

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY: APPLIED BUSINESS AND EDUCATION RESEARCH

2023, Vol. 4, No. 3, 784 – 791

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.04.03.11>

## Research Article

### Work-Life Balance of Married Female Teachers During Pandemic in the Philippines: A Qualitative Metaphorical Analysis

Elreen Aguilar-Delavin<sup>1\*</sup>, Angeline M. Pogoy<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>DEBESMSCAT, Cabitan, Mandaon, Masbate, Philippines

<sup>2</sup>Cebu Normal University, Cebu City, Philippines

#### Article history:

Submission January 2023

Revised March 2023

Accepted March 2023

#### \*Corresponding author:

E-mail:

[delavinelreen@gmail.com](mailto:delavinelreen@gmail.com)

#### ABSTRACT

Work-life balance is a cycle of one's life experiences which means satisfaction with work, family, and self. The study explored the self-representation of married female teachers with their work-life balance in Philippine public schools during pandemics through qualitative research using metaphorical analysis. The participants' metaphors of their work-life balance were identified in the interview, such as being like a drained cellphone, melting candle, strong and big tree, spider, COVID-19 vaccine, and season. Also, several studies revealed that they juggle multiple roles during pre-pandemic. Hence, their experiences in terms of work-life balance have advantages and disadvantages during the pandemic, which may worsen or lighten the current roles they have. Thus, it is recommended to raise more awareness of women's work-life balance in their organizations or agencies. Also, strengthening Republic Act 9710 in the workplace is highly recommended.

**Keywords:** *COVID-19, Female married teachers, Multiple roles, Work-life balance*

#### Introduction

Men and women in this generation are both responsible for making a living, which makes work-life balance an important issue. The idea of work-life balance helps employees figure out how to divide their time. They spend a lot of time and energy on work, family, and other important things in their lives. Work-life balance is how an employee feels about how their personal time, family responsibilities, and work all fit together with as little conflict as possible (Clark, 2000; Ungerson and Yeandle, 2005).

Work-life balance also just means where an employee draws the line between paid work and unpaid work. Clark (2000) says that work-life balance means "satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with as little role conflict as possible."

In the past few years, Filipino women have had to stay at home and take care of their families. If they wanted to go to school, they had to depend on their fathers. Few people have the chance to go to school and choose their own careers. These were rules about women that

#### How to cite:

Delavin, E. A. & Pogoy, A. M. (2023). Work-Life Balance of Married Female Teachers During Pandemic in the Philippines: A Qualitative Metaphorical Analysis. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*. 4(3), 784 – 791. doi: 10.11594/ijmaber.04.03.11

society had made up. But as the knowledge economy grew and educational rights changed quickly, women were given the chance to go to school and continue to grow to their fullest potential by having careers and professions. Now, there are enough women in the work force to make a difference (Anna, B., 2010). Barik (2017) says that teaching is a job that requires a lot of patience and empathy. Since females are thought to be more caring and empathetic, schools are a good place for them to get a job and feel welcome. This job also requires them to stay up-to-date because they have to enrich the next generation.

But this is hard for women because they have to do a lot of things at home and at work. When working women get married, they have more responsibilities, and when they have children, they have to take care of them and their extended family. Because of this, they are under more pressure to keep their careers going (Delina & Raya, 2013). There are a lot of tasks and responsibilities that come with being a teacher, some of which can be hard. People who work as teachers often have more trouble balancing their work and personal lives than people in other jobs. This is because teachers' jobs are often stressful, making it hard for them to meet their other social and family obligations (Mercado, 2019).

During the pandemic, teachers were said to be busier than they were before the schools closed because they were expected to be present and available. For example, they had office hours during lunch, and groups of students came and went throughout the day (Jones & Kessler, 2020). The new trend, which kept teachers busy, was to change face-to-face classes into asynchronous and synchronous sessions, prepare e-learning materials, and do other things like that. Also, the COVID-19 pandemic is having a big impact on the way teachers live (Rabacal et al., 2020). In addition to the possible stress caused by the threat of COVID-19 to themselves and their families, teachers also have to adjust to the new normal in education and provide effective remedial education (Guillasper et al., 2020; Moralista & Oducado, 2020). So, even though there are more studies on the work-life balance of female teachers before the pandemic, there isn't much written

about their work-life balance during the pandemic. This could help agencies figure out how to make women more productive in the workplace. Also, since women make up half of the world's workforce, it's important to know how female teachers balance work, family, and the pandemic. So, this study looked at what married teachers in public schools in the Philippines went through during the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, it looked at the balance between self, family, and work.

## **Methods**

### ***Design***

Qualitative phenomenological analysis was used by the researchers to gather descriptive data from the people's own words and actions (Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault 2015). When it comes to qualitative research, the phenomenology approach focuses on what experiences people in a certain group have in common. The main goal of this method is to come up with a description of the nature of the group and phenomenon in question. Interviews are usually done with a group of people who know firsthand about an event, situation, or experience.

(Moustakas, 1994) The interview tries to answer two big questions: What have you seen or heard about the phenomenon? What kinds of situations or places do people usually find themselves in when they experience the phenomenon? (Creswell, 2013). Through this process, the researcher may be able to figure out what the event, situation, or experience means in a broader sense and gain a deeper understanding of it.

### ***Data Collection Tools***

Data was gathered using a structured form created by researchers and edited by the opinions of two domain experts to create the final form. The interview form consisted of two parts; Part A looked into the socio-demographic profile of the respondents. While Part B was open-ended questions about the lived experiences of married female teachers during the pandemic in terms of self, life and work satisfaction. They were asked for metaphors for their self-representation during pandemics

based on their experiences. The data were collected through face to face and video call interviews. The interview process was recorded in audio format with the consent of the participants. The participants were chosen based on the following criteria: (1) Married Female Teacher, (2) Having one or more children, (3) Both are working in Public Schools.

### **Analysis of Data**

Metaphorical analysis was used to look at the participants' real-life experiences. It is a method of discourse analysis that is largely based on the work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980), who looked at how metaphors affect how people think. The idea behind this method is that by looking at the metaphors people use to talk about their experiences and beliefs, they can start to find the direct and conscious meanings that the writer or speaker is trying to get across (Zheng & Song, 2010). The fact that there are so many metaphors for the qualitative research process shows that reducing it to just one metaphor is a forced simplification (Schmitt, 2015).

Moser (2000) said that metaphor analysis is a good way to find out about "social and cultural processes of understanding" and to get at knowledge that isn't obvious (p. 5). While Bullough and Gitlin (1995) talked about the power of metaphor analysis to show how assumptions "define a concept and drive action" (Bullough, 1991, p. 51). The study of metaphor is now recognized as a valid alternative to traditional and conservative ways of looking at how people think (Zheng & Song, 2010). Also, Cameron (2007:200) says that metaphor is seen as a tool for language, thinking, feeling, and socializing. It is cognitive because each metaphor can be a reflection of larger metaphorical structures in which larger domains are mapped onto each other (Lakoff, 1993). So, the basic information that metaphors can use comes from language. Discourse analysts are metaphors in the words of discourse participants, and metaphors can be used in many different ways. The goal of the researcher is to show how powerful metaphorical language is by giving the participants ways to talk about themselves based on what they learned during the pandemic.

### **Findings**

#### ***Socio-demographic Profile of the Participants***

This part of the paper will present the results and discussion of the study using metaphorical analysis on the participants' responses. The first is the socio-demographic profile of the participants. Twelve (12) married female teachers were interviewed from different public schools in the Philippines. It was revealed that participants have an average age of 30-40 years old; 90% of them attained graduate studies; all are designated into various school designations. Further, they earn an average of P10,000.00-50,000.00 from their job; they obtained an average of 7-10 years in the service. Participants were teaching in elementary and secondary schools in the Province of Masbate. In terms of the number of children, they have an average of 2-4 children. Also, they are married for an average of 3-10 years.

#### ***Metaphors of Work-life Balance of Married Female Teachers during Pandemic***

The second part of the results and discussion is exploring the work-life balance of the participants in terms of family, work and self. All of the eight (8) respondents spoke metaphorically to describe themselves and their work-balance during pandemic. They find easy to express when they compare themselves into something that represents their feelings and experiences. Metaphors give them absolute idea of who they are, and their aspirations of satisfying life of a working woman.

#### **Extract 1**

When asked about how they would describe themselves during pandemic the following are their responses:

Participant 1: "I see myself as a drained cellphone which can be charged during pandemic".

With the response given by the participant it can be noted that there is a positive perspective of her situation during pandemic. Since human body after being exposed to work recharging it will gain energy to work on what is expected of it, however as the interview went by, she claimed that she is like a cellphone because

she felt that she maximized all her energy doing household chores and working late nights to finish her reports until she is totally drained. Also, she expresses that if given a chance to advice her younger self she would say that finishing her graduate studies in early adulthood stage will help her balance her responsibilities at home and at work.

Participant 4: "I feel like, I am candle during pandemic".

Just like the idea of a candle, it has to melt to give light to a dark corner. This participant compared herself to being a candle for her family during pandemic. Despite of the multiple roles she performed in the house and at work, she managed to save time and energy for her children who are seeking attention since they are still young. She would sometimes feel lost because of the feeling of anxiety of might catching a virus but she chose to be strong for her children since her husband is also busy at work and spends less time for their children. Further, she claims " I have no time to take care of myself anymore". Late nights give her time to reflect of her dreams for her children and family. She is like melting a candle yet getting brighter for the sake of her children. Thus, she added that there is no sufficient time for herself making her work-life unbalanced, however despite of this situation she still hopes that her life will be full of happiness someday because of the sacrifices she made for her family and children.

Participant 6: "I am like a tree during pandemic."

A big and strong tree is the self-representation of the fourth participant. With the thought that everyone is hit by this pandemic, this participant claimed that she is like a tree still standing strong despite of losing a loved one. She expressed that wherever the wind goes she will always remain standing, her leaves may wither and die, but she believes that another set of leaves will come out again more greener and healthier. Thus, her work-life balance during pandemic may be winding, she has ups and downs, unmet deadlines but she has still positive perspective in life that she will get up and bloom again just like a strong and big tree.

Participant 5: "I am a like a vaccine family during pandemic."

This participant claimed that she is like a COVID-19 vaccine because even people know that it is important to be vaccinated others could not appreciate its usefulness in saving lives. According to her, no matter how big her efforts exerted in the workplace and family she is still not appreciated. She would feel drained and exhausted because of the workload added to the teachers during pandemic, also, she has to deal with her growing children doing online classes and modules, and her husband who suffers from depression and anxiety. For her pandemic brought big changes in her family life even how she talks to her children, she is a lot more of authoritative rather than friendly unlike during pre-pandemic. When she was asked of what advice she could give to her younger self she said that she has to prioritize her dreams and goals rather than having a boyfriend and get married after college graduation. She should spend more time exploring and equipping herself to become the woman she wanted to be.

#### Extract 2

Participants were asked to describe their work-life balance during pandemic they answered metaphorically.

Participant 2: "I think, my work-life balance in this time of pandemic is like sailing on different kinds of weather."

This participant compared sailing into dancing. She stated that regardless of the situations she is facing, this pandemic taught her to go (dance) with the flow, to the ifs and hows of life. She also claimed that the pandemic taught her the importance of quality time with the family since she availed of a work from home scheme from her school assignment. She sees to it that she manages their household chores efficiently with the help of her husband. She is actually thankful of the positive impacts of pandemic since she can now assist and bond with her children while answering to their modules.

Participant 3: "My work-life balance is like the season, its a cycle."

According to this participant her work-life balance is constantly changing because of the unpredictable workload added to her as a teacher which is sometimes so exhausting that may led her to burnout. One good thing is that she has her child who inspire her to keep going despite of the uncertainties brought by the pandemic.

Participant 8: "I am like a spider because of the work and life I have right now".

She said that she is like a spider because of the many hands and feet of the spider. Having multiple roles such as; productive, reproductive and community roles, participant 8 claimed that she experiences multiple burden. Multiple burden is a manifestation of gender bias which led to violence against women and children. She deeply expresses her tiredness on her duty as a wife, mother and a teacher, however, this tiredness also gives her reason to still fight for her children's future. Positive perspective can be seen in her eyes after a tearful expression of her deep emotions.

### **Results, Discussion, and Recommendations**

Along with their socio-demographic information, the participants have different socio-demographic information. This means that married female teachers come from different backgrounds. Tusal (2017) says that the factors that affect employee burnout are demographic variables like age, gender, marital status, and education, personality traits, and work-related behavior patterns. In some studies, the burnout level of women has been found to be high, while in other studies, the burnout level of men has been found to be high. There have also been nondifferential studies. This means that the many jobs that married female teachers had to do for their families made them tired and unhappy with their lives. With a pandemic around, the anxiety it brings may make the situation of the people worse than it was before the pandemic. Also, major factors are known to play a role, as are the person's geographical location and race (Noronha & Aithal, 2019). Also, Bharadwaj and Shanker (2019) say that personal and family-related factors like age, gender, marital status, family or childcare

responsibilities, and personality concerns all play a role in making it hard to balance work and life.

The second part of the paper is a collection of metaphors about how the participants balance work and life. Literature shows that there are words for work-life balance that have to do with family, self, and work. People who took part in this paper wrote about how they balance their work and personal lives. In interviews or focus groups, researchers might use elicitation or a "forced metaphor approach" (Tracy, 2010), in which they ask people to use metaphors to describe their experiences. Then, researchers could look at how people in a certain community made sense of similar experiences by comparing the types of metaphors they used. Also, asking people to compare their own lives to metaphors can get them to think critically and evaluate, and it can give researchers interesting comparisons to look at (Redden, 2017). The results of this study show that the different situations that married working women face during a pandemic had a big effect on how they felt during the pandemic. The researcher found that most of the 8 respondents used metaphors when talking about themselves.

By thinking of herself as a dead phone that can be charged again, she acknowledges that she is too tired to work and take care of her house, but she still manages to keep going with her life. This is similar to a study done by Barik (2017), which found that both in public and private schools, married female teachers are unhappy with their work-life balance, but they still work hard to make it work. In the findings, a melting candle is used as a metaphor for a woman who gives up herself for her family. The more she lights up and melts, the more she is happy with her work-life balance. This fits with what Carli's (2010) study found: "Women give up free time and sleep to meet the needs of their families and jobs." But Krymis (2011) said that having more than one job is good for both work and family. One of the participants also mentioned a spider, which shows that the women played more than one role during the pandemic. Broadbridge (2009) found that women had too many responsibilities and made more sacrifices for their children than

men did. Being a big, strong tree is like being a candle that is melting, which was what another participant said. She said that despite the problems caused by the pandemic, women tend to look at the bright side and try to move on. To back up these findings, Thein, Currie, Austen, and Ong (2016) said that even though work can be stressful, women choose to keep working in

order to support their families financially and find their own sense of identity. They may find it hard to be a mother, a wife, and a career woman at the same time. Yet, this is proven by the thousands of stories of women leaders who are able to handle both home and work responsibilities (Cabrera et al., 2019).

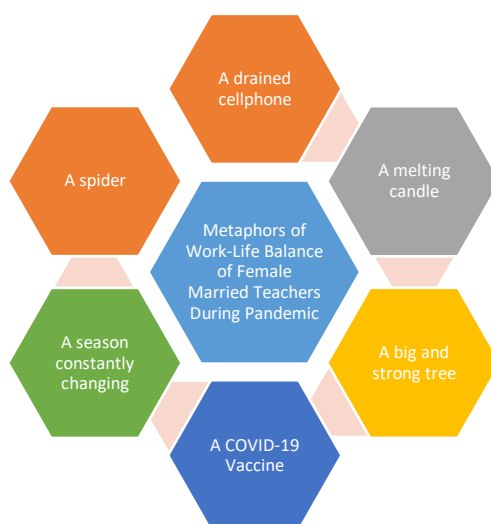


Diagram 1. Metaphors of Work-Life Balance of Female Married Teachers During Pandemic

A participant also made a comparison to a COVID-19 vaccine, which shows that no matter how important it is, it is still taken for granted and needs are not met. The problem for married women, according to a study by Cabrera (2019), is that they have less time to do their hobbies, hang out with friends, and do other relaxing things. Also, studies have shown that women who work for money and have young children are most likely to say they don't have time for themselves (Roberts, 2007). Also, in Garcia's (2016) study, the people he talked to about how hard it was to balance work and family responsibilities said that it was hard to find time for them.

So, people who work in Human Resource Management and Industrial or Organizational Psychology can come up with and put into place programs and systems that promote high-quality and effective WLB in institutions and agencies where working women or mothers belong (Cabrera et al., 2019). Also, family-friendly policies show that you care about the well-being of your employees and could help you get their commitment. An institution should take the

initiative to implement work-life balance policies and practices like flexible hours, childcare centers, rest rooms to take a nap, and housing for employees, if possible, to save them time traveling, etc (Barik et al., 2017).

Kotze and Whitehead (2003) say that life balance is not "one single ultimate experience," but a series of individual experiences that happen over time and could be called "life balance moments." In the last analogy, a participant said that work-life balance for her is like a season that changes all the time. The above study backs up what the participants said, which means that the work-life balance of married female teachers during a pandemic will always be different and won't be the same for everyone. Since it's like a cycle, married women learn to be good with their time, flexible, and creative. So, work-life balance isn't something you've done, it's just a part of life's seasons.

### Conclusion

To create a more comprehensive statement, it is important to highlight some of the specific challenges faced by married career women and

working mothers during the pandemic. These challenges can include managing remote work responsibilities while also caring for children and elderly family members, dealing with job loss or reduced work hours, and struggling to maintain a healthy work-life balance while facing increased stress and anxiety. To address these challenges, it is crucial to implement policies and programs that support the needs of working mothers and married career women. For example, providing paid family leave and flexible work arrangements can help to reduce the burden of caregiving responsibilities and allow women to balance their work and personal lives more effectively. Additionally, increasing access to affordable and high-quality childcare services can provide working mothers with the support they need to continue working while ensuring their children receive adequate care. Moreover, organizations can promote gender equality by addressing pay disparities and promoting leadership opportunities for women. Creating a supportive and inclusive work environment that values diversity can also help to attract and retain talented women. Thus, addressing the challenges faced by married career women and working mothers during the pandemic requires a comprehensive approach that includes policies and programs designed to support their unique needs. By implementing these measures, it can help to create a more equitable and supportive work environment for women, ultimately benefiting both individuals and society.

## References

- Anna, B. (2010). Women in Academia: A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Work/LifeBalance. <http://www.claremontmckenna.net/berger/pdf/BeningerDissertationWomeninAcademia>
- Barik, P., Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, G., & Corresponding Author, K. (2017). Work-Life Balance of Married Female Teachers in Government and Private Schools of Raipur, Chhattisgarh. *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 22(11), 38–46. <https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-2211043846>
- Bharadwaj, M. V., & Shanker, M. (2021). *Women at Workplace and Work Life Balance : A Literature Review. January 2019.*
- Cabrera, G. A., Ann Christine Conde, C. L., & Angela Ingles, K. S. (2019). Difficulties on Work-Life Balance of Married Career Women: The Case of Generation X. *Asia Pacific Journal of Academic Research in Business Administration*, 5(1), 16–21.
- Carli, L. L. (2010). "Having it all: Women with successful careers and families". *Sex Roles*, Vol. 62, No.9/10, pp.696–698.
- Clark, S.C. (2000). "Work / family border theory: A new theory of work /family balance". *Sage Publications*, Vol. 53, No. 6, pp.747-770
- Creswell, J.W., Plano Clark, V. L., Gutmann, M.L., & Hanson, W.E (2003), Advanced mixed methods research designs. *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*, 209 – 240.
- Delina, G., & Raya, R. P. (2013). A study on Work-Life Balance in Working Women. *IRACST - International Journal of Commerce, Business and Management (IJCBM)*, 2(5), 274–282.
- Garcia, B. E. (2016). Work-life balance: A phenomenological study on how female principals balance their professional and personal lives. *Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences*, 76(11-A(E)). <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=psyh&AN=2016-17129-137&site=ehost-live>
- Guillasper, J. N., Soriano, G. P., & Oducado, R. M. F. (2020). Psychometric properties of 'attitude towards e-learning scale' among nursing students. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, 30(1–3), 1–5.
- Jones, A. L., & Kessler, M. A. (2020). Teachers' Emotion and Identity Work During a Pandemic. *Frontiers in Education*, 5(November), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2020.583775>
- Kotze, M. and Whitehead, T. (2003). "Career And Life Balance of Professional Women: A South African Study". *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol.1,
- Krymis, E. (2011). Women and work-life balance: A phenomenological qualitative analysis of identity, relational style, adaptive style, and drive and motivation, and the role of faith from the narrative life-story framework. *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses*, 205. [http://search.proquest.com/docview/905289381?accountid=14553%5Cnhttp://openurl.library.uiuc.edu/sfxcl3?url\\_ver=Z39.88-2004&rft\\_val\\_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:disserta](http://search.proquest.com/docview/905289381?accountid=14553%5Cnhttp://openurl.library.uiuc.edu/sfxcl3?url_ver=Z39.88-2004&rft_val_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:disserta)



- [tion&genre=dissertations+&+theses&sid=ProQ:ProQuest+Dissertations+&+Theses+Full+Text&atitl](#)
- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M.. 1980. Metaphor we live by. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Marks, S. R., & MacDermid, S. M. (1996). "Multiple roles and the self: A theory of role balance". *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 58, 417– 432.
- Mercado, J. O. (2019). Work Life Balance and Level of Satisfaction among Female Teachers Assigned to the Northernmost Part of the Province of Surigao del Sur, Philippines. *The South East Asian Journal of Management*, 13(2), 140–150. <https://doi.org/10.21002/seam.v13i2.11344>
- M. Kramer (Eds.), Handbook of qualitative organizational research: Innovative pathways and methods (pp. 238–248). London: Routledge. doi:10.4324/9781315849072
- Noronha, S., & Aithal, P. S. (2019). Influence of Socio-Demographic Factors on Work Life Balance (WLB) Among Public University Teachers in Karnataka. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3488756>
- Rabacal, J. S., Oducado, R. M. F., & Tamdang, K. A. (2020). COVID-19 impact on the quality of life of teachers: A cross-sectional study. *Asian Journal for Public Opinion Research*, 8(4), 478–492. <https://doi.org/10.15206/ajpor.2020.8.4.478>
- Redden, S. M. (2017). Metaphor Analysis. *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*, November 2017, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118901731.iecrm0154>
- Smith, J. A., & Shinebourne, P. (2012). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis*. American Psychological Association.
- Schmitt, R. (2015). Systematic Metaphor Analysis as a Method of Qualitative Research. *The Qualitative Report*, June 2005. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2005.1854>
- Taylor, S. J., Bogdan, R., & DeVault, M. (2015). *Introduction to qualitative research methods: A guidebook and resource*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Thein, H., Currie, J., & Austen, S. (2016, January). Attitudes to work/life balance of women in Singapore, Hong Kong and China: Working for the family and more?. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277828353>
- Tuğsal, T. (2017). The effects of socio-demographic factors and work-life balance on employees' emotional exhaustion. *Journal of Human Sciences*, 14(1), 653. <https://doi.org/10.14687/jhs.v14i1.4383>
- Tracy, S. J., & Malvini Redden, S. (2015). Markers, metaphors, and meaning: Drawings as a visual and creative qualitative research methodology in organizations. In K. D. Elsbach & R.
- Ungerson, C., & Yeandle, S. (2005). Care workers and work-life balance: the example of domiciliary careworkers. *Work-life balance in the 21st century*, 246-262
- Zheng, H., & Song, W. (2010). Metaphor Analysis in the Educational Discourse: A Critical Review. *US-China Foreign Language*, 8(9), 42–49.