

## **Abstract:**

### **Towards a Better Understanding: Stories of Impoverishment and Lack of Accessible Child Care**

Poverty is arguably the most substantial problem facing the world at large today. In fact, 12.7% of the United States' population in 2016 lived in poverty—which encompassed 40.6 million people (Semega, Fontenot, & Kollar, 2017). The current study was motivated by the research question, "Does the lack of second and third shift child care impede economic movement from poverty into economic stability?". I hypothesized that the lack of second and third shift child care acts to keep the working poor socially excluded and that the lack of second and third shift child care negatively impacts individuals attempting movement from poverty into economic stability. Utilizing the qualitative research method of a focus group, I spoke to three respondents utilizing a questionnaire I created. The focus group was audio-recorded and then transcribed. The transcription of the focus group was independently read and openly coded by myself and my faculty mentor, Dr. Renee White. Together we performed closed coding, and from the coding process five themes were identified. The five themes identified were: Rigidity of Social Service Systems, Family Dynamics, Creative Solutions for Child Care, Quality of Child Care, and Non-Child Care Barriers to Exiting Poverty. After analyzing the five themes, I found that my original hypothesis was supported, and that many more research opportunities exist with regards to this area of research.