motherhood*, (loc. 96-472). Bradford, ON: Demeter Press.
- Enoch, J. (2008). A woman's place is in the school: Rhetorics of gendered space in nineteenth-century America. *College English*, 70(3), 275-295.
- Faircloth, C. (2014). Is attachment mothering intensive mothering. In L. R. Ennis (Ed.), *Intensive mothering: The cultural contradictions of modern motherhood*, (loc. 3198-3465). Bradford, ON: Demeter Press.
- Fullan, M. (2002). The change leader. *Educational Leadership*, 59(8), 16-20.
- Fraser, N. (1990). The uses and abuses of French discourse theories for feminist politics. *Boundary 2*, 17(2), 82-101.
- Freedman, E. B. (2002). *No turning back: The history of feminism and the future of women*. New York, NY: The Random House Publishing Group

- Frost, N. & Elichaooff, F. (2007). Feminist postmodernism, poststructuralism, and critical theory. In S. N. Hesse-Biber & P. L. Leavy (Eds.), *Feminist research practice: A primer*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Garey, A. I. (1999). *Weaving work and motherhood*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Gibbs, G. (2007). *Analyzing qualitative data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Golden, A. (2001). Modernity and the communicative management of multiple roles: The case of the worker–parent. *The Journal of Family Communication*, 4, 233–264.
- Goldstein, D. (2014). *The teacher wars*. New York, NY: Doubleday.
- Goodsell, W. (1931). *Pioneers of women's education in the United States: Emma Willard, Catherine Beecher, Mary Lyon*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Green, F. J. (2001). *Living feminism: Pedagogy and praxis in mothering*. (Doctoral dissertation.) Retrieved from Proquest Dissertations & Theses Global,. (Order No. NQ76730).
- Hammersley, M. (2006). Ethnography: problems and prospects. *Ethnography and Education*, 1(1), 3-14.
- Haynes, K. (2008). Transforming identities: Accounting professionals and the transition to motherhood. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 19, 620-642.
- Hays, S. (1996). *The cultural contradictions of motherhood*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Hesse-Biber, S. N. (2014). A re-invitation to feminist research. In S. N. Hesse-Biber (Ed.), *Feminist research practice: A primer* (2nd ed.; pp. 1-13). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Hill, J. (2013). Using participatory and visual methods to address power and identity in research with young people. *Graduate Journal of Social Science, 10*(2), 132-151.
- Hochschild, A., & Machung, A. (2012). *The second shift: Working parents and the revolution at home*. New York, NY: Viking.
- Huisman, K. & Joy, E. (2014). The cultural contradictions of motherhood revisited: Continuities and changes. In L. R. Ennis (Ed.), *Intensive mothering: The cultural contradictions of modern motherhood*, (loc. 1541-1853). Bradford, ON: Demeter Press.
- Johnston, D. D., & Swanson, D. H. (2006). Constructing the “Good Mother:” The experience of mothering ideologies by work status. *Sex Roles, 54*(7/8), 509-519.
- Johnston, D. D., & Swanson, D. H. (2007). Cognitive acrobatics in the construction of worker mother identity. *Sex Roles, 57*(5/6), 447-459.
- Jotham, V. (2012). *iSpace? Identity & space, A visual ethnography with young people and mobile phone technologies*. (Doctoral thesis). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global. (Order No. U606234.)
- Kinser, A. E. (2010). *Motherhood and feminism*. Berkeley, CA: Seal Press.
- Knoblauch, H. (2005). Focused ethnography. *Forum Qualitative Social Research, 6*(3), Art. 44.
- Leithwood, K. (2006). The 2005 willower family lecture: Leadership according to evidence. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 5*(3), 177-202.
- Leo, U. (2015). Professional norms guiding school principals’ pedagogical leadership. *International Journal of Educational Management, 29*(4), 461-476.

- Letizia, A. (2011). Radical servant leadership: A new practice of public education leadership in the post-industrial age. *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies, 12*(2), 175-200.
- Liss, M., Schiffrin, H., Mackintosh, V., Miles-Mclean, H., & Erchull, M. (2013). Development and validation of a quantitative measure of intensive parenting attitudes. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 22*(5), 621-636.
- Litmanovitz, M. (2011). Beyond the classroom: Women in educational leadership. *Harvard Kennedy School Review, 11*, 25-28.
- Loder, T. L. Women administrators negotiate work-family conflicts in changing times: An intergenerational perspective. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 41*(5), 741-776.
- Lumby, J. (2015). School leaders' gender strategies: Caught in a discriminatory web. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership, 43*(1), 28-45.
- Lumby, J., & Azaola, M. C. (2014). Women principals in South Africa: Gender, mothering, and leadership. *British Educational Research Journal, 40*(1), 30-44.
- Luthar, S. (2015). Mothering mothers. *Research in Human Development, 12*(3/4), 295-303.
- Luthar, S. S., & Ciciolla, L. (2015, October 26). Who mothers mommy? Factors that contribute to mothers' well-being. *Developmental Psychology, 51*(12), 1812-1823.
- Madigan, J. C. (2009). The education of girls and women in the United States: A historical perspective. *Advances in Gender and Education, 1*(1), 11-13.

- Marquez, L. (2011). Narrating our lives: Retelling mothering and professional work in composition studies. *Composition Studies*, 39(1), 73-85.
- May, S. (2011). Mothers and sons: Feminist parenting and the conundrums of raising males. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 27(2), 121-152.
- McCarthy, L. J. (2013). It's coming from the heart: Exploring a student's experiences of 'home' using participatory visual methodologies. *Graduate Journal of Social Science*, 10(2), 76-105.
- McClelland, A. (1992). *The education of women in the United States*. New York, NY: Garland Publishing.
- McGee, J. M. (2010). To climb or not to climb: The probing of self-imposed barriers that delay or deny career aspirations to be an administrator in a public school system. *Forum on Public Policy*, 2010(2).
- McHenry, K. A., & Schultz, D. (2014). Skinny jeans: Perfection and competition in motherhood. In L.R. Ennis (Ed.), *Intensive mothering: The cultural contradictions of modern motherhood*, (loc. 5264-5491). Bradford, ON: Demeter Press.
- McNamara, P. (2009). Feminist ethnography: Storytelling that makes a difference. *Qualitative Social Work*, 8(2), 161-177.
- Medved, C. E. & Kirby, E. L. (2005). Family CEOs: A feminist analysis of corporate mothering discourses. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 18(4), 435-478.
- Murdock, G. P. (1959). Cross-linguistic parallels in parental kin terms. *Anthropological Linguistics* 1, 1-5.

- National Center for Education Statistics (2011). Section 4: Contexts of elementary and secondary education. In *The Condition of Education 2011*, (pp. 82-107). Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011033_5.pdf
- Noddings, N. (2003). *Happiness and education*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Okimoto, T. G., & Heilman, M. E. (2012). The "bad parent" assumption: How gender stereotypes affect reactions to working mothers. *Journal of Social Issues*, 68(4), 704-724.
- Olesen, V. (2013). Feminist qualitative research in the millennium's first decade. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln *The landscape of qualitative research*, (pp. 267-304). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ortner, S. B. (1995). Resistance and the problem of ethnographic refusal. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 37, 173-193.
- Parker, R (1997). The production and purposes of material ambivalence. In W. Hollway & B. Featherstone (Eds.), *Mothering & ambivalence*, (loc. 488-849). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Pedersen, D. (2012). The good mother, the good father, and the good parent: Gendered definition of parenting. *Journal of feminist family therapy*, 24(3), 230-246.
- Perlmann, J., & Margo, R. A. (2001). *Women's work? American schoolteachers, 1650-1920*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Pink, S., & Morgan, J. (2013). Short-term ethnography: Intense routes to knowing. *Symbolic Interaction*, 36(3), 351-361.

- Pink, S. (2008). Mobilising visual ethnography: Making routes, making place and making images. *Forum Qualitative Social Research*, 9(3), Art. 36.
- Pink, S. (2012). Advances in visual ethnography: An introduction. In S. Pink (Ed.), *Advances in visual ethnography*, (pp. 3-16). London, UK: Sage.
- Pink, S. (2013). *Doing visual ethnography* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Pink, S. (2014). Digital-visual-sensory-design anthropology: Ethnography, imagination and intervention. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 13(4), 412-427.
- Palladino, H. (2014). The cultural contradictions of fatherhood: Is there an ideology of intensive fathering? In L. R. Ennis (Ed.), *Intensive mothering: The cultural contradictions of modern motherhood*, (loc. 4900-5251). Bradford, ON: Demeter Press.
- Pomerantz, S. (2009). Between a rock and a hard place: Un/Defining the “girl.” *Jeunesse: Young People, Texts, Cultures*, 1(2), 147-158.
- Poser, J. D. (2013). Visual methodology. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*, (4th ed., pp. 177-211). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Powell, G. N. (2011). The gender and leadership wars. *Organizational Dynamics*, 40(1), 1-9.
- Rich, A. (1986). *Of woman born: Motherhood as experience and institution*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Şahin, I. (2013). The principals of primary schools ideas on their school development strategies and practices. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice*, 13(1), 242-250.

- Sandberg, S. (2013). *Lean in: Women, work, and the will to lead*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Sanchez, J. E., & Thornton, B. (2010). Gender issues in K-12 educational leadership. *Advancing Women in Leadership, 30*(13), 1-15.
- Schueller-Weidekamm, C., & Kautzky-Willer, A. (2012). Challenges of work-life balance for women physicians/mothers working in leadership positions. *Gender Medicine, 9*(4), 244-250.
- Sergiovanni, T. J. (1998). Leadership as pedagogy, capital development and school effectiveness. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 1*(1), 37-46.
- Sexton, P. (1976). *Women in education*. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.
- Shaw, J., & Newton, J. (2014). Teacher retention and satisfaction with a servant leader as principal. *Education, 135*(1), 101-106.
- St. Pierre, B. A. (2000). Poststructural feminism in education: An overview. *Qualitative Studies in Education, 13*(5), 477-515.
- Stanczak, G. C. (2007). *Visual research methods: Image, society, and representation*. San Francisco, CA: Sage.
- Steyn, G. M. (2013) Using visual ethnography to explore a principal's perceptions of innovations made in a South African primary school. *Africa Education Review, 10*(3), 554-578.
- Sumer, S., Smithson, J., Dores-Guerreiro, M., & Granlund, L. (2008). Becoming working mothers: Reconciling work and family at three particular workplaces in Norway, the UK, and Portugal. *Community, Work and Family, 11*(4), 365-384.

- Taylor, T. (2011). Re-examining Cultural Contradictions: Mothering Ideology and the Intersections of Class, Gender, and Race. *Sociology Compass*, 5(10), 898-907.
- Townsley, N. C., & Broadfoot, K. J. (2008). Care, career, and academe: Heeding the calls of a new professoriate. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 31(2), 133-142.
- Tracy, S. J. (2013). *Qualitative research methods: Collecting evidence, crafting analysis, communicating impact*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Van Ogtorp, K. (2002). Attila the honey I'm home. In C. Hanauer (Ed.), *The bitch in the house* (pp. 159-169). New York, NY: HarperCollins Publisher.
- Vandenberg-Daves, J. (2014). *Modern motherhood, An American history*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Walford, G. (2009). For ethnography. *Ethnography and Education*, 4(3), 271-282.
- Walker, M. (2014). Intensive mothering, elimination communication and the call to Eden. In L. R. Ennis (Ed.), *Intensive mothering: The cultural contradictions of modern motherhood*, (loc. 4159-4403). Bradford, ON: Demeter Press.
- Wall, G. (2013). Putting family first: Shifting discourses of motherhood and childhood in representations of mothers' employment and child care. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 40, 162-171.
- Ward, K., & Wolf-Wendel, L. E. (2006). Academic life and motherhood: Variations by institutional type. *Higher Education*, 52, 487-521.
- Watts, R. (2013). *Society, education and the state: Gender perspectives on an old debate*. New York, NY: Routledge.

- Weiler, K. (2006). The historiography of gender and progressive education in the United States. *Paedagogica Historica: International Journal of the History of Education*, 42(1&2), 161-176.
- Wolcott, H. F. (2008). *Ethnography: A way of seeing*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.
- Woody, Thomas (1929). *A history of women's education in the United States*. New York, NY: The Science Press.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design & methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.