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Student Perspectives on Video Lectures in Online Learning

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Abstract

With the onset of COVID in 2020, many classes were transitioned online almost immediately. This forced transition was difficult for many instructors and their students; in particular, for those who were not trained in virtual instruction. One instructional strategy utilized by instructors was the use of video lectures. To update the understanding of student perceptions of video lectures, a survey was given to approximately 45 students in two education courses. Student responses indicated positive impact and high satisfaction of video lectures. Student perceptions on the importance of video lectures were dissimilar in the two courses. Overall, it appears that video lectures are useful according to student perceptions and can have positive impacts on student learning.

Key words: video lectures, student perceptions, learning, effectiveness

Introduction

Courses designed to train candidates to become K-12 teachers are often best delivered on-campus and in a face-to-face delivery. However, in 2020 due to the COVID pandemic many courses were immediately transitioned to a virtual delivery format. This transition was not only disconcerting for instructors but also for the students. One instructional strategy utilized by instructors was the use of video lectures which are intended to substitute for in-class instruction. In this study, the researcher sought to identify and measure student perceptions of such video lectures and the impact on the learning experience in educational courses. In addition, the researcher sought to provide instructors with insight on student perspectives regarding impact of video lectures as a substitute for in-class instruction.

Video lectures serve varied strategic purposes. One purpose is to allow students multiple opportunities to watch video lectures. Students are able to view the recorded

lectures as needed to learn key concepts and understand the course material. Students come with varied learning styles and educational needs; recorded video lectures are available as needed to support varied learning styles.

Another purpose is to be able to break down complex, often challenging material into smaller segments so that students are not overwhelmed. Students who become agitated and ill at ease with information packed lectures have an additional resource in the form of video lectures. This allows such students to view as needed and be more actively engaged with the course content rather than destress over whether or not they are comprehending content during lectures.

Even though there are there are clear and important purposes to support the use of Video Lectures, current research on the impact of videos lectures is mixed. Several studies were identified which showed positive impact on learning according to student perceptions. Likewise, several studies showed either negative impact or no statistically significant difference in courses which utilized video lectures and those that did not. A brief review of such literature details the studies in the next section.

Review of Literature

The literature is mixed on the student perceptions and video use in courses. In one study, Brecht, H. & Ogilby, S. (2008) found 68% of students using videos said they helped them to understand course content and prepare specifically for the midterm exam. Another 72.2% reported that videos helped them complete homework and prepare for weekly exams. Conversely, 24.2% of students who did not view or utilize videos failed the course. This particular study indicated that video lectures appeal to students for a variety of reasons and are effective for learning. In addition, final exam data revealed the availability of video lectures improved final exam grades for students at all grade ranges.

Another study focused on attitudes toward tutorials and differences in academic performance between online sections that utilized tutorials and those that did not. Delaney (2009) found that there was no statistical difference between sections with and without access to tutorials with respect to academic performance. The results of this study suggest that video lectures might be best used as supplemental materials and are as effective as traditional in-class lectures.

Evans (2014) found that students enrolled in courses which did not use video lectures rated their instructors higher on student evaluations than instructors who did use video lectures. The results from this study suggested that in certain courses, video lectures might not be the best teaching and learning strategy. The courses utilized in this study were introductory subject matter in political science.

Perceived usefulness, attitude and internet self-efficacy were included as the "explanatory factors of video usage" according to Nagy (2018). In a study, which utilized 89 students to determine factors of video usage and their learning satisfaction, Nagy found that perceived usefulness, attitude and internet self-efficacy had a direct effect on

whether or not the video lectures were utilized. In addition, students who used the video lectures reported significant effect on learning performance and learning satisfaction. The study found that students need to feel confident in the use of technology in order to utilize video lectures for learning.

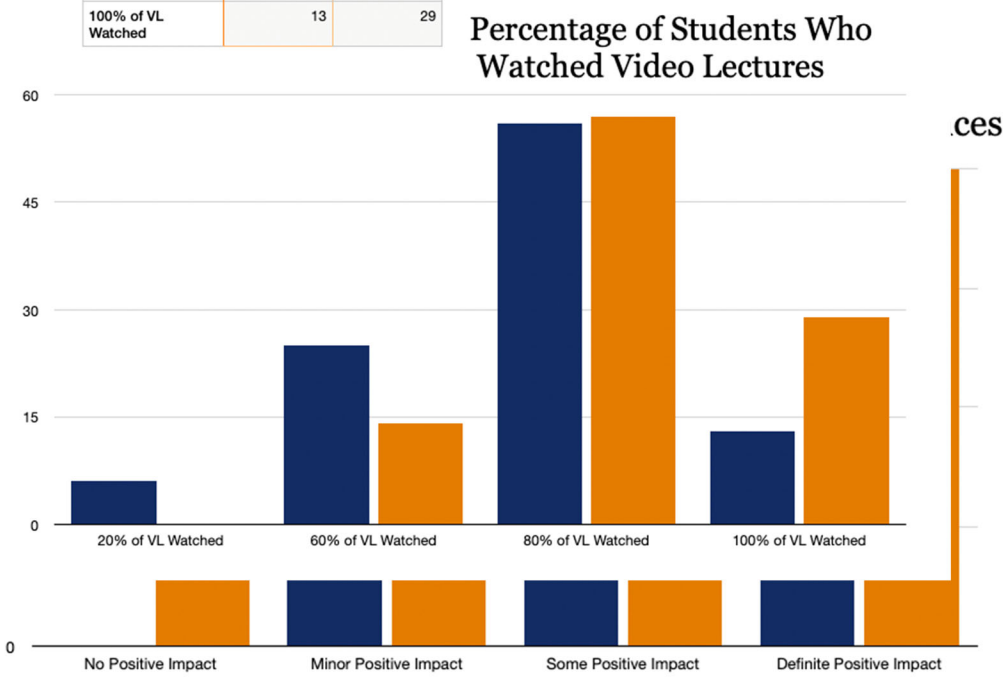
In a recent publication, Scagnoli, Choo & Tian (2019) investigated online student experiences with video lectures. The study looked at opinions on the usefulness of video lectures, student satisfaction and perceived impact of the video lectures on learning. The results of this study showed their student's satisfaction with in course video learning has a significant relationship with positive overall learning. In addition, student's satisfaction with video learning resulted in overall positive perceived impact on learning. The author's in this study revealed that video learning can enhance the feeling of engagement among students due to the learner's control of media and instructor's presence.

Methodology

This mixed method study employed a survey with open-ended questions. This methodology was chosen because he participants sample for this study were approximately 60 students enrolled in two traditionally taught on-campus education courses. Both courses (Instructional Strategies & Classroom Management) was transitioned immediately due to COVID19 in March of 2020. All f2f contact was stopped and students began virtual learning through Zoom. The instructor determined the best use of synchronous learning was through active engagement which included breakout rooms, discussions and peer reviews. In order to deliver subject-specific content, the instructor pre-recorded video lectures for asynchronous learning. During Week 12, students were given a Student Perceptions Survey on Video Lectures. The survey was completed anonymously by all students enrolled in both courses.

Comparison of both courses

Description	Classroom Management	Instructional Strategies
20% of VL Watched	6	0
60% of VL Watched	25	14
80% of VL Watched	56	57
100% of VL Watched	13	29



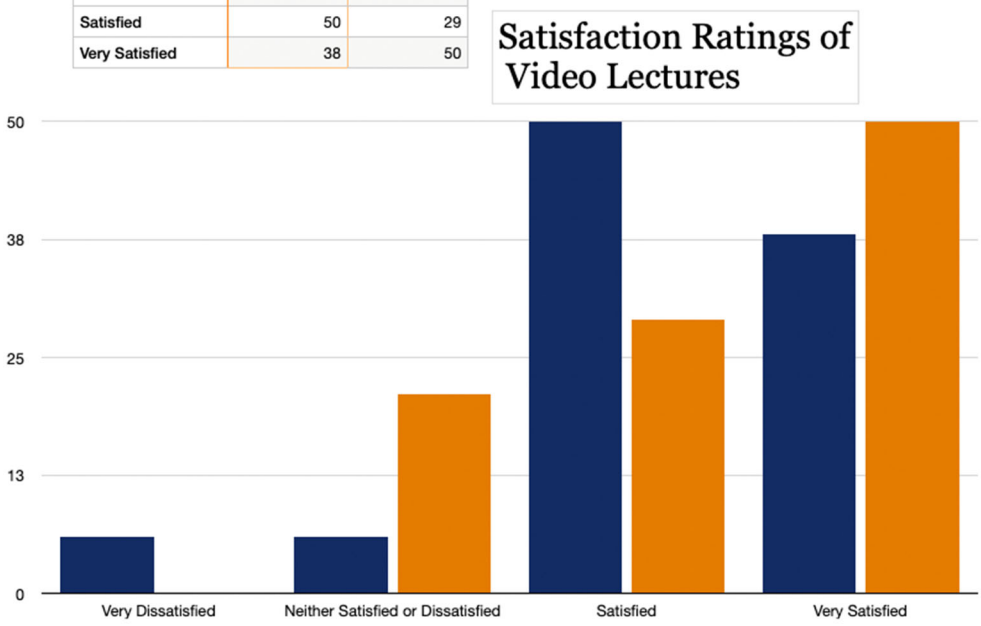
Results

Student perceptions on the video lectures **impact on learning** were similar in both courses. 50% reported a definite impact on learning in both Instructional Strategies and Classroom Management. 36-38% of students reported some impact and fewer than 13% in both reported minor or no impact.

A similar percentage of students in both courses (56%, 57%) **reported watching** at least 80% of the video lectures. Weekly video lectures were recorded with a total of 15 video lectures. The videos were between 6-10 minutes and were considered mini-lectures about single concepts.

Comparison of both courses

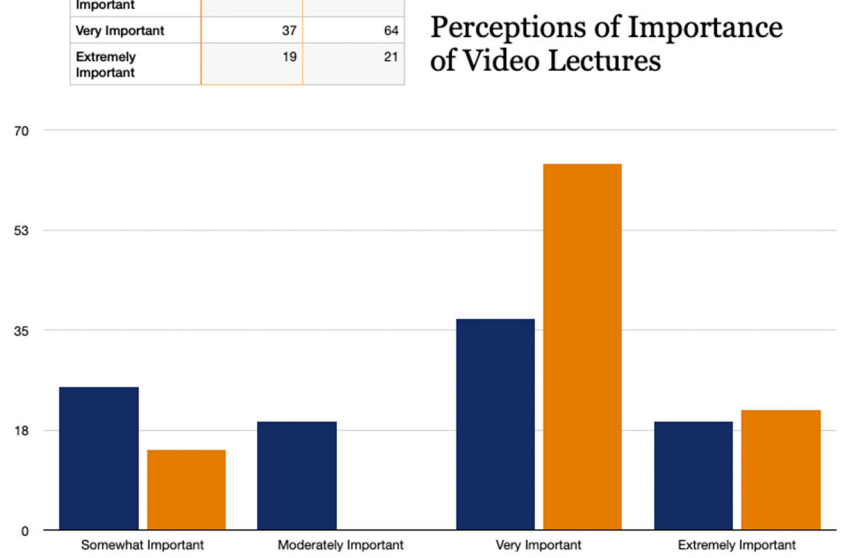
Description	Classroom Management	Instructional Strategies
Very Dissatisfied	6	0
Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	6	21
Satisfied	50	29
Very Satisfied	38	50



A very high percentage of students were **satisfied or very satisfied with video lectures** in both courses (50%, 29%) and (38%, 50%).

Comparison of both courses

Description	Classroom Management	Instructional Strategies
Somewhat Important	25	14
Moderately Important	19	0
Very Important	37	64
Extremely Important	19	21



Student perceptions on the importance of video lectures were dissimilar in the two courses. In the Classroom Management course, 64% of students reported the video lectures as very important while only 37% of the students in Instructional Strategies.

Discussion

Video Lectures were made available to all students in Instructional Strategies and Classroom Management courses but not required. A small group of students did not watch the video lectures and one student stated "I felt the textbook has enough details and information and so I did not watch the video lectures". Otherwise, a little over 50% of students reported watching the video lectures. Interestingly, in the Classroom Management course 64% reported the video lectures were very important or extremely important while on 375 of the Instructional Strategies students. This might be attributed to the content difference in the two courses. In the Classroom Management course, video lectures not only included mini-content specific information from the Instructor but also short clips of other Instructors managing noncompliant and disruptive students. The Instructional Strategies video clips included mini-content specific introductory information regarding lesson planning, utilizing the TEAM lesson template, and various instructional strategies including cooperative, inquiry, direct and differentiated instruction. The differences may be attributed to the content of the video lectures.

At the end of the survey, students were also asked four questions regarding their Opinions about video lectures.

The questions were:

1) What did you find useful in watching the video lectures?
2) In what ways could the video lectures be improved?
3) What, if any, problems did you encounter while accessing the video lectures?
4) What other comments do you have that would be useful for future video lectures in this course?

Some responses are listed below.

1) What did you find useful in watching the video lectures?

"I really enjoyed watching the video lectures in this course. I could see your personality come through as well as your excitement for the content".

"It was cool how you took one subject and focused on that in your video clips. I liked how the information supported what was in the textbook and even expanded on it."

"The videos presented helped me to understand the content even better."

"It was nice to hear more about the content and to be able to watch anytime I needed."

2) In what ways could the video lectures be improved?

"*I had a really hard time accessing the video lectures on my phone."*

"I appreciate the time you took to record your VLs but I did not feel the need to watch them. I found what I needed in the textbook."

"One suggestion might be to implement a participation grade as an incentive to watch the Videos. I know some classmates who did not watch them and I felt I deserved more credit since I did."

3) What, if any, problems did you encounter while accessing the video lectures?

"*I mentioned this before but I had trouble accessing the videos on my phone. I am not sure why this was an issue I could access on my computer."*

"One problem I had was with the audio. Sometimes it worked and other times it did not."

" I had to stop the video from time to time to take notes."

"I really did not have any problems."

4) What other comments do you have that would be useful for future video lectures in this course?

"I was really worried about moving to a virtual learning experience. I take all of my classes on campus and had never had an online course. Thank you for making it a good experience."
"As far as virtual learning goes, this was a good experience. It was a very stressful semester but your class helped me adjust.

Conclusion

Not only did this study provide useful information with insights on student perceptions on the impact of video lectures as a substitute for in-class instruction but also provided some useful lesson for instructors who utilize video lectures. It is extremely important to keep the video lectures brief between 6-8 minutes. Students reported that brief lectures were more appealing and forced the instructor to get to the point quickly. In addition, adding content to the video lectures which either supported the textbook or course content was more helpful to those who watched the videos. Offering something that is different from the textbook is more helpful than repeating textbook content. Adding notes, reflections and questions to the video lectures provides students with structure and gives them valuable test preparation notes. Including some of video content on the quiz or exam gives some incentive to review the videos for students.

As an instructor who encourages engagement in learning, the transition to online learning in traditionally on-campus courses caused concern for both the Instructor and the students within the courses. This study sought to investigate student's perceptions on the use of video lectures as a substitute for in-class presentations. In this study, students reported positive impact of the video lectures and significant impact on learning. In addition, the instruction gained insights on ways to impact student learning through engaging video lectures. More research should be done on the use of video lectures in online learning and in face to face courses.

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Resilience and Self-Care During COVID-19

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Dr. Dye is an assistant professor with ETSU teaching broadly across both, the BSW and MSW, program curriculums. She has been a clinician for over 12 years. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) and a Certified Substance Abuse Counselor (CSAC) in the state of Virginia. She has a strong clinical background in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy, Intensely Trained Dialectical Behavioral Therapist (DBT), Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT), Motivational Interviewing (MI), and so on. Dr. Dye has several publications and ongoing research in the areas of eating disorders, early childhood trauma, self-care and burnout.

Abstract

This conceptual presentation will present and explore the constructs of resilience theory and the capacity of "systems" an individual depends on to be successful during challenging times of COVID-19. Through the use of metaphors, participants will learn about the process of building resilience, having surge capacity (resilience bank account), and surge depletion (resilience deflation). Participants will be able to apply these new constructs to the current challenges of the pandemic and engage in self-awareness regarding their own level of self-care.

Developing Global Students

D. Lance Revenaugh
Montana Tech University

Dr. Lance Revenaugh is an Associate Professor in Business and IT at Montana Tech University in Butte, Montana, USA. He teaches international management, entrepreneurship, and various information systems/technology courses. His education includes a PhD in Decision and Information Systems from Arizona State University (1992) and MBA and BBA degrees from Baylor University. He has also served at the Air Force Institute of Technology, Thunderbird--The American Graduate School of International Management, City University of Hong Kong, and Biola University, as well as serving as the Dean of Business and Professional Studies at Wilberforce University.

Abstract

In today's international world, our workforce must be trained to handle the challenges of business globally. This research examines the Montana higher education system from the point of view of what opportunities students have to prepare themselves for the globalized world. A comparison is made between Montana schools and select out of state and international schools on their international efforts. An action plan is then be presented on how Montana schools can improve.

The Role of Mathematic Manipulatives in the Preschool Classroom

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Donna Sanderson, Ed.D., is professor in the Department of Early and Middle Grades Education at West Chester University in West Chester, Pennsylvania, where she has been teaching early childhood courses for twenty years. She earned her Ed.D. at the University of Pennsylvania in Reading, Writing & Literacy, and her research interests focus on teacher education and early childhood teaching practices, specifically in using hands-on manipulatives as learning sources.

Abstract

Using mathematic manipulatives is common in primary classrooms. An unchallenged assumption exists that using manipulatives when teaching mathematics is key to learning about mathematic concepts, while simultaneously enhancing early learner's engagement. Child development theorists support the use of manipulatives in early childhood classrooms and purport that youngsters "learn through doing" and a hands-on learning approach is developmentally appropriate. This research highlights key issues in the use of manipulatives in preschool mathematics. Teachers provide initial insight into manipulative usage, frequency of usage, and how manipulatives are used to teach mathematical concepts. Issues surrounding hinderances manipulative create are investigated. Research results provide useful information to teachers, directors, and parents regarding effective planning of mathematical activities supplemented with manipulatives to stimulate student learning.

Introduction

In 1997, Perry & Howard conducted a research study which investigated how manipulative aids were being used in primary mathematic classrooms across New South Wales, Australia. Since the nature and use of manipulatives had changed throughout the prior decades, they focused their investigation on what particular manipulatives teachers were using and how they were effectively using them in the learning and teaching of mathematics. At the time they led their study, Perry & Howard (1997) believed, "teachers seem to give manipulatives almost mystical powers in terms of their importance to students' learning of mathematics." (p.26). While some studies at that time regarded the use of hands-on manipulatives as beneficial in the learning and teaching of mathematics

(Thompson, 1992; Bohan & Shawaker, 1994), other studies questioned an over-reliance of the use of manipulatives to mathematics instruction (Friedman, 1978) and questioned if the power of manipulatives in teaching mathematics was somehow overstated (Ball, 1992).

They surveyed 249 primary teachers focusing on what manipulatives were being employed, and specifically asked how the manipulatives were being used. A large percentage of teachers (95%) declared that they were using manipulatives available to them, with the most popular being labelled number materials such as Base Ten blocks, Multilinks, and Unifix cubes. The two major reasons why teachers were using the manipulatives were "teachers believed the materials benefited the children's mathematical learning" and that "children enjoy using them" (p.27) (Perry & Howard, 1997). As far as how the manipulatives were being used, they found students were using them 'as they wished' and 'by the children for remedial work', and teachers were using them mostly 'for demonstration.'

Fast forward eleven years to 2008, Swan & Marshall conducted a similar research study, again in Australia, exploring key issues in the use of mathematic manipulatives in both primary and middle schools. Their comprehensive study surveyed 820 teachers, instructing students in grades PP-9, across 250 schools from all over Western Australia and yielded much data. Their research identified what and how manipulatives were being used to teach mathematics, which manipulatives proved to be the most popular, and teachers were questioned as to the advantages or disadvantages of using mathematic manipulatives (Swan & Marshall, 2010). Overall, they found the most used manipulatives were base ten blocks, counters, and unifix cubes, and the two most popular advantages of using manipulatives as per the teachers were, 1) they heighten interest by (helping engage students, bring enjoyment & fun, provide motivation), and 2) they are a visual aid and assist in concrete visualization (Swan & Marshall, 2010).

An interesting fact materialized from both of these research studies conducted eleven years apart. When focusing on the grade levels the teachers taught and their usage of mathematical manipulatives, the studies yielded mirrored results. Perry & Howard (1997) found that teachers reported a decrease in the use of manipulative use as the grade levels increased. Swan & Marshall (2010) reported similar findings with primary teachers' percentages of daily manipulative use being the highest of all the different grade levels. The studies confirmed, the lower the grade level, the higher the usage of manipulatives on a daily level.

Fast forward another eleven years to 2019. Using these prior research studies as a springboard, and noting that manipulative use was highest by teachers working with the youngest population, I began questioning what mathematic manipulatives are used in preschool classrooms today. As a university professor teaching field-based courses I have access to an array of different preschool classrooms and the opportunity to collaborate with multiple preschool teachers. I wondered if I conducted a similar, albeit it smaller

research study using a similar framework, what data would be revealed regarding preschool teachers use of manipulatives and reasons for their use? What, how and how often are manipulatives being used? What are the teachers' perceptions of their efficacy in enhancing the learning of preschool mathematics? Are there any specific hinderances or roadblocks to their usage at this level? These research questions became the framework for my study in an effort to gain a broad impression of the issues associated with using manipulatives to teach mathematics at the preschool level.

Manipulatives and Mathematics

Many definitions of manipulatives seem to exist in the literature. Teacher Vision's (2009) definition states manipulatives are "physical objects that are used as teaching tools to engage students in the hands-on learning of mathematics" (p. 1), while Hynes (1986) definition focuses more on manipulatives and mathematics stating that they are "concrete models that incorporate mathematical concepts, appeal to several senses and can be touched and moved around by students" (p. 11).

When it comes to manipulatives and mathematic instruction, concrete manipulatives can be "particularly effective in further developing conceptual understanding, because they help students relate concrete ideas to abstract ideas, as well as link informal with formal approaches (Jones & Tiller, 2017). Specifically, when looking at mathematical research, "manipulatives can be important tools in helping students to think and reason in more meaningful ways" (Stein & Bovalino 2001). As one can gather, manipulatives in early childhood can be viewed as an essential tool for children to acquire knowledge through using these hands-on learning tools and can lead to a more positive student attitude toward education in general.

Much research documents the benefits of using learning manipulatives in the early childhood classroom. Students with innovative, common sense, dynamic, tactile or kinesthetic styles learn best when involved in hands-on tasks, games or cooperative learning (McCarthy, 1980). While using manipulatives, students have fun, which has been proven to increase engagement, motivation and self-confidence. Jackson, R., Harper, K., & Jackson, J. (2002) in The National Center for Accessing the General Curriculum, reviewed 14 studies and found that use of manipulatives compared with traditional instruction typically has a positive effect on student achievement. Manipulatives have been found to help students make the leap from intuitive to logical thinking, from concrete to the abstract (Hartshorn & Boren, 1990; Heddens, 1986), and studies have found that first grade students need tangible objects to count correctly and that those that had manipulatives available during problem solving tasks scored much higher than those who did not have manipulatives (Steffe & Johnson, 1970; Carpenter & Moser, 1982). In every decade since 1940, the National Council for the Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), has encouraged active student involvement through the use of manipulatives at all grade level. In their publication, ***Principles and Standards for School Mathematics*** (2000), the

NCTM explicitly recommends the use of manipulatives in the classroom. During the primary years teachers and parents are trying to capture youngster's attention and interest at school as well as at home. Using concrete manipulatives during instruction to engage learners can generate greater student interest in mathematics (Moch 2001; Moyer, 2001).

Manipulatives & Early Childhood Learning Theory

The early childhood years, from ages 0-8, are critical in terms of development (McGuire, Kinzie & Berch, 2012). Historically, educators have provided children in early childhood settings with handheld, three-dimensional objects such as manipulatives for learning aids (Mattoon, Bats, Schifflet, Latham & Ennis, 2015). In Germany, dating back to the 1830's Froebel designed a series of concrete manipulatives for children (Manning, 2005) to assist them in understanding geometric and numerical relationships (Saracho & Spodek, 2009). Later, in the early 1930's, Maria Montessori developed and introduced hands-on, sensorial materials to children (Edwards, 2006). Throughout history many child development theorists, such as Dewey, Piaget, Bruner, Vygotsky, and Kolb are often cited as the founders of active, hands-on learning when researching child development. They believed that learning is an active, highly evolving and complex process and when youngsters are giving the opportunity to manipulate and play with hand-held, concrete objects it supports child development and early learning.

Research supports the use of manipulatives in developing youngsters mathematical understanding (Samara & Clements, 2004), and in their processing of new information. Based on the premise that early learners' thinking is fundamentally concrete, using manipulatives seems to provide a necessary and important support for youngsters (McNeil & Uttal, 2009). It is important that teachers find instructional strategies that align with young children's growing understanding of the world (Jones & Tiller, 2017) and support the hands-on, interactive way that youngsters learn through actively participating in the learning process (Katz, 1994) and being encouraged to explore, interact, create, and play (Thompkins, 1991).

Methodology

Research Sites & Participants

This study was conducted in the western suburbs of a major urban area. The majority of the homes within the suburbs surrounding the schools were one-family residential home with some apartment complexes. The neighborhoods were clean and well kept. Public transportation was plentiful yet the majority of the community members were commuters with their own automobiles. Teachers and administrators in the child care centers reported high parental involvement and family support which they saw as a consistently high priority.

Nineteen preschool teachers, teaching in eight different child care centers, were provided the survey in fall 2019. Teachers taught preschoolers between the ages of three and five years old in both half day and full day programs within private preschools. Eighteen out of nineteen surveys were completed resulting in a completion rate of 95%. The eighteen teachers have been in the overall teaching profession for an average of 21 years, with the range of shortest being 4 years to the longest of 40 years. They have specifically been teaching at the preschool level for an average of 18 years, ranging from the shortest amount of time being 4 years to the longest of 40 years.

Procedures

A four-page survey was created to gather data regarding what manipulatives, if any, were being used in the classroom and to what extent. The surveys were hand delivered to the preschool teachers during September, 2019 with a self-addressed stamped envelope to be return via the US mail. The responses were received by November, 2019 and data analysis began. In order to analyze data, the researcher organized responses according to survey question numbers. For example, each of the responses to question one on the survey were compiled and analyzed together. The same method was used to analyze each remaining question and its responses.

Findings

The findings from the investigation are based on the questionnaire responses of eighteen preschool teachers. Their responses are reported question by question, and in each case the question is provided with simple numerical data and/or support data gleaned from written comments on the survey.

What math manipulatives have you used in your classroom in the last year and what skills are you teaching with them?

Teachers were asked to identify what manipulatives they used in their math classes. Space was provided on the survey for teachers to list all manipulatives they use and how they use them. The eight most popular manipulatives were: counting bears, pattern blocks, multi-link cubes, attribute blocks, unifix cubes, base ten blocks, cuisenaire rods, and square tiles. Teacher briefly described how they specifically use these manipulatives for mathematical instruction. Table 1 shows the percentage of teacher usage with each manipulative and how they were utilized for instruction. Additionally, teachers were asked list other manipulatives being used for instruction purposes, but not on a regular basis. Among those used were: dice, a counting jar, number stickers, lock/key manipulatives, dinosaur bones for measuring, geoboards, blocks, dominoes, pom poms, etc.

Table 1. Popular manipulatives and how they were utilized

Manipulative	Number &Percentage of teachers utilizing them		Math concepts manipulatives being taught/how and when they were utilized
Counting bears	18/18	100%	Patterns, counting with scale, ABAB, color recognition, counting with number line, making sets, number recognition, sort by color and size, more than/less than games
Pattern blocks	18/18	100%	Building puzzles relating to themes, shape recognition, patterns, sorting, stamp art, creating pictures
Multilink cubes	16/18	89%	Measuring, counting, patterns, teaching more or less than, colors, sorting, graphing, comparing
Attribute blocks	14/18	78%	Build theme puzzles, build, sort, stack, make patterns
Unifix cubes	14/18	78%	Making patterns with cards that align, measuring, counting number stairs, comparing numbers
Base 10 blocks	10/18	56%	Build, sort, measuring and comparing numbers
Cuisenaire rods	4/18	22%	
Square tiles	2/18	11%	Build

Additionally, manipulative usage varied throughout the day. Even though this survey concentrated on the use of manipulatives to teach mathematics, math was not just taught during traditional math class time. Teachers used manipulatives to explain mathematic concepts with the calendar during circle time, in the math centers during centers time, and at other times throughout the day with individual students and in both small and whole group instruction.

Regarding the frequency of usage, fifteen teachers (83%) replied they use manipulatives on a daily basis, two teachers (11%) replied using them several times a week, and one teacher (6%) reported using manipulatives to teach mathematics once a week.

To what extent do you think manipulatives enhance children's learning of math?

Without a doubt, 100% of the preschool teachers view manipulative usage as an important benefit in teaching mathematical concept. Teachers spoke of manipulatives increasing student's specific math skills in the areas of beginning number sense, counting, patterning and learning shapes. Some teachers reported that they believe the

manipulatives enhance student learning because they are visual aids and support tactile, hands-on learning. Teachers also see manipulative use as engaging and fun for students and increases their ability to mathematically problem solve. Space was provided on the surveys for teachers to write extended answers. It was encouraging that the teachers took this as important, thoughtful work as was evident by their comments such as:

- "Manipulatives highly enhance learning since the visual aids help students understand concepts that seem abstract."
- "Manipulatives help provide concrete concepts, tactile and visual models. The manipulatives connect ideas, grab attention and keep the child engaged in learning. They improve concentration and bring meaning to the written symbol."
- "When a teacher is able to use manipulatives with the children during their time at the center it assists with counting, identifying shapes, more or less than and understanding patterning. Manipulatives also help a great deal to strengthen beginning number recognition."
- "Having something tactile really enhances children's learning. Children learn by doing and enjoy being able to "touch" what they are learning through visual representations. They make for a more rewarding educational experience."
- "Children learn by seeing and handling and experimenting with manipulative materials. They improve a child's sense of spatial awareness. Children learn how things fit or don't fit together through hands-on manipulatives; they promote problem solving and are highly engaging for preschoolers."

What do you see as the main disadvantages of using manipulatives in the classroom? Are there any perceived hinderances to manipulative use in teaching preschool mathematics?

Although all teachers surveyed shared multiple ways manipulatives can positively enhance mathematical instruction, they also recorded some drawbacks:

- "Sometimes student lead one another astray for activities (example: unifix cubes are built to be swords)"
- "Time constraints when using manipulatives."
- "Some students can handle the manipulatives better and stay on task. Others it becomes a huge challenge."
- "Our day moves so quickly, when I use manipulatives it eats away at the time on task for the students when you factor in all the clean-up."
- "Students get distracted and start "playing" inappropriately with the materials when they are supposed to be using them in a more academic say."
- "It becomes repetitive and boring."
- "The room gets loud. I mean, it's a good that they are enjoying working with the cubes, but management becomes an issue."

- "Time to explain and keep the children learning how to use them effectively, and them explain their different uses. It takes a lot of time."

The table below lists in rank order the twelve possible hinderances teachers see as impeding manipulative use in the preschool classroom.

Table 2. Perceived hinderances of using mathematical manipulatives

Perceived Hinderance of using mathematical manipulatives	Number & Percentage of teachers who perceived as a hinderance
1. Student Behavior	18/18 100%
2. Noise level	18/18 100%
3. Lack of knowledge in how to use them effectively to support the teaching of mathematical concepts.	16/18 89%
4. Time constraints	16/18 89%
5. Management issues (packing up, lost pieces, sorting sets)	8/18 44%
6. Organization (borrowing, returning)	7/18 39%
7. Lack of ample storage space	6/18 33%
8. Lack of space in the physical room	5/18 28%
9. Availability	2/18 11%
10. Cost/money	2/18 11%
11. Parental expectations	0/18 0%
12. Students dislike of manipulative use	0/18 0%

Implications

Four main implications were drawn from this study.

1. **The use of a wide variety of manipulatives is supported by all the preschool teachers as a way to help teach mathematical concepts.**

The survey data reveals the teachers felt strongly that they should be using manipulatives in their preschool classroom to help teach emergent mathematics and the majority of the teachers use them on a daily basis. Teachers find ways to use manipulatives to teach math throughout the day, not at the designated math time or center in the classroom. Since cost and availability were not main factors in inhibiting manipulatives in the classroom, teachers felt they had ample supplies to use in their teaching. Findings imply that highly popular manipulatives were used in multiple ways to teach emergent math concepts. Many of these materials could be purchased from education supply companies or teacher stores, yet teachers commented on how they also supplement with other more "home-made" manipulatives such as

bottlecaps, button, pom-poms, etc. which help them to keep a large array of manipulatives to pull from in the classroom.

2. **Teachers use manipulatives because they believe they are beneficial to preschool student's learning.**

Overall, teachers spoke strongly of the connection between the hands-on nature of exploratory learning during the preschool years and the need to see, touch and feel manipulatives. Teachers comments support the research of Katz (1994) and Thompkins (1991) since they place a high value on the hands-on nature that play-based, interactive manipulatives bring to the early childhood learning environment. They spoke of an overwhelming belief that students need to use their senses as their growing understanding of the world increases. Teachers reported that during the preschool years, children are primarily learning with all of their senses and the use of concrete manipulatives supports this learning which supports the work of McNeil & Uttal (2009). Teachers conveyed that manipulatives are viewed as attention grabbers that assist in focusing children on their learning and are developmentally appropriate with this age group; plus, they enjoy it. This aligns with the research conducted by (Moch (2001) and Moyer (2001). Yet, considering the number of teachers who use them on a daily basis and the teachers' strong beliefs regarding the value bring to teaching emergent math skills, many teachers still saw the biggest drawbacks of their usage to be focused on issues related to management.

3. **Management issues and time constraints are viewed as challenging to manipulative use in preschool.**

Issues of classroom management, specifically regarding student behavior and level of noise created were viewed as major hinderances with manipulative use. Although teachers see the merit in their usage to teach mathematical concepts in a developmentally appropriate way and want the students to physically interact with the materials, when they do management becomes problematic. Likewise, teachers wrote openly about the time it takes to use manipulatives during lessons with the addition of time it takes to get the manipulatives both set up and cleaned up in the end.

Perhaps the way in which manipulatives are used for learning purposes need to be explored at a deeper level. To lessen or eliminate behavior issues one might ask how specifically manipulatives are being used. Could teacher demonstration with manipulatives versus students interacting with them change the behavioral dynamic in the classroom and strengthen management concerns? What would be gained, and what would be lost using the manipulatives in that model? Regarding the time necessary to both set up and clean up the manipulatives, can alternate solutions be found by having university practicum students or teacher assistants help with this time-consuming task?

4. **A significant number of teachers lack training in manipulative usage although they believe in the merit of using them. Many would like professional development training in best practices of mathematical manipulative usage.**

The need for substantial and continuous professional development on the use of manipulatives is needed. An interesting finding was that although teachers see the merit in teaching with manipulatives and believe they assist student learning, and almost all teachers use them on a daily basis, they do not feel confident in their current knowledge of effective manipulative instruction. Building on teachers' strong beliefs of using manipulatives, schools could provide professional development to broaden and extend teachers' current knowledge of the use of manipulatives.

Additionally, in the current survey, only 3 teachers (17%), indicated that they had had any previous professional development on the use of manipulatives, yet 16 teachers (89%) believe they lack knowledge in how to use them effectively to support the teaching of math concepts. Research by Stein and Bovalino (2001) indicated that strong mathematical lessons do not happen on their own, but the groundwork for solid teaching takes places years in advance when teachers are instructed on how to effectively incorporate manipulatives into their teaching. They purport that there is no "easy-fix series of activities" teachers can use the following day, but rather after sustained professional learning teachers acquire insight into ways manipulatives can enhance children's learning.

Conclusions

This small survey on mathematic manipulative usage in preschool mirrors some findings of Perry & Howard (1997) and Swan & Marshall (2010), particularly, "manipulatives benefit the learning and teaching of mathematics and there is strong teacher support for manipulative use in the early grades" (Perry & Howard, 1997, p.29). Teachers surveyed did not report any trouble gaining access to manipulatives and given the considerable amount of money that can be spent on purchasing manipulatives, they had relatively no problems acquiring them to be used during instruction. Overall, mathematic manipulative usage in this study was plentiful and used multiple times during the day and week.

While teachers see many advantages to using manipulatives to teach preschool mathematics and hold a positive view of manipulative usage in the classroom for multiple reasons, some hinderances were noted with usage. Issues of management and timing, and lack of training could all be areas schools/educational systems and directors could assist by providing sustained training to help teachers feel more confident in their current knowledge of effective manipulative instruction. This could have budgetary, organizational and professional development implications for schools, but considering

the high value level that teachers believe manipulatives bring to the learning of mathematics, this might be an area worth exploring.

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Covid-19 & Multimedia Discussion Forums: A Radical Change

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Dovel is an experienced business manager, entrepreneur and educator with an extensive professional background and academic training currently serving as an assistant professor of business administration at Shepherd University.

Jaime Davis, PhD, is the VP of Academic Affairs for the Center for Excellence in Higher Education. She has worked in higher education for nearly 20 years, with experience in Admissions, Instruction, Career Services, and Administration. Jaime also has a leadership and communication consulting practice, and offers training and speaking services offering expertise in communication, customer service, change management, organizational culture, and leadership strategies. Her research interests span from organizational culture cultivation to student engagement and retention initiatives.

Abstract

Covid-19 has radically changed the educational landscape from face to face to online and hybrid teaching modalities. Combine this with individuals rapidly adopting various internet platforms and practices, like selfies, YouTubers, and numerous other online formats; there is an urgent need to adopt new educational platforms and methods. This presentation includes a literature review and preliminary practical research into the use of multimedia discussion boards/forums, specifically Flipgrid, in undergraduate hybrid and online education.

BEST PRESENTATION WINNERS
Selected by Peer Review

STEM in an Elementary Classroom

Lisa Douglass
Washburn University

Cherry Steffen
Washburn University

David Pownell
Washburn University

Dr. Douglass specializes in the teaching and learning of mathematics at all grade levels. She focuses on a constructivist approach to inquiry-based learning, including the integration of curriculum (ie STEM), and project based learning. Prior to higher education, Dr. Douglass was a classroom teacher for 16 years; she brings experience from public education, and hands-on work with middle grade students to her methods classes.

Dr. Cherry Steffen is currently professor and chair in the Department of Education at Washburn University in Topeka Kansas. She holds a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from the University of Richmond, a master's degree in Botany and a Ph.D. in Secondary Science Education from the University of South Florida. Prior to her time at Washburn University, Dr. Steffen taught 6th and 7th grade math and science and was an associate professor in the Department of Elementary and Early Childhood Education at Kennesaw State University. Dr. Steffen's research focus is on STEM education at all levels and integrating STEM throughout the curriculum. She is currently working to develop STEM teacher education programs at the elementary and middle grades level.

Dr. David Pownell is an assistant professor of educational technology in the Department of Education at Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas. He received a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science Education from McPherson College, a Master's of Science in Educational Computing, Design, and Telecommunications from Kansas State University, and a doctorate in Educational Administration from Kansas State University. For the past fifteen years, Pownell has taught all of the undergraduate and graduate educational technology courses at Washburn University.

Abstract

This session provides an opportunity for the participants to learn a pedagogical approach while immersed in it. We have transformed our math and science methods classes into a STEM methods class. You will participate in one of our STEM units, in which we integrate literature, science, mathematics and technology.

Gender Inequality within CPA Firms: Underrepresentation of Women in Upper-Level Accounting Positions

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Sara B. Kimmel
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Sheree M. Corkern, Ph.D., CPA, is a Professor of accounting Mississippi College in Clinton, MS. Her research focus is practitioner-geared topics, accounting education, and ethics in accounting.

V. Brooks Poole, CPA, CIA, is an instructor of financial accounting and taxation at Mississippi College in Clinton, MS. His research focus is practitioner-geared topics in taxation and international financial accounting. Specific areas of research interest include estate taxation and planning, federal and state income tax planning, international convergence, and ethics in financial accounting.

Dr. Sara B. Kimmel is an Associate Professor in the School of Business. Dr. Kimmel joined MC's faculty in 2010 and currently teaches Global Dimensions of Business and Managing in the Global Environment. Her areas of expertise include international business. Dr. Kimmel currently researches motivation and barriers to adult learners, gender studies, marginalized populations, and learning strategies. Dr. Kimmel has been honored by many: Outstanding Teacher of the Year, School of Business, 2016; Excellence in International Education, Mississippi World Trade Center, 2012; Leadership Award, Women in Higher Education - Mississippi Network, 2008; and many others. Dr. Kimmel currently serves with Salt and Light Ministry Foundation in developmental missions to Honduras.

Abstract

The research question of this study is "Why are women underrepresented in upper-level positions within CPA firms?" This research contributes to extend accounting literature by exploring a pressing issue of practice within CPA firms--gender inequality in upper-level management positions. Studies have found gender inequality persists within CPA firms

in recent years, as females are underrepresented in upper-level management positions. This research explores academic and professional literature for repeated themes evidencing factors that potentially affect female inequality in these positions and offers proposed recommendations to foster gender equality within the CPA firm. This study offers practical information to human resource departments and partners of CPA firms to promote social justice and equitable treatment of women within upper-level positions within CPA firms. As a practical matter, CPA firms can benefit by understanding factors causing female employees to exit public accounting as they reach upper-level eligibility in order to foster better retention of women in upper-level accounting positions within CPA firms.

LGBTQ Sexting

Elizabeth Englander
Bridgewater State University

Dr. Elizabeth Englander is the founder and Executive Director of the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center at Bridgewater State University, a Center which delivers programs, resources, and research for the state of Massachusetts and nationwide. As a researcher and a professor of Psychology for 25 years, she is a nationally recognized expert in the area of bullying and cyberbullying, childhood causes of aggression and abuse, and children's use of technology. She was named Most Valuable Educator by the Boston Red Sox and in 2018, Massachusetts Governor Charles Baker appointed her to his Juvenile Justice Advisory Council. She is also on the Scientific Advisory Board for the Institute of Child Development and Digital Media. During the 2020 Coronavirus Pandemic, Dr. Englander's work has focused on helping children and schools promote strong mental health and social relationships in the face of sustained social isolation and rising depression and anxiety in children. During 2020, she authored and published two books, one for schools (When The Kids Come Back) and another for children aged 8-11 years old (The Insanely Awesome Pandemic Playbook: A Humorous Mental Health Guide For Kids), which also features a supplemental guide for teachers and parents. Prior to 2020, Dr. Englander served as the Special Editor for the Cyberbullying issues of the Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry-CONNECT and the Journal of Social Sciences, and has authored more than a hundred articles in academic journals and books. She is the author of five books, including Understanding Violence (a standard academic text in the field of child development and violent criminal behavior), Bullying and Cyberbullying: A Guide for Educators, published by Harvard Education Press, and 25 Myths About Bullying and Cyberbullying (Wiley press). She has also written a variety of research-based curricula and educational handouts for communities and professionals. Reflecting her interest in educating laypeople, Dr. Englander has answered questions in a column for the New York Times (online edition), and she wrote the column Bullying Bulletin Board, which was syndicated by Gatehouse Media in hundreds of newspapers nationwide.

Abstract

This presentation will address the psychological, sexual, and emotional impacts of sexualized digital behaviors. The complexity of such behaviors has largely evaded scrutiny. These behaviors are often all treated alike; yet, clothed-but-sexually-suggestive

images are plainly different from “hook up” apps used by teens and adults, or from viewing of pornography. Further, different types of youth (younger versus older; LGBTQ vs non) may show very different risks and responses.

Lifestyle Discriminations: Exploring Social and Psychological Factors in the Modern Landscape

Daniel Warwick
Arkansas Tech University

Tracy Cole
Arkansas Tech University

Stephen Jones
Arkansas Tech University

Dan Warwick is currently an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Arkansas Tech University. He has fifteen years experience working as a Licensed Psychological Examiner engaged in individual and group psychotherapy as well as crisis intervention screening and placement. Dr. Warwick has a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology with a focus on assessment-guided treatment planning and decision-making. His current research interests involve behavioral economics and assessment-driven adaptive learning.

Tracy L. Cole is a Professor of Legal Studies at Arkansas Tech University, where she also serves as Department Head of Accounting, Finance and Economics. She is a licensed attorney, and she has taught in the areas of business law and business ethics. Her research has been published in journals such as the Journal of International Management Studies, the Journal of Organizational Leadership & Business, and the International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

Stephen Jones is a Professor of Management at Arkansas Tech University and serves as the LeMoyne Smith Research Professor for the College of Business. He has taught in the fields of small business and entrepreneurship, business policy and statistics. His research has been published in journals such as the New England Journal of Entrepreneurship, the Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing, Quality Management Journal and the Journal of Foodservice Business Research.

Abstract

While employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, and disability is illegal, "lifestyle discrimination" based on characteristics such as smoking, physical appearance, or social media usage is legal in most jurisdictions. Ten years ago, the authors conducted a study regarding the attitudes of college students toward lifestyle discrimination. This paper will explore possible psychological theories explaining these

attitudes and consider how a decade of rapid social change might impact students' attitudes today.

Higher Education Industry Beyond COVID-19

Prema Nakra
Marist College

An educator, economist and a marketing consultant Dr. Prema Nakra holds Ph.D. in Economics and MBA in Marketing Management. Dr. Nakra, professor of Marketing at the School of Management in Marist College, New York, is an active member of American Marketing Association, American Economic Association, and Balanced Scorecard Technology Council. She frequently presents papers at international business conferences. She has diverse research interests in areas ranging from knowledge management to corporate reputation management to country studies.

Abstract

As people and businesses around the world enter the new year, businesses, economists, policy makers and risk management specialists begin to develop a list of existing and new sources of global risks. Ringing in "Year 2020" was no different. Some of the sources of global risks identified included: global warming, national security threats, demographic deficit among many others. But the possibility that in a globalized world we live in, a virus would turn into global pandemic did not make the list. The World Health Organization (WHO) labeled the new virus labeled COVID-19 a pandemic in the beginning of year 2020. China recognized this highly contagious and dangerous virus in December 2019. Today, as we welcome 2021, the coronavirus crisis (COVID-19) is upending the economies, industries as well as the lives of people around the world, and Higher Education Industry (HEI) is no exception. Although COVID-19 is a global pandemic and its impact is being felt across the globe, this article will focus on the impact of COVID-19 on HEI in the U.S.

BEST PAPER WINNER
Selected by Peer Review

A Case Study in Emergency Remote Teaching and SEL for Teachers and Children

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Megan Barlow
Endicott College

Lynne Stasiak, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor in the School of Education at Endicott College. She accumulated over twenty years of experience as an elementary educator prior to moving into higher education. Professor Stasiak's interests include neuroscience in education and contemplative practices to strengthen resilience, emotional health, and wellbeing of students and educators across settings. She currently teaches a variety of courses related to special education, social emotional learning, and mindfulness practices.

Kathleen McLaughlin, Professor of Education, has been on faculty at Endicott for twenty years teaching courses in Literacy, Second Language Acquisition and Senior Thesis. Currently, Kathleen's work is focused on developing the course and experiential components of the Educational Studies program where undergraduates pursue professional leadership roles outside of classroom licensure.

Megan Barlow is a senior education student at Endicott College. Her background is in elementary education and interests include social emotional learning and equity. For her Senior Thesis at Endicott, she has completed a yearlong research study about students' social emotional needs during the pandemic, specifically related to her internship in a remote learning pod.

Abstract

The pandemic has forced significant changes in our approach to instruction. Emergency Remote Teaching has resulted in various methods to incorporate best practices. Beyond navigating digital instruction, research indicates now more than ever, educators must

align elements of applied learning theories with social emotional support when teaching students in a remote environment. This presentation shares one pre service educator's experience working with a learning pod of students in a remote setting and highlights valuable insights for future practice.

Introduction

As faculty in the School of Education, it is necessary to look at all theories and change to pedagogy from several lenses. As professors of Education we focus on best practice for our preservice educators which also requires focuson the children and families that our preservice teachers will serve.

With the move to emergency remote teaching in the Spring, along with all teachers, the SOE faculty were taskedwith making the move from small class, student based learning for our students to virtual classes. Additionally, many of the preservice teachers were in field placements at the time and witnessed the move to emergency

remote teaching/learning for ECE and ELED students. Spring placements included not only classrooms but alsodirect teaching with children with Special Needs and/or ELL.

While anxiety and stress surrounding the dramatic shift was ubiquitous, the silent fear of the unknown, the why and how we were in this situation, seemed to be repressed. Teachers and students were trying while struggling,supporting others while seeking support for themselves and becoming increasingly isolated. Additionally, one's educational philosophy was in the balance as teaching /learning pivoted towards the demand for quality content instruction in a non-student based environment.

While Spring Term 2020 for all in Pre school -16 was emergency remote teaching, summer 2020 included intensive training in the how and why of distance learning. Little, if any, focus was on the mental health of educators, children/students and parents. As a result, when a preschool student was asked in a virtual setting to "share" anitem with the educator his response was " no, you live in the screen, you don't know me!". When a kindergarten student was asked about returning to school he was most excited " .. for my teacher to see the real me not the screen me". When a second grader was asked about hybrid he said, " I really like seeing my friends and teacher on screen but it is not real school." When teachers are asked about virtual learning they shared they want to be with their students to "know them."

This presentation focused on children's, teachers' and parents' social emotional needs during the virtual transitions in education by revisiting application of learning theory in remote environments, listening to the voicesof stakeholders relative to mental health and examining a home school setting where SEL was the focus.

In terms of virtual learning, recent research has reported on the importance of 1) clearly defining the condition oflearning – emergency remote, online synchronous and asynchronous, remote and hybrid: 2) best practice in seatedcompared with best practice remote, 3) moving student centered learning to virtual: 4) the loss of identity and

relationships when isolated. This presentation explores two studies published in the early summer of 2020. These studies are cited, in a literature review context, as in introduction to the case study being presented.

Theory and Research

A major element of the teachers' story in response to emergency remote teaching and transitioning to remote teaching has been self-reflection - What ***is*** my educational philosophy? What are ***my*** values in education? How do Isustain learning ***and*** relationships with my students? This self reflection required revisiting learning theory surrounding motivation, goal orientation, self regulatory learning and cognitive load.

Exploring the best practices of both seated and online learning, Carter et al(2020) reviewed self regulated strategies for remote/online learning. "When taking a goal orientation to learning, learning environments the consider affective aspects of learning such as learner motivation must be developed and supported (Ryan and Deci2000 as cited in Carter et al, 2020, p. 322). Locus of control was paramount in their discussion of motivation.

Since, connecting students with learning and their experiences often involves choice, Cognitive Load Theory, however, suggests that "… choice can be confusing, distracting and /or mentally taxing on learners' cognitiveprocessing (Van Merrienboer and Sluijsmans 2009 as cited in Carter et al, 2020, p. 323.

In a traditional learner centered environment, employing Self Regulatory Learning (SRL), teachers prepare alearning environment for students that includes access to content, resources and mentoring. SRL requires self-reflection in order for self- monitoring to happen. Conversely, best practice in online learning includes structuring the pacing for the students, having a monitoring dashboard system and online support with externalmonitoring and intervention as needed. Scaffolding is essential in both environments.

Carter et al (2020)also concluded that "there might also be elements important for young learners that have yet tobe uncovered, particularly in models that account for differences in cognition and motivation in. the presence of advanced technologies." P.327

Furthering the conclusions of the Carter et al (2020) study, Bhamani et al (2020) addressed the relative to the need for physical and psychosocial components of learning, the researchers in this study pointed to two importantlearning theories – self regulated learning and cognitive load theory.

Bhamani, et al (2020) stated that " … in times of a pandemic and global trauma, specifically of a novel kind, it is hard to explore relevant literature to suit specific inquiry…The findings (in this study) are true reflections of livedexperiences (of the participants) p.21

The results of their study spoke to children "being cocooned in homes due to possible threat of contracting the virus". The focus of the study started out as a

pedagogical inquiry. In their conclusions however, Bhamani et alstated that while educators "... have played a phenomenal role in flipping the conventional model of teachingand learning ... (it is important) to (now) evaluate how effective their outbound communication has been and whether parents and students were able to get the help they (the teachers) are intending to give in the first place." p. 22 Further, their conclusions indicated an incidental finding, that the curricula should incorporate cautiously curatedonline courses which include ***physical and and psychosocial components*** o*ther than academic goals.*(p.24)

In summary, student centered environments often seek to develop metacognitive skills, or student owned accountability for learning. Student centred learning includes the elements of s***tudent choice, self-reflection, motivation and mentoring.*** Further, the success of student centered learning is dependent on the immediate andpersonal relationship and conversation between teacher and learner during the learning process. Whereas, in well developed online learning environments, these very aspects of choice and self-reflection can cause confusion and cognitive overload. ***Pacing*** in the virtual environment becomes the parallel element to the in-person immediate intervention and conversation with the teacher in the seated environment.

The researchers in the two studies discussed here concluded that 1) scaffolding is an essential element in all settings for the both content growth as well as SEL, and 2) routines and rituals are essential for success in bothenvironments for both content growth and psychosocial development.

The following case study from Fall 2020 seeks to unveil some of those elements.

Case Study

A significant issue during the COVID-19 pandemic was the increased social emotional needs of students and families, and how teachers would incorporate social emotional development into teaching practices. The review ofcurrent literature surrounding SEL also identified an interconnected relationship between academic standards and social emotional development. (Honess & Hunter, 2014; Plumb et al., 2016; Rossi et al., 2016; Sanchez et al.,2018; Stephan et al., 2016; Anyon et al., 2016; Mahoney et al., 2018)

A case study, qualitative research design was implemented to explore the research questions regarding the complex and increased social emotional needs of three students in a remote learning pod in Massachusetts duringthe COVID-19 pandemic. The case study also examined how the teacher-researcher addressed the students' needs using SEL strategies. Data was collected through group interviews with the three students, daily observational notes, and artifacts collected before and during the learning pod.

The findings suggested four major themes in the case: a perceived need for schools to address SEL; the social aspects of education; improvement of student

behaviors; and teachers' SEL skills and competencies related to effective teaching. First, reopening recommendations from the four stakeholders reviewed in the study mentionedSEL or students' mental health in some capacity. The importance of social components in the classroom were evident from student interviews and in their SEL curriculum through developing social awareness and relationship building. Theme three was evidenced by Students A, B, and C all exhibiting improvements in behaviors, defined asdecreases in significant behavior situations and increases in target behaviors, by the end of the four month period.Finally, the teacher-researcher identified several applications of personal SEL skills while engaging in both direct and indirect SEL instruction which significantly impacted the effectiveness of her teaching practice throughout thelearning experience.

While the findings suggest a relationship between SEL and positive outcomes, it is important to recognize that SEL is more than a stand-alone lesson or program. The teacher-researcher applied her commitment to SEL (buy-in) andintegrated opportunities to develop competencies throughout the learning experience (fidelity). The students would not have engaged with the remote curriculum in the same way had they not been in the learning pod settingwhich suggests the impact teacher buy-in and fidelity has on the appearance of outcomes.

Given the lasting impact of the pandemic on students' academic performance and social emotional needs, theteacher-researcher suggests that stakeholders utilize this unprecedented time to improve the educational landscape rather than working to return back to "normal."

Conclusion

Outcomes of this study signify an important shift in the perception and value stakeholders and policymakers placeon the integration of SEL in tandem with academic content. This is clearly noted at the onset of the case study experience, as the teacher researcher identified such awareness and directives on the part of four various higher level agencies. Additionally, SEL curricular resources were provided at the school level by classroom teachers for remote learning application. Although this is a positive point in the recognition of a solid place for SEL in education, the findings also suggest that beneficial and noticeable outcomes are significantly enhanced by teachermediation.

It is the teacher, in traditional educational settings that can have one of the greatest influences on learningoutcomes and student achievement (Hattie, 2012). Presumably, this teacher should also positively augment learning outcomes and psychosocial development of students in the remote setting as well. Simply providingresources as a part of a remote learning menu, is not sufficient to truly support meaningful and intended outcomes. It is with guidance and effective pedagogical practices that results are observable, as noted in the casestudy

findings, and one could equate such scaffolding in this case with the previously stated elements of self-regulated learning. The ability of the teacher to impact learning correlates with their understanding of instructional methodology, materials, and the intended purpose of materials provided, as all intersect to bring meaning and value to the learner. While each element may be utilized independently, it is when they are integrated with purpose that results align with objectives.

This study also reveals the mutually reinforcing competency development and value for both the teacher and students when social emotional competencies are explicitly addressed. Although, this case specifically referencessocial emotional skills, findings mirror research by Hattie (2012) "the greatest effects on student learning occur when teachers become learners of their own teaching and when students become their own teachers" (p. 18). Developing skills such as self-regulation, flexibility, self-advocacy, and social engagement not only support a senseof wellbeing, and attention to instruction (which likely increases learning in all areas of content), they importantlybuild resilience and serve to mitigate the feelings and impact of stress. Such outcomes further support teacher training is necessary in SEL. Building this knowledge serves to enhance personal development and resilience to manage the roles and responsibilities of teaching and further supports teachers' perception of value and fidelity ofimplementation when working with students.

While the context and case shared are focused primarily on the emergency shift in teaching due to the pandemic,the findings from both the literature and case study can be applied to other settings. Many have been forced to adjust practice, procedures, and standard ways of conducting business during this unprecedented time and as we reflect upon the experience, underscoring the importance of attending to SEL when moving forward is warranted. Not only must we provide the resources, explicit attention to personal and professional competency use and training should be an integral aspect of the process. The intersection of neuroscience of teaching and learning andsocial emotional competency development offer valuable insight for future improvements to build collective human capacity as we all move forward to create our new normal.

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Overcoming Blind Spots: Finding True Pragmatism in Education Research

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Abstract

Education researchers increasingly see themselves as pragmatic with a philosophical desire to understand a studied phenomenon by the best means possible. However, being truly pragmatic requires some sacrifices, including being in opposition to personal beliefs and values to reach the desired discoveries. This presentation explores pragmatism through the consciousness competence model to identify opportunities and challenges (i.e. "blind spots") to true pragmatism. Suggestions for practice and application will be provided.

Taking the Reigns: Mentoring Pre-Service Teachers in the Early Childhood Classroom

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Prior to joining the West Chester University faculty in 2001, Dr. Donna Sanderson held a variety of teaching/administrative positions in a highly transient, urban public-school district in south-eastern Pennsylvania. At West Chester University she teaches Pre-K Methods and Field, Classroom Management, Theory and Field, and supervises student teachers. Dr. Sanderson's research interests include mentoring first year teachers and exploring the challenges teachers' face instructing highly transient students in urban schools.

Abstract

Pre-service teacher education programs play an important role in the development of beginning teacher's self-efficacy and identity. Research suggests this development is influenced by the "apprenticeship of learning" and that the support they receive while completing their practicum courses is viewed as essential in helping beginning teachers. This study examined the results of a survey completed by preschool cooperating teachers and explores strategies used to help alleviate the teacher candidates' fears & concerns related to their practicum experience. Findings suggest that cooperating teachers used multiple strategies to calm their pre-service teacher candidates and prepare them for a successful practicum experience.

Introduction

As a professor at a four-year state university in suburban Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, I have been given a wonderful opportunity to supervise pre-service educators in their first Pre-K practicum course as part of the Early and Middle Grades Education Program. Students enrolled in this program earn their certification in grades Pre-K

through fourth grade. This is the only pre-K practicum course that is part of this program. This is something I have wanted to do since I myself was a college student. After supervising over one hundred early-field practicum students over a span of four years I have come to the realization that a large percentage of them were extremely fearful and hesitant when given the opportunity to go into the field of early childhood classrooms as they viewed it as their first "real" teaching assignment.

From informally conversing with my students I quickly noticed that this twelve-week, sixty-hour teaching assignment, which takes place in local child care centers, is a great cause for concern and stress for many pre-service, practicum students. Much research documents this phenomenon and reports on how this 'culminating semester' is frequently viewed as the most important experience in the professional preparation of teachers (Conant, 1963; Johnson, 1982; Holmes Group, 1986) and the most stressful semester of their college career (Clement, 1999; Enz, 1997; Schwebel et al., 1992). Many students have shared personal stories of not being able to sleep for weeks before they begin their placement, eating antacids for breakfast, stressing about their relationship with their soon-to-be cooperating teacher, having panic attacks over which grade they will be assigned, and worse, having nightmares that the students will not listen to them or respect them as their teacher.

While I have always believed moderate stress helps students prepare for the unique challenges of fieldwork, excessive stress can inhibit both teaching and learning and, if left untreated, may eventually lead to physical problems (Justice, 1998; Swick, 1989). Listening to these stories prompted me to take action and was the basis for this study. Much research on teaching has focused on the perspectives of the students as opposed to those of the cooperating teachers (Rikard and Veal, 1996). This particular study focuses on what specific strategies cooperating teachers are using to assist their pre-service, practicum students during this critical time of their apprenticeship in an attempt to help alleviate their fears and anxieties. In this regard, it is my perception that the practicum student's main focus should be on their young preschool students and their teaching, not on stressing about mismatched teacher personalities, student discipline, or assigned grade levels. It is my intent to use the information gleaned from this study to assist practicum student for their preschool teaching experiences and help alleviate their concerns, while simultaneously providing comfort and support. More specifically, this research uncovers the strategies used to ensure the young preschoolers, university practicum students, and the cooperating teachers all have a successful semester teaching and learning in the classroom.

Idea Construction & Rational

The purpose of this research is twofold. One, to better understand cooperating teachers' views of practicum students and learn about the deliberate ways they offer help and assistance to them during their six-credit preschool practicum experience. Two, to share this information with future preschool practicum students in an attempt to offer comfort and support, as well as with cooperating teachers who are mentoring practicum students; some possibly for the first time.

Preschool practicum students will definitely benefit from the perspectives of cooperating teachers as they share strategies of what works well in the classroom. It is my intent to use this critical information during weekly course meeting times on campus when I teach the 'theory" part of the preschool methods and field course. I will use this information to help lesson students' anxieties and fears of the "real preschool classroom." Additionally, this research will be helpful when collaborating with new pre-K cooperating teachers who have decided to mentor a practicum student for the first time. Learning strategies and helpful tips for a smooth semester from veteran cooperating teachers will certainly be an advantage for novice cooperating teachers as well. In this regard, I view this research as beneficial to all parties involved; me, a university supervisor of preschool practicum students, the practicum students themselves, and both veteran and novice cooperating teachers. But mostly, this research will benefit the people who can never be forgotten as the primary focus of the classroom, the young preschoolers who are there to learn from both the cooperating teacher and the practicum students.

Participants

Over three semesters, fall 2017, spring 2018, and fall 2018, twenty-five cooperating teachers from ten child care centers in the Philadelphia metropolitan area were surveyed. From the twenty-five cooperating teachers asked to participate in the study, all twenty-five teachers completed the survey questions, for a return rate of one hundred percent. Child care centers were located in both suburban and urban type locations and the cooperating teachers taught children in the age range of three to five years old. The exact number of returned surveys broken down by the age of the children taught is provided in Table 1 (end of paper).

Practicum students were assigned to these cooperating teachers for their entire preschool practicum experience, consisting of a twelve-week placement, in which they devoted 60 hours in the preschool classrooms. Overall, practicum students spend 8:30-

11:30 am on either Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday mornings in the preschool classrooms. It must be noted that students do not have a choice as to which child care center they will be placed in or what preschool age group level they will work with throughout the semester. These decisions are made between the child care centers and me, the university preschool practicum supervisor.

Pre-K cooperating teachers had a range of experience working with practicum students. The average number of preschool practicum students they have worked with over the years was eleven. From the twenty-five surveyed only one was new to the role of the preschool cooperating teacher.

Data Collection

The chosen method of data collection was a two-page survey, which asked open-ended questions and gave ample room for teachers to explain their answers. Cooperating teachers were asked questions related to what personal and professional traits they look for in a practicum student, and, in general, what areas are preschool practicum students in need of more preparation. In regard to the topics of child development theory, lesson planning, and classroom management, questions pertaining to how the university can help prepare practicum students with these specific skills were asked. Additionally, questions centering on cooperating teachers' perceptions of the fears and anxieties preschool practicum students have were explored, and lastly, how cooperating teachers can help practicum students alleviate these concerns were shared. Although much information was gleaned from these informal surveys, this article concentrates specifically on the strategies used by cooperating teachers to effectively mentor their pre-service students and provide for a successful preschool practicum experience.

Data Analysis

"Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the masses of collected data. It is a messy, ambiguous, time-consuming, creative, and a fascinating process. It does not proceed in a linear fashion; it is not neat. Qualitative data analysis is a search for general statements about relationships among categories of data, it builds grounded theory." (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 111)

Throughout the three semesters of data collection I printed the surveys and either mailed then through the U.S. mail system, complete with a self-addressed stamped envelope, or gave them to my pre-service students at our on-campus class sessions and asked them to hand deliver them to their cooperating teachers. A cover sheet/ thank you letter was attached to the survey explaining the rationale for the study.

The analysis of the data did not occur in a linear manner, but rather recursively. As surveys were collected they were continually reviewed, organized, and categorized. This was accomplished so the data could be recorded efficiently and managed in ways that allowed for easy retrieval.

The initial step in qualitative analysis is reading the documents that are to be analyzed. (Dey, 1993). I found that reading and reread the surveys in an attempt to become familiar with the data helped me to uncover themes and patterns within the open-ended responses. During this reading time I wrote notes I call analytic memos in order to develop tentative ideas about categories and relationships. Referred to as "an essential technique for qualitative analysis" these memos not only assisted in my reflection of the data collection, but captured my analytical thinking about the data by facilitating such thinking and stimulating analytical insights (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 78). Overall, data were collected, analyzed and coded according to salient themes that arose through the surveyed information.

Results

"The purpose of qualitative inquiry is to produce findings. The process of data collection is not an end in itself. The culminating activities of qualitative inquiry are analysis, interpretation, and presentation of the findings. The challenge is to make sense of massive amounts of data, reduce the volume of information, identify significant patterns, and construct a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal. (Patton, 1990, p.371-372)

A great number of teacher statements are included within the results and discussion section to let their voices be heard. Only using a minimal amount of teacher excerpts would have been easier, and perhaps would have yielded a tighter, more concise article. Yet, since one of my primary purposes of this project is to share this data with future practicum students and new cooperating teachers, I feel including a multitude of direct statements from veteran cooperating teachers proves to be more powerful.

In the Beginning…The first, and one of the strongest, themes to emerge from the cooperating teachers' responses focuses on having the student teacher and cooperating teacher meet each other BEFORE the start of the student teaching semester. Teachers gave multiple reasons why they believe this is a crucial step to starting a successful student teaching experience.

Some teachers believe meeting before the experience helps calm nerves and alleviate fears "It is imperative that the college students meet face to face with the cooperating teacher ahead of time. That will help to alleviate fears." Some cooperating teachers suggest using this time to discuss the schedule, curriculum, and individual needs and personalities of the students. "It would be great if the cooperating teacher and student could meet before the student teaching assignment starts so the cooperating teacher could give the student teacher information on the schedule, curriculum details, and the make-up of groups of students (e.g. some special education students, honors students, etc.)." "Make student teachers aware of specific student needs so they can research before coming to class." "Co-ops can explain what works with the class re: learning styles, discipline, expectations, previously taught concepts, health concerns, parent involvement, etc."

Discuss expectations

> Cooperating teachers believe setting firm and understandable expectations helps ensure a positive and successful student teaching experience. "Be up front about your expectations for the partnership you are about to undertake." "The student teacher should meet with their cooperating teacher prior to their experience. This would give expectations to both the student teacher and cooperating teacher." "Meet with students to discuss classroom expectations and make them clear early on." "As cooperating teachers, we need to let student teachers know what the school rules are, what we expect, what the university supervisor expects, what the kids expect, and what your student teacher expects. It's all about clear expectations."

Observing

Cooperating teachers not only explained why soon-to-be student teachers should meet with their new cooperating teacher; they explained that observing the cooperating teacher before the experience begins is also important. "Student teachers should observe cooperating teachers in the classroom before their last semester or before their student teaching semester begins. Later this means – no surprises."

Preparing the class & a proper introduction

Teachers also shared the importance of preparing the students for the student

teacher and providing a proper introduction for the student teacher. "Prepare the students in your class before the student teacher arrives; let the class know they are coming." Providing a proper introduction is also necessary. "Introduce him/her as a co-teacher, not a student teacher and treat them as such." "Introduce your student teacher to the class as a "teacher" not a student teacher. Make sure they know she or he is a voice of authority and deserves respect."

While some teacher education programs might not share placement information with student teachers until the experience is about to begin, the teachers surveyed explained that knowing ahead of time is critical to starting the experience off on the right foot. Much work can be accomplished before the semester starts, and all of the consulting with the cooperating teacher regarding expectations and "preparing" for the class is certainly time well spent. Next, cooperating teachers explained that the key to a successful student teaching semester is a two-way street.

Communicating: Keeping an Open Dialogue

Cooperating teachers stressed the importance of an open, honest, and reciprocal relationship between the student teacher and co-op. "Cooperating teachers need to be available to listen to student teachers concerns." "Keeping an open line of communication is important for both the co-op and the student teacher; it also helps the student in the long run." "Keep an open door for questions and concerns." This section explores the theme of a strong relationship centering on respect, honesty, and personal connection and compassion.

It's such a lonely word… HONESTY

A small, but powerful word, emerged as critical to fostering a strong cooperating teacher/student teacher relationship. "Cooperating teachers can help student teachers by encouraging them to be honest and open about their fears. If the student teacher expresses the areas where they see themselves as weak, it allows the cooperating teacher to address them more easily." "Co-ops can assist student teachers by spending time each day talking openly and HONESTLY about their expectations and about how their work in the classroom is proceeding. Honest communication is essential." "Let them know how you honestly think they are doing, provide suggestions and praise lessons that went well. They crave honest and detailed information."

Keep it Positive

Teachers talked about the importance of providing positive feedback. The power of praise is viewed to be both motivating and encouraging. "Be supportive of all their efforts and offer lots of praise initially." "Talk to the student teacher and ask them about their concerns. Answer everything that can be answered and give ample praise when deserved." "Provide suggestions, praise lessons that go well. Treat them like a professional." "When the student teacher is teaching the coop should be listening and then give praise and advice."

Ask questions

Co-ops explained that student teachers need to be provided with the time and opportunity to ask questions. "Being a student teacher is a difficult job. They need to ask questions to clarify ideas and increase information." "Cooperating teacher should provide them with all the expertise they can." "It is hard to be a temporary teacher. Student teachers often don't know how much or little to offer. Let them ask questions to help feel the way."

Personal connection & compassion

Many suggestions focusing on the humanistic side of teaching emerged as significant. Co-ops feel that sharing their student teaching experiences will not only help foster a closer, more honest relationship, in the end it will increase student teacher's self-esteem to know that all teachers struggle at some point in the beginning of their careers. Sharing personal stories boosts student teacher's morale and may lead to a more trustworthy relationship with the cooperating teacher. "Be helpful, encouraging, and relate your own teaching experiences to the student teacher." "Co-ops should share areas where they feel (or once felt) weak. This could help the student teachers see that areas of weakness can be worked on and they can become more successful." "We need to remember and tell them (student teachers) that we've all been where they are. We are all human. We all make mistakes and we all learn from them." "Cooperating teachers need to remember when they were student teachers or beginning teachers. You must show compassion!"

Overall, keeping an open door by providing praise and honest feedback, answering questions, listening to concerns and sharing personal stories related to teaching will help create an open and trusting relationship between the student teacher and cooperating teacher. In this type of environment classroom student teachers will flourish.

Assimilation: When and How?

To have a successful student teaching experience, and complete all the necessary requirements for student teaching, the student teacher needs to assume responsibility in the classroom; but when and how should this begin?

Cooperating teachers have very specific, and very different, views on how and when student teachers should get involved in the classroom. All agree that student teachers need to be active and get involved in the classroom and its operations, but they gave very different answers in regard to the pace of assimilation. Like the fairytale, The Tortoise and the Hare, some co-ops prefer that student teachers dive into the deep end while other believe wading in the baby pool is the best way to start the experience. This is viewed as a matter of personal preference, for both strategies have definite merits.

Jumping in the big pool

Many co-ops believe student teachers should get directly involved with the students right at the beginning of the placement. "Involve student teachers from the first week with direct student contact rather than provide a week of observation. Let them get right in there." "Get the student teacher involved ASAP, even if it is just a name game or something small, perhaps even one-on-one instruction." Letting students get directly involved can help with student confidence, feelings of belonging, and possibly give them an edge learning how to manage students. "Allow student teachers to jump into fairly safe classroom management situations fairly quickly. This will help with the confidence factor." Still, other co-ops shared ideas of involving students right away, but in a less intimidating and softer way in order to ease them into the (possibly already established) classroom. "Start student teachers working with one or two students the first day – have them walk around the room providing help, mark papers, work with 3-4 students at a time, and increase the number of children by the end of the first week."

Wading in the baby pool

Some cooperating teachers shared that they prefer to let their student teacher assimilate into the classroom at a slower pace while they concentrate on observing to get a feel for the students, the curriculum, the cooperating teacher's style, and the climate of the classroom. Providing the opportunity to let student teachers feel comfortable before actively engaging in teaching is a strategy some favor. "Let the student observe for a while until he/she feels comfortable with the class." "Student teachers need to be gradually incorporated into the daily routine of teaching."

Although some co-ops suggest a slower approach to teaching and believe taking the necessary time to observe is critical; student teachers need to do so actively. Their observational skills should be finely tuned and they should use this time to become familiar with the rules, procedures, and students of the class. "During the observation period at the beginning of the placement, it is essential that the student teachers take good notes on classroom procedures, so that when they take over, it is a smooth transition." "Observation days at the beginning of student teaching should not mean just sitting. By assisting students 1:1 the students and the student teacher get to know each other better and anxiety is reduced." "Let student teachers take small steps, then a little more, etc.

Small responsibilities, like working with individual students first, work well." "Give lots of opportunities to work in small groups at first." "Have them in front of the class for short periods of time in the beginning and gradually increase it." "Start student teachers out with situations in which they are sure to be successful – short simple teaching assignments, or co-teaching during a lesson."

Lastly, some teachers believe in letting the student teacher decide the pace of assimilation. "It is a personal decision. Let students evolve into the classroom at their own pace." The benefit of this strategy views the student teacher as an individual and looks at their personal level of confidence and unique personality. It maintains that there is not one correct way to let students begin interacting in the classroom, but suggests an individualized approach. Although co-ops differed on the best pace of assimilating student teachers into the classroom, a large number believe that to learn the craft correctly, student teachers must be exposed to many types of learn experiences. These experiences open the door for pre-service educators and create real life learning opportunities.

Co-op as opportunity creator

Many cooperating teachers agree that student teachers need multiple and varied experienced during their placement, and these should occur both inside and outside the classroom. "Have as many experiences as possible during the placement such as conferences, faculty meetings, open house, back to school night, family fun nights, shows, presentations, intramural sports, etc." "I try to include them in as many special activities as possible like plays, skits, parties and conferences to name a few." "Have lots of opportunities for them to interact with students." "Have them take part in as many teacher activities as possible." "By having student teachers experience the

multiple roles and multiple hats that teachers wear they will begin to realize the all-encompassing job of teaching." No longer can a teacher solely concentrate on just the lessons in the classroom. Communicating with other professionals in the same grade, in the building, or in the district, plus working with parents and other caregivers is critical for success in the classroom.

Modeling

Cooperating teachers feel very strongly about the strategy of modeling and believe there is merit in having student teachers model veteran teachers. In teaching strategies related to classroom management and discipline, this was a popular response. "It is imperative that cooperating teachers model classroom management techniques so student teachers know how to use them effectively." "Model clear and consistent enforcement of rules. Intervene in order to make the atmosphere more comfortable for both the student teacher and the students at the beginning of the experience." Additionally, cooperating teachers discussed how they are role models for their student teachers and need to model expected teacher behavior and proper choices at all times. "Co-ops should model expected teacher behavior – their eyes and ears are always on US." "Cooperating teachers need to remember – these are "student" teachers, they are beginning - they need to see us as role models and they need constant feedback, encouragement and guidance."

> In order to help student teacher's, lessen their fears and concerns regarding the student teaching experience, cooperating teachers feel that they should help them with their assimilation into the classroom, provide as many varied teaching/learning opportunities as possible, and be a strong role model for pre-service educators. Fulfilling all of these roles is a tall order, but is crucial to the success of the student teacher.

A good cooperating teacher always…Cooperating teachers listed many small ways they help prepare pre-service educators and relieve their anxiety. Strategies such as "letting student teachers know the key to this profession is flexibility" and "letting them know that co-ops aren't perfect" were shared. Additionally, some other quotes were, "be willing to give up some control of your classroom" and "…treat your student teacher as a professional. When they come up with a good idea, use it!"

Co-ops suggested that to help build student teachers self-esteem and creativity they should "let student teachers create lessons on their own" and "explain that each teacher teaches differently and has a different style." In regard to style, many

cooperating teachers made suggestions to "provide a stress-free, laid back environment allowing student teachers freedom to explore their style" and to "let student teachers develop their own style. Other comments focused on the physical space of the classroom and locating needed materials. "Set up a desk for them to use and include a name tag. Have a designated area for them to keep their lesson plans and materials." "Helping them locate materials and resources for their lesson plans will help lessen anxiety."

The two sides of observation

Co-ops gave multiple responses centering on the importance of observation from the perspective of both the cooperating teacher and the student teacher. This strategy is one that many teachers commented on and believe is essential for a positive learning experience. "Cooperating teachers need to consistently observe and critique lessons constructively." "By carefully observing my student teachers' lessons, I've been able to provide assistance from the very beginning. That way, bad habits don't form or are nipped in the bud."

Cooperating teachers made comments suggesting that observational feedback must be timely and explicit. "Co-ops should address the lessons student teachers teach and why it worked or didn't work for them. Remembering to be honest yourself can help the student teacher see that it takes time and practice for it all to work effectively." One cooperating teacher explained the format she uses to provide feedback, "I point out what was good in every lesson they do first, then I give only ONE suggestion. I would have _____ because _____." This structured format for feedback provides student teachers with encouragement by highlighting the positives, while also gently suggesting reasons that changes should be made. By keeping the suggestions for change to one per lesson student teachers will not be bombarded with negative feedback; hence, this strategy helps to preserve and build student teachers self-esteem.

Many surveyed teachers feel that student teachers need to take time to actively observe in the classroom before they begin teaching lessons. In an effort to build a strong relationship and introduce the student teacher to the unique world of the classroom, observation time is viewed as critical learning time. "Students should be allowed at least one or two full weeks to observe, ask questions, and confer with their cooperating teacher. Many things can be learned from actively observing the teacher and the students." "Allow the student teacher to "kid watch" or observe as much as possible before teaching. So much can be learned through observation." "Even if it's a

second placement student teachers need to observe. Sometimes there is too much of a push for them to begin teaching." Observing other professionals in the building is also a strategy that is believed to have merit. "Observing other faculty members helps student teachers to see different classroom management styles."

Observation is viewed as a strategy that should be used by both the cooperating teacher and the student teacher. The cooperating teacher should use it to provide explicit feedback from the beginning of the student teaching experience. The student teacher should use it to assist with their assimilate into their new learning environment and learn valuable information centering on their new students and the cooperating teachers' unique teaching style.

Journaling

Journaling was another strategy that multiple teachers listed as a way to maximize the student teachers learning experience. Frequently used as a vehicle for two-way communication between the cooperating teacher and student teacher, this method of feedback works well, especially when time is an issue. If a cooperating teacher is observing a student teacher teaching a lesson, when the lesson is finished the cooperating teacher might take over and begin teaching the next lesson of the day. When this happens, no time is available for meaningful discussion or reflection. Since the pace of the typical elementary school day is so harried finding time to debrief, even at the end of the day, is sometimes very difficult or down right impossible. By passing back and forth a journal of thoughts, ideas, suggestions and questions, cooperating teachers and student teachers can participate in a thoughtful and meaning dialogue that is not dependent on the issue of time.

Cooperating teachers had this to say about the strategy of journaling: "Journaling consistently and honestly has been a plus between my student teachers and me. It gives us a place to share our thoughts and feelings when the other one is teaching that we might not find time for otherwise." "Keep an open dialogue through a journal or log." "Journaling by the cooperating teacher with positive comments and reinforcements helps to establish a positive rapport early in the placement." Overall, this form of communication seems a favorite for maintaining a meaningful exchange between the co-op and the student teacher.

And in the End…

Perhaps the most important strategy shared throughout the data was remembering and frequently reminding student teachers what the main focus of teaching actually is: the STUDENTS. With student teachers carrying so much stress and anxiety with so many pressures upon them during their final field placement it may be easy for them to lose track of the big picture. As student teachers worry about grade level placements, earning the respect of the cooperating teacher and class, curriculum issues, their final grade from their supervisor, plus, on a larger scale, their final grade point average, securing letters of recommendation, looming Praxis exams, completing lengthy teaching applications, interviewing, and securing a teaching position post-graduation, it is no wonder why this semester is deemed as the toughest of their college career.

Some co-ops offered advice on how to ground their student teacher by reminding them of what the central focus of this semester is all about. "I look at having a student teacher like a co-teacher. I try to establish a relaxed atmosphere. I chime in during their lessons and I feel free to invite them to chime in when I am teaching. We are teaching the children – IT'S ABOUT THEM. The students must get the best from the both of us." "Cooperating teachers need to remind student teachers that teaching is about the STUDENTS."

Implications

Clement (1999) believes "learning to teach is a process, and student teaching is just one phase of the process." Practicum students working in the field-based classrooms must juggle many different balls and learn to wear many different hats during this critical experience in their teacher preparation program. By helping them prepare for this opportunity and offering useful support and assistance the cooperating teacher can help to make this a valuable learning experience as they prepare them to be "instructional leaders" of their future classrooms.

Overall, this study was conducted to assist both practicum supervisors and cooperating teachers. Field-based practicum supervisors are often times provided the dual challenge of helping to prepare practicum students for their field placement by teaching methods classes, and, journeying down the practicum path with students in field experience courses. By explaining to soon-to-be practicum students that mentoring teachers have multiple strategies to choose from in an effort to diminish their

worries, this may hopefully let them concentrate on their students, as well as and their own learning.

The results of this study also have implications for soon-to-be cooperating teachers and possibly even veterans. By sharing ideas and strategies that are being utilized in the classroom this research may assist preschool cooperating teachers by providing concrete ways to help their university students. A considerable amount of research findings indicate cooperating teachers to be an extremely important person during the practicum students teaching experience (Booth, 1993; DelGesso & Smith, 1993; Karmos and Jacko, 1977; Manning, 1977; McNally, Cope, Inglis, & Stonach, 1994; Stark, 1994).

Realizing that cooperating teachers are extremely important figures in the educational process, they should be provided a forum to dispense thoughts and ideas relative to supporting practicum students. This forum could support the interchange of valuable knowledge and expertise they provide to their pre-service teachers to make their field-based teaching experiences less stressful and more rewarding. Subsequent studies of cooperating teachers comforting strategies are needed to provide research-based data essential for the understanding of how teachers can support and assist practicum students. Future research centering on what specific fears and anxieties practicum students experience would be a complimentary focus of study as well.

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Table 1

Age Groups of Classes	Number of Returned Surveys
Three year old classes	4
Three & four year olds	6
Four year olds	4
Four & Five year olds	9
Five year olds	2
	Total 25

Answering the Question, "Why?", and Developing Conceptual Understanding

Joseph Spadano
Rivier University

Joseph Spadano received a Bachelor of Science degree from Fitchburg State University and a Master's Degree and Doctorate from the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Dr. Spadano taught mathematics at Westford Academy and presently holds a dual appointment as Associate Professor in the Division of Education and Department of Mathematics at Rivier University. Dr. Spadano was a 2001 recipient of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, a 2002 recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Massachusetts Lowell, and is a National Board Certified Teacher. He is also a proud member of Pi Sigma Upsilon.

Abstract

Teaching methodology often focuses on addressing students' procedural knowledge. This study investigated methodologies that emphasize conceptual understanding. The research examined the effects of building conceptual understanding activities into classroom learning experiences. Thirty-eight undergraduate and three graduate students enrolled in university teaching-methods courses participated in a qualitative study to examine and analyze teaching methodologies that focused instruction on conceptual development. The data indicated that, when developed, conceptual understanding influences instruction and supports learning.

BEST PRESENTATION WINNER
Selected by Peer Review

Can Study Abroad Programs Survive in the Age of Covid? What We Can Do to Provide Students a Successful International Education

Terrence McCain
Central Washington University

Lida Noori
Central Washington University

Terrence McCain, PhD, is a professor of Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) and Bilingual Education at Central Washington University in Washington. He is a former Peace Corp volunteer who served in Honduras. His research focuses on language issues, international education, and globalization.

Ms. Noori recently completed her Masters Degree in Higher Education and has extensive experience in study abroad programs. She organized and co-directed the Belize program at Central Washington University. Her research interests are: language acquisition, multicultural and International education, and social justice in education.

Abstract

Our Study Abroad Program takes Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) pre-service teachers to the countries of Honduras and Belize. With this program, they get more than a language experience. They participate in cross cultural and international education in addition to language activities.
International travel restrictions have created a particular challenge to study abroad programs. We will address how we can accomplish a successful study abroad program in this age of travel restrictions.

Learning to Teach Science Preservice Teacher Preparation

Rosemarie Michaels
Dominican University of California

Dr. Rosemarie Michaels is an Associate Professor of Education at Dominican University of California in San Rafael. She is the chair of the Education Studies Teacher Preparation Program. Rosemarie has taught in higher education for over 20 years and is dedicated to developing university-school partnerships, both locally and abroad. She was a visiting professor at the University of Tokyo, Japan in spring 2019, where she worked closely with professors and graduate students on professional development through lesson study. Her professional interests include effective, equitable pedagogy in teacher education and K-12 classrooms, collaborative lesson study, and the 21st century skills.

Abstract

University faculty members created a course to prepare education majors to teach science when they are elementary teachers. The course embeds the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and California's Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs) as a focus for understanding and teaching science. A mixed method design was used to collect data to answer the research question: How does a Teaching Science course facilitate the development of preservice teachers' pedagogical knowledge, specifically the NGSS science practices and TPEs?

Growing Self Efficacy, Strengthening Resiliency in a Culture of Uncertainty

Darolyn Seay
Nebraska State College System

Dr. Darolyn Seay - Currently in my thirteenth year at Peru State College as an Associate Professor of Education in the School of Education. Research interests are focus on teacher dispositions and professional practice for educators. Appointed by the Governor, I completed a 2nd term (6 years total) as the higher education representative for the state of Nebraska serving on the Professional Practices Commission. This board's purpose is to review and act on decisions regarding revocation and/or suspension of teacher license. I am a licensed teacher, hold a Master's in school counseling, a doctorate in curriculum and development and have taught in the public schools for 12 years.

Abstract

This session further examines the recommendation in identifying teaching strategies that would support students in reaching their full potential when considering social, emotional, and academic success. Dialogue will be encouraged as we identify several internal and environmental factors that impact student learning while offering suggestions and ways to encourage resiliency. Increasing the ability to be intuitive and aware of others' needs will create a more supportive learning environment where all students will feel a much better sense of belonging, a identify relevance and purpose. Helping students understand multiple perspectives will help them gain a better picture of their circumstance, while learning to focus on personal goals and grow self-efficacy. Modeling ways to work through challenging circumstances while allowing students to see “mirrors” of kindness will help build self-concept.

Economic Implications of COVID-19 for Global Higher Education

Robert E. Waller
Columbus State University

Pamela A. Lemoine
Troy University

Thomas J. McCormack
Columbus State University

Christopher J. Garretson
Columbus State University

Evan G. Mense
Southeastern Louisiana University

Michael D. Richardson
Global Tertiary Institute

Robert E. Waller graduated from the University of Georgia with post-graduate Masters, Educational Specialist, and doctorate in Educational Leadership at Georgia Southern University. He has served as teacher, principal, assistant superintendent, superintendent and assistant and associate professor at Georgia Southern University and Argosy University. Academic interests include educational law, school facility planning, school business management, school finance, leadership, communication and the superintendent in public school systems. Dr. Waller has published in his areas of expertise in national and international journals and presented at state and regional conferences on educational law, school finance and school level leadership development.

Pamela A. Lemoine, Ed.D. is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Leadership Development and Professional Studies at Troy University and Director of the Global Leadership doctoral program. She previously held a faculty appointment at Columbus State University. Dr. Lemoine completed a BA in English, an MA in Educational Technology, and was awarded an EdD in Educational Leadership at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Her P12 experience includes work in Canada, Japan, and Germany. Before entering higher education, she was a teacher, principal, elementary/middle school district supervisor, and federal programs director. Her research interests include educational leadership preparation, and the impact of digital technology on education.

Dr. Thomas J. McCormack is a professor of educational leadership in the Department of Counseling, Foundations, and Leadership at Columbus State University. He earned his doctorate in educational leadership from Auburn University in 1980. Dr. McCormack served for 34 years as a public school teacher and administrator in seven public school systems in five southern states retiring as a superintendent of schools.

Dr. Christopher J. Garretson is professor of Educational Leadership at Columbus State University. He graduated from Michigan State University as an English and Secondary Education major. In the past he served as a teacher, assistant principal, and High School principal in schools across Georgia. He later became a Title I School Improvement Specialist with a regional educational service agency in conjunction with the Georgia Department of Education. Dr. Garretson currently serves as the Program Coordinator for the MEd and Ed.S. in Educational Leadership at Columbus State University. His research interests include educational leadership, school improvement, and school climate.

Dr. Evan J. Mense—no biography submitted.

Dr. Michael D. Richardson is Director of the Global Tertiary Institute. He was formerly Director of the Doctoral Program in Curriculum and Leadership and held the Fuller E. Callaway Chair in Educational Leadership at Columbus State University. He previously held faculty and administrative appointments at Western Kentucky University, Clemson University, Georgia Southern University, Mercer University and Southeastern Louisiana University. He completed a BS and MA in Education at Tennessee Technological University and was awarded the EdD in Educational Administration from the University of Tennessee. Dr. Richardson served as Founding Editor of the Journal of School Leadership an internationally refereed journal of educational

leadership, Founding Editor of Contemporary Issues in Educational Leadership, and as Editor of The Journal of At-Risk Issues. He has authored or edited seventeen books, published more than two hundred articles in professional journals, published more than eighty book chapters and made more than four hundred presentations to state, regional, national and international professional organizations. He has chaired more than one hundred dissertations and continues to actively conduct research and write for publication. His current research areas are organizational theory, particularly resiliency of leaders, phenomenology, and the implications of technology for administrators. Dr. Richardson served as a secondary and elementary principal, Personnel Director, Director of Special Projects, Coordinator of Federal Programs, and Assistant Superintendent before entering higher education.

Abstract

Modern society in most countries is rapidly moving toward globalization. Most of the elements of society, particularly higher education, are struggling with COVID-19 across cultures and around the world. The globalization of education places a new emphasis on both the content and process of education coupled with global ramifications for delivery. Consequently, global higher education is increasingly viewed as a major engine of economic development that is being severely challenged by the economic ramifications of COVID-19. Globalization implies a need for content and process that has educational and employment relevance. Traditionally, universities and colleges, particularly in the West have taken a more parochial view and have emphasized a Western canon that may or may not be relevant to needs in the East and in emerging nations.

Lessons in Flexibility: Using the HyFlex Model During a Pandemic

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Auburn University Montgomery

Gilbert Dueñas
Auburn University Montgomery

Shelly H. Bowden
Auburn University Montgomery

Dr. Erin F. Klash - Dr. Erin Klash is an assistant professor in the College of Education. Research interests related to this topic include instructional strategies teachers use to facilitate positive learning environments in the elementary classroom setting. Dr. Klash taught in the elementary education environment for 7 years and has 4.5 years of experience in higher education teaching foundations of education courses.

Dr. Gilbert Dueñas is a Professor in the Department of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology within the College of Education, Auburn University at Montgomery. He teaches both undergraduate and graduate level courses and supervises candidates enrolled in the field experience, as well as the early childhood practicum and internship. Dr. Dueñas was born and raised in East Los Angeles, California. Following high school completion, he served a 30-year military career in the United States Air Force. Prior to his current professional work, he worked 7.5 years as a third grade classroom teacher at a K-3 public school in central Alabama.

Dr. Shelly Bowden is a professor in the College of Education. Research interests related to this topic include mentoring and creating naturalistic classroom environments. Dr. Bowden taught kindergarten for 14 years before moving to higher education. She has 25 years of service in teaching undergraduate and graduate level courses in early childhood education.

Abstract

Three instructors at a regional institution used the HyFlex model of instruction during Fall, 2020, due to the coronavirus pandemic. Each instructor enacted HyFlex in various ways to meet the needs of their students, but flexibility was key in navigating this new mode of instruction. Upon analyzing data, it was noted that flexibility was demonstrated in at least three ways: access to instructional delivery, use of technology, and in adapting to meet student needs.

Using Mindfulness to Decrease Stress and Improve Productivity in a COVID World

Michelle Grace Beach
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LeAnne Syring
Southwest Minnesota State University

Dr. Michelle Beach is a Professor in the School of Education at Southwest Minnesota State University and a recipient of multiple state and national awards. Beach earned a Ph.D. in Institutional Assessment: Distance Learning Technologies track from North Dakota State University and Master's degrees in Special Education and Child and Family Development at St. Cloud State University. Beach was at the forefront of the distance education movement as a faculty trainer and course developer. Beach is a frequent guest speaker on topics related to best practices in online course development, technology, accessibility, and increasing the effectiveness of teaching and training strategies.

Dr. LeAnne Syring is Associate Professor and coordinator of the Special Education programs at Southwest Minnesota State University. Syring earned her Ph.D. in Early Childhood Education with an emphasis in Special Education Inclusion from Northcentral University and Master's degree in Special Education from Southwest Minnesota State University. Syring was a contributor to the online textbook, *Why Writing Works: Disciplinary Approaches to Writing Text.* Syring speaks on a variety of topics including: differentiation in the classroom, teacher education, and student success. Syring considers laughter the best way to relax your mind, body, and soul to be your best self.

Abstract

Even before COVID-19, stress was identified as a major issue for Americans. Stress can have a negative impact on physical and emotional health and decrease achievement and work production. The impact of COVID-19 on stress is well documented. Public health

actions, such as social distancing and working remotely, are necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19, but increase feelings of isolation, stress, and anxiety. This presentation will discuss research findings and offer examples of how current research can be applied to diminish COVID-19- related stress and performance in classrooms and workplaces.

Keywords: Stress, Coping, Mindfulness, Meditation

Stress is identified as a major health issue for Americans because of its negative impact on physical and emotional health. Stress can decrease achievement and work production as well as depress general feelings of life satisfaction. Research on the impact of COVID-19 on stress is in its infancy, but preliminary results indicate that CoVid has significantly increased stress and anxiety. Public health actions such as social distancing and working remotely have been necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19, but such actions increase feelings of isolation and further increase stress and anxiety levels (Mayo Clinic, 2021).

What is Mindfulness?

The term Mindfulness is often used interchangeably with Meditation or Mindfulness Meditation. and is considered a type of mind-body complementary medicine. According to Mayo Clinic (2021), Meditation is an umbrella term for the many ways to achieve a relaxed state of being. Several types of meditation and relaxation techniques exist that have meditation components. All share the goal of achieving inner calm.

Meditation in a variety of forms has been practiced for thousands of years. Meditation originally was meant to help deepen understanding of the sacred and mystical forces of life as a religious technique. Later, it was integrated as one of the alternative or New Age therapies. Recently, Mindfulness has been integrated into schools and workplaces in an effort to decrease stress, improve attention skills, and increase productivity.

Mindfulness Meditation focuses on becoming mindful, or showing an increased awareness and acceptance of living in the present moment. One goal of Mindfulness Meditation is to broaden conscious awareness. When focus is narrowed to moment-to-moment experiences during meditation, such as concentrating on the flow of breath, the

practitioner attempts to observe thoughts and emotions in the present and lets them pass without judgment. Meditation can then produce a deep state of relaxation.

A limitation of research measuring the effects of Mindfulness or Mindfulness Meditation is that its definition varies widely. According to Mind.org, the definition of Mindfulness by Jon Kabat-Zinn developed in 1997 is the most popular explanation of Mindfulness in the United States of America: "Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally" (2017). Mayo Clinic (2021) defines Mindfulness as "a type of meditation in which you focus on being intensely aware of what you're sensing and feeling in the moment, without interpretation or judgment, using breathing methods, guided imagery, and other practices to relax the body and mind and help reduce stress." For the purposes of this paper, the definition of mindfulness is limited to "Intentional cessation of thoughts that focus on past and future for a short time in order to focus on the present."

Background

Mindfulness Meditation, along with biofeedback, acupuncture and massage, exploded as a popular alternative therapy in recent years. Mindfulness has been increasingly adopted by the public to treat stresses such as anxiety and depression. Despite its increasing popularity, there appears to be a dearth of well-designed studies to support its use and effectiveness to treat learning, mental, or physical health issues. The bulk of current research studies based results on anecdotal evidence, lacked control groups, were loosely run research studies that used shortcuts to arrive at conclusions, or were case studies. Most studies recruited volunteers more likely already sold on the practice of Mindfulness and therefore apt to report positive effects. Accordingly, many professionals have been reluctant to endorse Mindfulness without credible research to back up its effect and effectiveness. Moreover, many researchers dismiss the practice as an alternative age "flash in the pan" since credible research did not appear to support its use.

Review of Literature

As the use of Mindfulness significantly increased, U.S. schools began instituting more programs for students, particularly for students with special needs such as autism. This brought the question of efficacy to the forefront of the research community. Johns Hopkins University set out to investigate Mindfulness by sifting through 19,000 studies on Mindfulness and Meditation in order to evaluate the quality and strength of the body of research. Out of the 19,000 studies examined by the researchers, 47 studies met the criteria used to define a well-designed study and adequately addressed the

limitations of bias. The bulk of the literature presented on Mindfulness and Mindfulness Meditation was anecdotal and self-report.

Johns Hopkins researchers performed a meta-analysis of 47 studies that met the criteria for well-designed research. A meta-analysis indicated that Mindful Meditation positively affected several areas of emotional regulation. In addition, the researchers found that the practice itself, even without guidance, produced benefits for the participants in the studies.

Results of the meta-analysis study indicated that Mindfulness Meditation promoted increased development of executive function. Several studies found improvement in the ability to concentrate and pay attention, both critical skills for school success. The number of incidence demonstrating impulse control strengthened increased and results found that inappropriate behaviors decreased. Some studies also reported an increase in working memory, although researchers did not identify the underlying mechanism that produced the result.

Results indicated improvement of cognitive flexibility after participants regularly practiced Mindfulness. Cognitive flexibility refers to the brain's ability to transition from thinking from one concept to another. The more quickly a learner can switch or shift thinking from one dimension to another, the greater the indication of a higher level of cognitive flexibility.

Results also indicated increase in emotional regulation or self-regulation. Emotional regulation refers to the ability to response to the ongoing demands of daily life with a range of emotions that is socially acceptable, flexible enough to permit spontaneous reactions, and delay spontaneous reactions appropriate for the situation. Similar to emotional self-regulation is emotional resilience. Study results indicated an increase in the individual's ability to adapt to stressful situations or crises when using Mindfulness. Less resilient people have fewer coping mechanisms and more difficulty dealing with major and minor stress changes, such as the advent of CoVid. Resilient people more easily adapt to adversity without lasting effects.

Summary of Findings

While Mindfulness and meditation are practices that have become increasingly popular in the mainstream, the majority of studies examining their efficacy have suffered from a lack of using standard and accepted research practices. Johns Hopkins examined over 19,000 research studies regarding the effectiveness of Mindfulness and found only 47 studies that adhered to sound research practices. In response to the widespread use of Mindfulness in schools and work places, a recent plethora of

professional research studies and meta-analysis explored the effectiveness of Mindfulness across ages and environments. Study results indicate that Mindfulness may be an effective strategy to lower stress, increase coping strategies, and improve attention, behavior, and impulse control.

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