

Abstract

The problem is the limited understanding of why families choose homeschooling and what curriculum and program elements they desire among homeschooling families in South Florida. Homeschooling enrollment has grown by over 70% since the 2017–18 school year. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the perceptions of homeschooling families in South Florida on why they choose homeschooling and what curriculum and program elements they desire. Guided by humanistic learning theory and ecological systems theory, this study addressed a gap in the literature regarding the needs of homeschoolers within public education frameworks. Fifteen parents of homeschooled students in South Florida were selected as participants through purposive sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using Miles and Huberman's thematic coding. This study fills a gap in the literature by increasing understanding of homeschoolers' motivations for homeschooling and their needs for curriculum and program elements in a public homeschooling program. The results indicate that while facing some challenges and in need of support, homeschooling families value personalized curriculum choices, flexible schedules, control over teaching methods, and the opportunity to allocate more quality time as a family. Recommendations are provided for district policy changes to prioritize individual learner needs over standardized instructional models, including flexible scheduling, competency-based learning, and differentiated pathways.

Keywords: curriculum design, ecological systems theory, homeschooling, humanistic learning theory, public homeschooling programs, under-enrolled schools