

Perceived Barriers to Homeschooling in a Fragile Community, With a Focus on Black Families

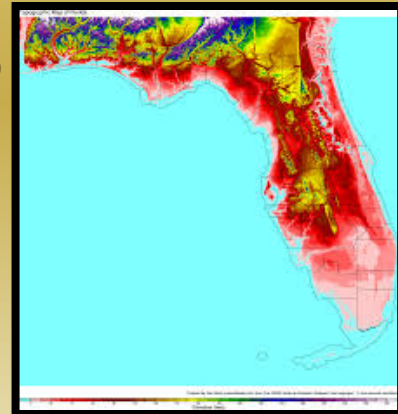
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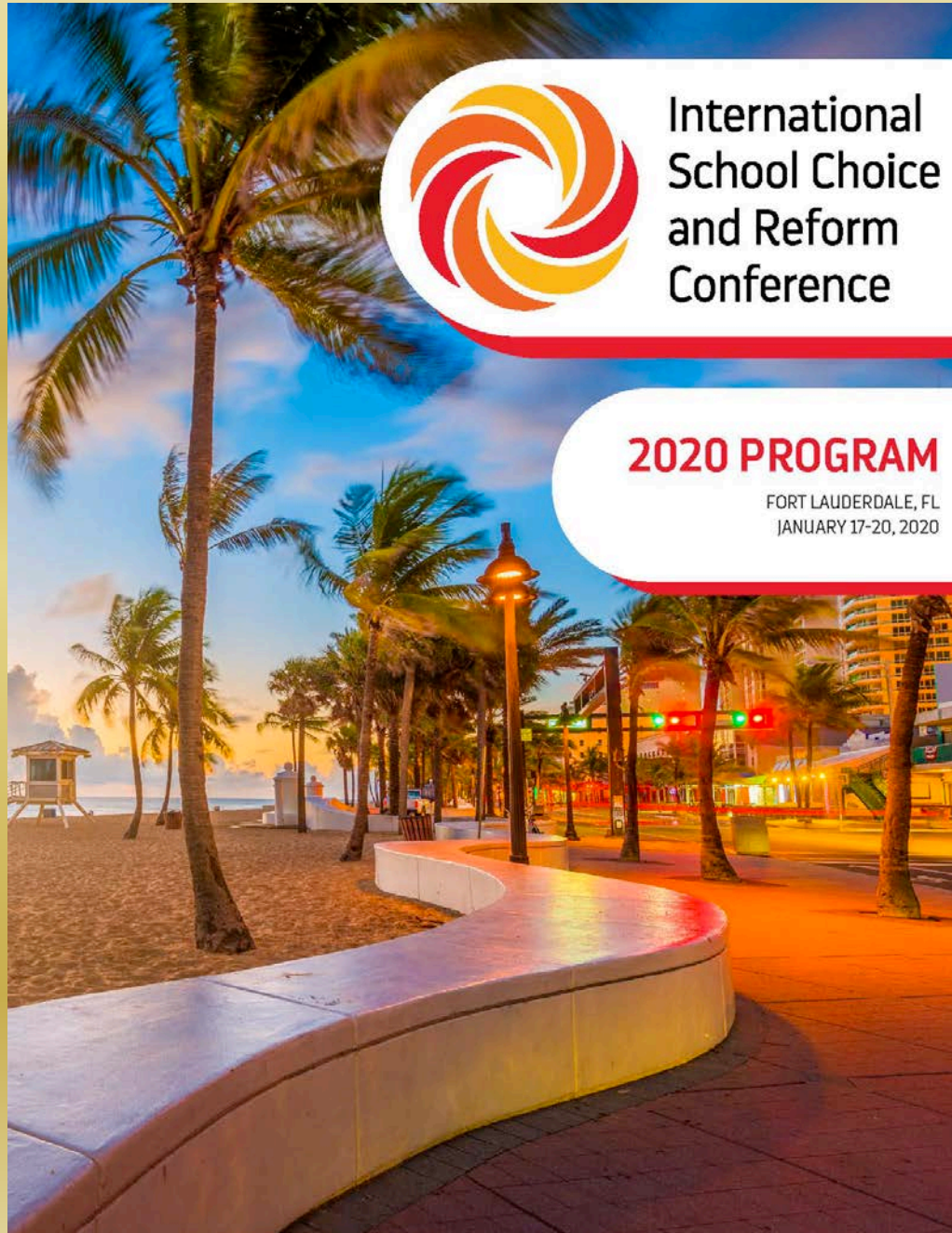




International School Choice and Reform Conference

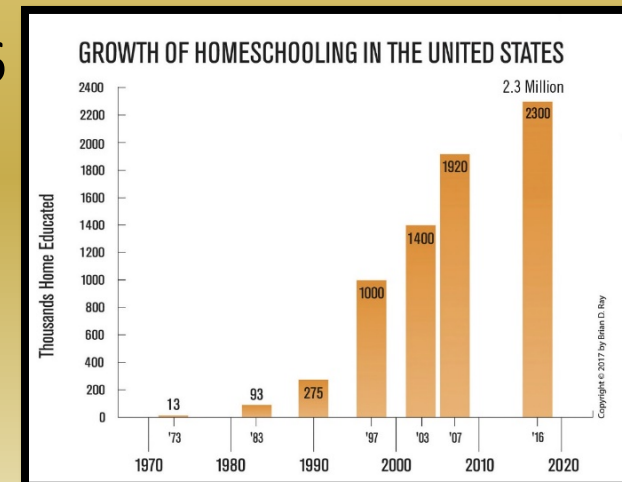
2020 PROGRAM

FORT LAUDERDALE, FL
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Context and Theoretical Framework

- Renaissance of parent-led home-based education (homeschooling) for 40 years
- Now about 2.1 to 2.5 million K-12 homeschool students in the USA
- Growth around world
- Why do parents continue homeschooling or not choose institutional schooling – we know much
- **Why do parents not continue homeschooling or get out of institutional schooling – we know little**
- My barriers study presented at GHEC 2016
- This study supported by Center for Educational Opportunity (Albany State University, Albany, Georgia)



Defining Homeschooling

- It was once simple — parents teach their children at home rather than send them away to an institutional, classroom school
- Shifting circumstances (permutations)
 - Researchers operationally define
 - Philosophical theorize and define
 - Pragmatists re-define and blur lines
- Define in this study, see survey instrument
“Homeschooling is parent-led education and children are not sent away to schools.” “This does not include charter school or public-school online schooling.”

What Influences Parents' Choices Regarding Homeschooling?

- Much positive press on homeschooling
- Some negative press
- Over thirty-five years of research
 - Academic achievement – 11 of 14 (78%) peer-reviewed studies found a significant positive effect for homeschooling
 - Social and emotional development – 13 of 15 (87%) peer-reviewed studies showed significantly positive outcomes for the home educated
 - Success into adulthood (including college) – 11 of the 16 (69%) peer-reviewed studies found a significantly positive effect for homeschooling
- Friends, family, parents' schooling experiences, etc.

Why do parents stay or not stay with homeschooling?

Fragile Communities

- Fragile communities are “... defined as areas with high proportions of residents who struggle financially in their daily lives and have limited opportunities for social mobility.”

--- New Study Gives Americans in Fragile Communities a Voice, February 5, 2018, retrieved 1/14/20 from <https://news.gallup.com/opinion/gallup/226550/new-study-gives-americans-fragile-communities-voice.aspx>

Focus on Black Families

- African American families tend to be overrepresented in fragile communities
- Black families moving to homeschooling at an accelerated rate
- Only study of its kind found that black homeschool students significantly academically outperform public-school black peers and perform as well or better than white public-school peers (Ray, 2015)
- The present study includes all ethnic/color groups but puts a focus on black families

Methods

- Reviewed past research on reasons for homeschooling
- Considered Ray (2016) on barriers
- Asked homeschool parents and researchers of varied ethnicity/color and homeschool experience to review list of items and comment and add
- Created survey instrument with aid of Barna Group

Sample

- State of Georgia
- Low-income families, making less than \$40,000 a year (household income, before taxes)
- With children between the ages of two and eighteen currently living in the home
- 800 individuals from a nationally representative online consumer research panel participated in an 18-minute long online survey
- Respondents were quota sampled by ethnicity to maximize proportional representativeness to the population of Georgia. The sample includes an oversample of African Americans as a population of interest to the research

Findings

Male 15%

Female, 85%

Ethnicity/race	Percent*
White	44%
Black	50%
Hispanic	3%
Asian	2%
Native American / American Indian	0%
Another ethnic group Please specify	1%
Prefer not to answer	1%
* Rounding error is evident	

Household income, before taxes

\$10,000 or less	18%
\$10,000 to less than \$15,000	11%
\$15,000 to less than \$20,000	12%
\$20,000 to less than \$25,000	14%
\$25,000 to less than \$30,000	17%
\$30,000 to less than \$35,000	17%
\$35,000 to less than \$40,000	12%*

* Total not 100 due to rounding error

Findings

- Top 25 barriers (out of 67)
 - 40% or more Strongly agree or Somewhat agree it is a barrier

	Top Perceived Barriers	Agree %
1	Q21r6: I am not a trained or certified teacher.	67
2	Q18r5: Lack of money to pay fees for private instruction (e.g., tutors, music lessons)	64
3	Q19r3: Concern that children will not have good social development	60
4	Q19r2: Concern about social isolation of my child/children.	59
5	Q21r1: It is hard work to homeschool children.	58
6	Q18r4: Lack of money to purchase curriculum materials	55
7	Q19r7: My child will not have access to enough sports/athletics if homeschooled.	55
8	Q20r1: I do not know how to get started homeschooling.	53
9	Q20r2: I do not know who to ask for help to get started homeschooling.	51
10	Q19r6: Concern that I personally cannot offer a good academic education	50
11	Q18r1: All the parents in our house must work full time.	49
12	Q19r10: Concern that colleges will not accept my homeschool educational records for them for entrance to college.	48

Top 4 Barriers, Significant IVs (.05)

- #1. Not a trained teacher for “agree”:
 - Ethnicity – only Black and White different from Asian
 - Income, low vs. high – no differences
 - Parent education – several differences (of 12 cells)
- #2. Lack of money to pay fees
 - Ethnicity – no differences
 - Income – no differences
 - Parent education – few differences (of 12 cells)
- #3. Concern that children will not have good social development
 - Ethnicity – no differences
 - Income – no differences
 - Parent education – no differences
- #4. Concern about social isolation of my child/children
 - Ethnicity – only Black and White different from Asian
 - Income – no differences
 - Parent education – one difference (of 12 cells)

13	Q13r1: I do not understand the homeschool laws in my state.	48
14	Q21r2: Lack of access to research on benefits of homeschooling (e.g., on academic achievement, social development, success in adulthood)	47
15	Q19r4: Concern that my child will have limited access to friends of the same ethnicity or race	47
16	Q21r3: Lack of books or articles about homeschooling.	47
17	Q20r12: I think that educating my children is something that "the experts" can do better than I can.	45
18	Q19r9: Concern about how to do homeschool recordkeeping of grades and attendance	45
19	Q21r5: I am not sure I'm organized enough to manage my child's education.	45
20	Q20r9: I do not know anyone who homeschools	44
21	Q17r3: Limited experiences with homeschool children and/or parents	43
22	Q20r7: Our home is small.	43
23	Q19r5: Concern my homeschooled child could not get a college scholarship	41
24	Q20r4: I do not understand what homeschooling looks like in practice.	41
25	Q18r6: We as parents do not have time to homeschool	41

- Top 12 barriers on which participants say they are Undecided/Don't Know whether it is a barrier
 - 25% or more said undecided/don't know on these barriers

	Most Undecided/Don't know if it's a barrier	U.D./Don't Know %
1	Q17r1: My experiences with homeschool children	40
2	Q13r2: Homeschooling regulations are burdensome.	39
3	Q17r2: My experiences with homeschool parents	38
4	Q16r5: University/college policies are not friendly to homeschool graduates	35
5	Q16r1: Private school staff's negative attitudes toward homeschooling	32
6	Q14r9: Professionals/experts do not support of homeschooling	31
7	Q15r4: My community's expectations of what education/schooling should look like	30
8	Q14r8: Lack of homeschool support groups	29
9	Q16r4: Scholars' and academics' negative attitudes toward homeschooling	28
10	Q16r3: Public school staff's negative attitudes toward homeschooling	28
11	Q17r3: Limited experiences with homeschool children and/or parents	27
12	Q15r3: Experts claim that homeschooled children are not good at getting along with other people	26

Comments

- Noticed very few significant differences between lower (under \$25k) and higher (\$25k to less than \$40k) income participants
- Need to dig more into any ethnic differences
- Those who think that homeschooling is a good choice for children's academic and social-development education or for society have plenty of work cut out for them in fragile communities

Recommendations

- Use this study as a benchmark
- Examine other fragile communities
- Compare to non-fragile communities
- Suggest ways to empower families in fragile communities to make the choice to practice parent-led home-based private homeschooling if they are so inclined

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