

ABSTRACT

The Experiences and Challenges of Women Teachers' Lives

This study explores women teachers' lives to understand their experiences of teaching in South Africa today. Accountability and a culture of performativity have to come to dominate schooling in South Africa. Since then, teachers have decreased discretion and autonomy over their work. This study examines the claim that educational reforms and initiatives have changed the nature of teachers' work. This is a qualitative study drawing on autobiographies, journal entries and interviews. This study which was conducted with four women teachers from secondary schools, provides a commentary on their past experiences with the intention of exploring their identity formation, and how it frames the enactment of their personal and professional identities. The study analyses the ways in which women teachers experience the new mode of regulation which has changed the nature of professionalism and teacher identity. It examines the expansion of teachers' roles and responsibilities and their negotiating a balance between work and family.

The findings show that the women teachers bring into schools experiences gleaned from their personal history. A prominent feature in the narratives is the women teachers' struggle to find a balance between the demands of home and school in the light of the new mode of teacher regulation. This thesis contributes to South African research on women teachers and their negotiation of the relationship between work and home.

Keywords:

Expanded role	performativity	regulation	home-school
Intensification	accountability	demands	identities

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