

University of Washington Bothell

B EDUC 300

Research and Educational Knowledge

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Researcher Positionality Statement

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10/5/2022

Introduction

My name is Alexandro Martinez and I'm a junior at the University of Washington-Bothell. I come into spaces and interact as a mixed-race Hispanic male. In some ways I am privileged like being a cisgender male or coming from a lower-middle class family. It's wishful thinking to say I want to see the world in rose-colored glasses, however, because of my background as a person of color this is not the case.

At the forefront of my educational career, the importance of said education never left my mind. Both my parents are immigrants that never obtained more than a middle school education. Due to this, my father always stressed that I have the best opportunity to grow up in this country. Growing up he said to me "I want you to be someone in this life, to have your own desk with your name on it, to obtain this you'll have to study and never lose focus on your goals". Thanks to these words, I fell in love with education! The serotonin school gives me is unmatched. Now, I get to add 'first generation college student' to my list of identities!

Luckily, I am much more than a student number at this institution. University of Washington-Bothell allows me challenge old thinking and take in new information. It's because of this university that I learned to follow my passion & study the field of education. I not only get to learn how to improve educational spaces but also why I have to. Let me explain, education was not made for someone like me. Students of color were not allowed to be integrated into public education until the ruling of Brown vs Board of Education in 1954. Being an education major, I have a duty to be on the lookout for policies or setbacks that negatively affect students.

As a researcher, I not only am on the lookout for surface level discrimination but also how it affects those with marginalized identities. It's why I'm so passionate about politics and being civically engaged. I tend to focus on how the intersectionality of a person comes into effect with negative policies. A recent example is the attack on reproductive health and how it will affect white women vs women of color. On the flip side, I need to understand how topics can privilege others, being able to identify these groups. Researching this way allows me to see where I am affected in comparison to others. It also allows me to recognize my own privileges and how I could use my power to elevate others' voices.

Conclusion

I understand that whether I want to or not, I have a position in this world. Unfortunately, there may be situations where I am above someone or below another. What I can do is recognize the differences in privilege I hold to better my cultural humility. It is why the education field betters me as an individual. As an undergrad student, I embrace my privilege of being able to attend a 4-year institution. I do so because I know one day, I'll be in a position to give back to students – whether in a teaching role or working alongside them in higher education. I only hope I can make students feel seen and not like another student number.