



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts

of

Catherine Taylor

BASc (University of Guelph, 2012)

**“Transitioning Out of Violence: Intersections of Motherhood and
Precarious Immigration Status”**

School of Child and Youth Care

August 22, 2017

10:30 A.M.

Human and Social Development Building
Room A250

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Sibylle Artz, School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Mandeep Mucina, School of Child and Youth Care, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Susan Strega, School of Social Work, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Daniel Smith, Department of Geography, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Abstract

This study addresses a significant gap in our knowledge of how mothers with precarious immigration status transition out of domestic violence in Canada. It uses an intersectional analysis to explore the help-seeking processes of mothers with precarious immigration status who have experienced domestic violence while residing in a mid-size coastal city in British Columbia. Using semi-structured interviews with service providers and an intersectionality informed thematic analysis, this study seeks to answer the following questions: (1) How do mothers with precarious immigration status seek help when experiencing domestic violence? (2) What facilitates or impedes women's help-seeking processes? (3) How do existing services and systems respond to mothers with precarious status as they seek help with domestic violence? (4) What can be done to improve these responses? Qualitative data from service providers reveal that mothers with precarious status face numerous, intersecting and often insurmountable barriers as they seek help with domestic violence. Findings also indicate that despite the dedicated and collaborative efforts of participating service providers, many mothers with precarious status are forced to either return to their abusers or to return to their countries of origin. This research also shows how existing services and systems are not structured, funded, mandated or equipped to meet the needs of these mothers and their children. Moreover, the findings show how some of the systems and structures that these women encounter as they seek help seem to actively exclude, oppress and/or marginalize them. The findings of this exploratory study and the recommendations provided by service providers have implications for policy, practice and further research.