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BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE PROCEEDINGS

Aftermath: Life after Retirement from a First Responder

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Dr. Mims is an Assistant Professor/Instructor of Criminal Justice and a member of the Saint Leo Community since 2011. Dr. Mims received her degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Criminal Justice from Northcentral University. Dr. Mims has taught at both the Pasco-Hernando State College Police Academy and the Hillsborough Community College Police Academy. Dr. Mims is a retired Tampa Police officer where she served on the Mounted Patrol Unit, Bicycle Unit, worked as an Undercover and Community Service Officer. She was also a child abuse, elderly abuse and domestic violence investigator. Dr. Mims is a certified firearms instructor and CPR/BLS instructor. Dr. Mims teaches a variety of criminal justice courses within the Department of Criminal Justice. Her research passion is the animal/human bond and animal-assisted interventions that contribute to the health and well-being in the lives of individuals, both young and old.

Dr. May is an Assistant Professor/Instructor of Criminal Justice and a member of the Saint Leo Community. Dr. May received her degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Criminal Justice from Northcentral University. Dr. May is a

retired Lieutenant from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement where she served in the Medicaid Fraud Unit.

Abstract

The career of a first responder can be worthwhile and fulling while also challenging and demanding. First responders – law enforcement personnel, emergency dispatchers, firefighters, and EMTs are exposed daily to human suffering, tragedy, life and death situations, and risk of personal harm or death. Day after day, month after month and year after year of exposure to such stress can take a toll on a first responders' mental and physical health. For first responders, this constant exposure can increase the vulnerability and risk of substance abuse and addiction. In an effort to better assist former first responders in re-entering civilian life this research looked at retired first responders in an effort to identify stress prevention and management and secondary traumatic stress for first responders prior to and after leaving a first responder career.

Are Neuroscientific Findings Being Properly Applied to Best Educational Practices: Is There a Cause for Concern?

Kourtland Robert Koch
Ball State University

Dr. Koch is very active in his service to the profession. His research focuses on applying brain mapping methods to identify specific perceptual modality pathways using fMRI imaging analysis to explore relationships among learning and behavior. As Program Director for Early Childhood Special Education, Dr. Koch recognizes the importance of early intervention and transition services. Dr. Koch has been awarded two grants, one internal and one external, to support his research. He serves as associate editor or co-editor on numerous national and international journals. Since 2006, Dr. Koch has served on 50 committees at the international, national, and state level.

Abstract

Advances in neuroscience during the past ten years have yielded important insights into mental functioning, but their implications for the field of education have remained largely unexplored. This is perhaps due to a lack of dialogue between neuroscientists and educators, which to this point has proven to be a most difficult and yet needed endeavor. Although the potential significance of these insights to education is enormous, so far this potential has proved to be difficult to realize in educational practice. Education and neuroscience have remained on the opposite sides of the playing field, each afraid to cross the 50 yard line of difference.

Historically, both neuroscience and education have focused on cognitive development, often neglecting the emotional and physiological domains that are generally more difficult to tackle. By turning educators' attention to social and emotional environments in which children encounter learning, it may become possible to modify educational practices based upon neuroscience. If we can learn to appreciate the diversity of strategies that researchers apply to answer a specific question, then perhaps education may also benefit by emphasizing the importance of teaching different strategies and helping students develop the skills necessary to be able to take different approaches to a problem.

Much too often, educational practice in my opinion is solution orientated, stressing the importance of reaching a solution much more so than the fact that there could be different ways to getting to it. In my area of research the existence of multiple intelligences and diverse learning pathways are often ignored. This approach not only negates important individual differences, but also prevents educators from helping a students explain the range of strategies available to them (e.g.) perceptual modalities. The continuum of learning moves from a more emotional aspect in the elementary years and becomes more analytical during the high school years and beyond, which tends to serve the adult well when the plasticity to learn different approaches is likely to be greatly diminished. One of the most challenging goals that I see is how are we going to distinguish between neural and cognitive plasticity. For instance, do dyslexic boys compensate for their cognitive differences by adapting their remaining hemispheric pathways to take over functions normally associated in those areas identified by fMRI as non-developed pathways? Or do they instead transform the nature of the processing problem to suit the existing pathways in the adjacent hemisphere?

As I attend national conferences it is becoming apparent that neuroscientists (Shawwits & Laurente) to name a few who are attempting to facilitate the application of neuroscience findings to education. Even in my own research agenda I am attempting to disseminate my results to an audience of educators and outlining the specific implications that my results may have on the process of learning. If a dialogue between neuroscience and education is to be successful, it is indeed the neuroscientists who will have to take the initial steps of first, formulating their results and theories so that they are accessible to teachers and, second, thinking about and communicating what they believe are the implications of these findings and theories to educational practice so that these suggestions can be discussed, tested, and if appropriate, considered for application.

The Future of the American Administrative State

Donald Brand
College of the Holy Cross

Donald Brand is the author of Corporatism and the Rule of Law: A Study of the National Recovery Administration and numerous articles in professional journals on the New Deal and the growth and development of the American administrative state.

Abstract

The death of Justice Antonin Scalia and the appointment of two new justices (Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh) to the Supreme Court may presage a fundamental shift in American administrative law. Justice Scalia, who as a law school professor wrote extensively on administrative law, had long supported Chevron U.S.A., Inc v. Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc, arguably the most important administrative law precedent in the modern era. Chevron established the principle of judicial deference to administrative agencies when agencies interpreted the statutes authorizing their regulatory activities. Chevron deference encouraged judicial restraint when administrative agencies were challenged in court. Scalia's prominence for conservative jurists notwithstanding, conservative like Gorsuch and Kavanaugh (along with Justice Thomas) have suggested that the judiciary should become more active in restricting activist administrative agencies, which could imply a reexamination of Chevron deference. My presentation will explore the significance of Chevron deference and the potential implications of heightened judicial scrutiny of administration.

Human-Animal Interaction: Opportunities to Improve Human Development Outcomes

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The author is an Associate Professor with a PhD in Behavioral Science and teaches in the Educational Leadership Department at Plymouth State University. Her work has focused on the impact of animals on human development, specifically young children and adolescents. She is a certified pet assisted therapy facilitator and trains others in the field of Human-Animal Interaction. Most recently, her scholarly work has examined the impact of companion animals on adolescent development and incarcerated populations. In practice, she has been assisting local Restorative Justice Programs to affect outcomes for juvenile offenders and their families.

Abstract

Increasingly, people are relying on animals for emotional, physical, cognitive, and behavioral health support. Relationships with animals have been found to assist humans across the lifespan (young children through elderly populations), in various environments (educational settings, prisons), and through multiple delivery methods (i.e., companion animals, visiting therapy pets, and service animals). This paper (and presentation) will present a brief overview of the history of humans and pets (pet relationship dates back at least 14,000 years!); several case studies of how animals are included in the development of human (such as classroom pets and inmate rehabilitation programs); challenges when including animals in educational or

therapeutic settings (cleanliness in nursing homes and hospitals); and the research that is being conducted in the field of Human-Animal Interaction (including the ethics of working with animals).

Transformational Travel: Emerging Trends

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Indiana Wesleyan University

Doctor of Philosophy – The University of Tennessee, 1993

   Majored in School Psychology. Summa Cum Laude

Masters of Arts – Wheaton Graduate School, 1984

   Majored in Clinical Psychology. Cum Laude

Bachelor of Science – Virginia Tech, 1982

   Majored in Psychology.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Indiana Wesleyan University, Marion, Indiana 2000 – Present

   • Professor of Psychology

Teaches: Child Development, Lifespan Development, General Psychology, General Psychology 2, Play Therapy, Family Systems, Global Helping Professions, Urban Encounter, Independent Studies, Marriage and Family, and Abnormal Psychology. Researching attachment issues, faith development, hope, and emotional intelligence.

   • Adjunct Professor Psychology : Graduate Counseling

2004 – 2015 Teaches:Human Appraisal; Human Growth and Development; Child and Adolescent Development and Treatment;

   • IWU Online: Summer blended learning courses in: Child Development, Child and Adolescent Development and Treatment, and Human Growth and Development

Abstract

As educators, we are always seeking efficacious methods to transform students' narrow view of Psychology and the world so that they will graduate with more than just knowledge. This year we added an international travel class, "The History of Psychology in Europe" to aid in this goal.

Sixteen students, (3 male and 13 female) and 2 professors went to Europe in May of 2018 to study some of Psychology's origins. Before departure, each participant took the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES). "The Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES) was developed specifically to evaluate the skills critical to interacting effectively with people who are from cultures other than our own. The IES focuses on three dimensions of intercultural effectiveness that are combined to generate an Overall Intercultural Effectiveness Score: Continuous Learning, Interpersonal Engagement and Hardiness" (Kozai Group, 2018).

After the trip, each student wrote a final reflection paper, turned in daily journals, and re-took the IES. This workshop will present the findings of the pre and post IES administrations. Did this travel experience have any transformational influence on the students?

Undergraduate Internships: Best Practices in Building the Bridge Between the World of School and the World of Work

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Pennsylvania State University

Dr. Carl earned her Ph.D. in Administration and Leadership Studies from Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 2007. She has served as the Director of Research and Evaluation of the National Early Childhood Accreditation Program, as well as being on faculty at Penn State University in the Human Development and Family Studies Program. In her faculty position, she was responsible for developing a successful model of an internship program. Based upon best practices in both the business and social work arenas, the model has proved to be successful, with 75% of graduating students earning jobs either at their placement or through the connections made during their internship. In addition, her research area includes improving the quality of early care and education.

Abstract

All you have to do is turn on the nightly news and you know that higher education is under fire. The costs of tuition continue to rise and many students are earning degrees that are not translating into jobs that will provide them with adequate salaries. In fact, in 2016, the employment rate for those with a Bachelor's Degree or higher was 88% (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). It has been shown that "one major obstacle that graduates encounter is lack of real world work experience, which is a vital component.

However, many positions require several years of experience" (Hurst, Thye, and Wise, 2014, p 58). So what can we in higher education do? An internship program can help students bridge the world of academia with the world of work (Lopez-Martin, A., et al, 2015). Not all internships are created equal. A successful internship program requires several key components. These elements require strong community connections with agencies; well prepared students, both academically and professionally; and adequate student supervision and reflection time (Burke Debra D., and Carton, Robert, 2013). Based upon best practices in the business world, as well as social work internships, this session will identify the key elements of a successful behavioral sciences internship. The discussion will also focus on utilizing your campus' existing supports to help students become career ready.

BUSINESS PROCEEDINGS

The Effects of Fostering the Global Mindset into the Introduction to Business Undergraduate Curriculum

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Andrew Pueschel (Ph.D., Robert Morris University) is the Director of the Emerging Leaders program at the Robert D. Walter Center for Strategic Leadership, and an Assistant Professor of Instruction in the Management Department of the College of Business at Ohio University. His research includes Well-Being, Positivity, Leadership, Soft Skill Development, Organizational Behavior, Culture Change, and Motivation.

Katherine Hartman (Ph.D., Indiana University) is an Associate Professor and Chair of the Marketing Department in the College of Business at Ohio University. She teaches marketing strategy, marketing research, and consumer behavior. Her teaching and learning research interests include assessment, accreditation, problem-based learning, general education, and intercultural competency.

Mary L. Tucker (Ph.D., University of New Orleans) is a Professor of Management at Ohio University. Her dissertation research focused on Transformational Leadership. Current research interests include leadership, management pedagogy, and assessing learning. She has provided leadership training for both private and public-sector organizations, including the American Association of Highway Transportation Officials, 3M, and State Farm.

Janna Chimeli (Ph.D., Ohio University) is an Assistant Professor of Instruction Analytics and Information Systems Department. Current research interests include rationality and choice models; particularly the ones that assess and predict information search, judgment heuristics, in addition to the final choice. Applying her research interest to her teaching, Dr. Chimeli employs analytics techniques that can be used both to form judgments and to make data-driven decisions.

Abstract

Rapidly changing technology is impacting organizations and businesses, allowing employees to conduct business at any time and any location. Ironically, at the same time, the rise in isolationism is impacting the levels of cross-cultural engagement both locally and globally. As such, in an educational environment that prepares students for

future success, it is imperative that students are encouraged to engage in a global-mindset so that they can take advantage of opportunities that arise throughout their professional journey. One way of fostering the global mindset may be to introduce international business concepts early in students' business curriculum. This study discusses the impact of the inclusion of global interventions in an undergraduate introduction to business course. Results affirm interventions positively influence students' self-reported knowledge of international business concepts.

Introduction

Many undergraduate students, when continuing their higher-educational journey, are at a disadvantage when it comes to global experiences. Luxuries such as traveling across borders, positive exposure to social and business best-practices, and engaging with other young adults from areas outside of their home country, county, or even town are not consistent among individuals. At a time where students are polarized with constant biased world-wide media footage and limited home-town views of our global society, what would happen if we prioritized a cross-cultural educational component to the introduction to business curriculum, early on, within the first year of college?

Literature Review

Technology has fed the speed of globalization and impacted every person, organization, company and country in myriad ways. For example, economic activity in one country results in a ripple effect that moves from one geographic region's economy to around the globe. Thus, domestic, international, and multinational corporations transcend international boundaries and create a more global society (Black, Gregersen, & Mendenhall, 1999; Tucker, Gullekson, & McCambridge, 2011). Yet, current political crises, cybertheft, protectionism, and increasing trade barriers have fed a growing nationalistic view (Deresky, 2018) that adversely impacts cross-cultural harmony. According to Bremmer (2014; 2018), we are now experiencing "guarded globalization" with widening divides. This is the reality our graduates will face in their new careers.

Now more than ever before, there is a need for educators to assure that students and future employees have the requisite global learning and mindset for career success (Cruz. 2010; Gutierrez & Bhandari, 2009; Hovland, 2009; Zernike, 2010). In fact, the Institute of International Education reminds us that "To succeed and prosper in a global economy and interconnected world, U.S. students need international knowledge, intercultural communications skills, and global perspectives (Institute of International Education, 2009a, 5). This is echoed by administrators, faculty, and students who recognize that building skills to successfully manage intercultural business interactions effectively is paramount to career success (Tuleja, 2006). Students entering the college of business can develop a foundation for global learning in the introduction to business class. Traditionally, this course provides students with an introduction to the world of business by investigating a wide array of issues and phenomena that business executives face while conducting their work. Overall goals for the course are to

introduce participants to the context of business in general, to discuss the challenges people face as they try to lead and navigate their organization(s), and to lay a foundation for personal growth and development in business-related studies. All of the issues encountered will appear again in more depth through a variety of core courses as students complete their business degree.

Changing current students' mindset from domestic to global can be a major challenge with this student body, especially when the majority of the participants have not been exposed to a variety of cultures. Yet, arguably, this is the perfect time to instill students' global awareness as they acclimate to a campus life that offers opportunity to interact with other cultures. Thus, this research seeks to determine whether the inclusion of global interventions, within the undergraduate introduction to business curriculum, positively enhances the student knowledge base specific to international business. The following section provides further details about the research study.

Research Study

This research addresses whether or not the inclusion of a global intervention in an undergraduate introduction to business course positively enhances students' self-reported knowledge of international business. To determine the extent of impact, the research examined self-reported 1) knowledge of international business practices, 2) importance of engagement between domestic and international students, and 3) identification and analytical abilities of ethical global business issues. Two sections of an introduction to business course (taught by the same instructor) were used to measure the effectiveness of the integrated cross-cultural business curriculum. The introduction

to business course included traditional topics for students to learn about a generalized overview of functional areas within business.

The Global Intervention

The global interventions were one-slide country spotlights about a strategically selected country. Slides were introduced at the end of select lectures; the total number of slides introduced during the course of the semester was 19. Each one-slide spotlight included information about the country's currency, economy type, imports, exports, and cultural value dimensions (i.e., high context vs. low context). In addition, the flag of the spotlighted country was also presented on each slide. The selection of the countries chosen to spotlight was a result of asking the college administration for a list of those countries represented the student body. In order to increase student engagement, students were encouraged to research (in class during the discussion) current ethical issues in the news for the spotlight county. The intervention created a brief opportunity to introduce students to the diverse culture in the college and assist them in understanding global perspectives.

The intervention utilized in this study were created to be purposeful, concise, and have immediate impact on the audience. A key benefit of this particular intervention is the ease in which new concepts can be introduced within existing curriculum. By being consistent in both format and topics throughout the semester, the intervention created a predictive repetition during class which allowed for better possible student knowledge recognition and retention. The brevity of the interventions made it easy for the instructor to include in the coursework.

Methodology

The research design was a quasi-experiment with a treatment group and control group. Students were enrolled in one of two sections of the course (section T or C). Students in section T were the experiment group; they were provided with the global intervention designed to increase student attitudes toward global understanding. Students enrolled in section C were the control group; they were not shown the one-slide country spotlights.

Measures

Undergraduate students enrolled in an introduction to business course were surveyed using Qualtrics. Measures were collected at the beginning (pre-) and end (post-) of the semester. (See Table 1: Means of Items by Group and Time.) Measures were matched by survey respondent to examine changes in self-reported attitudes and knowledge. Measures included self-reported items about:

- the general importance of international business education (3 items);

- comfortableness and importance of interacting with people from other countries (4 items); and

- perceived knowledge of international business topics (6 items).

All items were measured using a five-point, Likert-type scale (where 5 represented strongly agree and 1 represented strongly disagree).

Sample

The total population included 215 undergraduate students enrolled in one of two sections of an introduction to business course. After excluding responses with excessive missing data, the final samples included 170 respondents (79% response rate). The

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treatment group ($n = 84$) was primarily male (62%), between 18-21 years old (89%), and from the US (92%). Similarly, the control group ($n = 86$) was primarily male (64%), between 18-21 years old (93%), and from the US (97%). The first and second measure were deemed important, as with no real change, which created a baseline understanding to the importance of international business. Results suggest that learning about global business practices is important to the students themselves. In addition, we measured the extent to which students were comfortable in interacting with other students from around the globe. The high initial score (above 4.0) as reported by both groups indicated that there was no significant difference between groups and pre/post.

Data Analyses

Data was analyzed to test two hypotheses. The first hypothesis predicted that student knowledge of international business would increase after taking the course. Specifically:

H1: Student self-reported knowledge of international business will increase after taking an introduction to business course.

H1 was tested using dependent sample t tests to compare pre- and post-measures within both the treatment and the control group. **Table 1** provides the means for the pre-test and post-test measures by group.

The results of the dependent sample t tests found significant differences between the pre- and post-tests measures of knowledge of international business for both the treatment group and control group, $p < .05$. For the treatment group, the results found large, significant increases in students' knowledge of other countries' currencies ($t(83)= 5.53$, $d= 0.60$), economies ($t(83)= 7.15$, $d= 0.78$), imports ($t(83)= 8.67$, $d= 0.95$), exports ($t(83)= 9.27$, $d= 1.01$), cultural business practices ($t(83)= 10.57$, $d= 1.15$), and countries

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represented in the college ($t(83)$= 8.00, d= 0.87), $p < .001$. For the control group, the results found small to moderate, significant increases in students' knowledge of other countries' currencies ($t(85)$= 2.72, d= 0.29), imports ($t(85)$= 4.59, d= 0.49), exports ($t(84)$= 4.32, d= 0.47), cultural business practices ($t(85)$= 6.00, d= 0.65), and countries represented in the college ($t(83)$= 3.80, d= 0.41), $p < .01$. As expected, H1 is supported; student self-reported knowledge about international business increased for both the control group and the treatment group.

The second hypothesis predicted that gains knowledge of international business would be greater for the treatment group as compared to the control. Specifically:

H2: The inclusion of global interventions in an undergraduate introduction to business course positively enhances the student knowledge base specific to international business.

H2 was statistically tested by comparing the differences between the post-measures of treatment group and the control group using independent sample t tests. The results of the independent sample t tests found the average self-reported gains in knowledge for the treatment group as compared to the control group were moderately and significantly larger for knowledge of other countries' economies ($t(168)$= 2.88, d= 0.44), imports ($t(168)$= 3.05, d= 0.47), exports ($t(168)$= 3.06, d= 0.47), cultural business practices ($t(168)$= 3.12, d= 0.48), and countries represented in the college ($t(168)$= 2.52, d= 0.39), $p < .01$. As such, H2 is supported; student self-reported gains of knowledge about international business was larger for the treatment group as compared to the control group.

Discussion

The results suggest that changes need to be made in today's introduction to business courses to not only share with all of the students the various perspectives from around the globe, but to also send the message to our students from outside the United States that we are, in fact interested in their culture, their lives, and how they conduct business. Although both groups of students reported increased knowledge after taking the course, the inclusion of a brief intervention sharing simple characteristics of another country produced larger gains in students' self-reported knowledge of international business topics. Given the necessity of global awareness, the return-on-investment for instructors is noteworthy.

The data collected highlights the measurement of increased engagement in regard to cross-cultural education. Information as to the impact that the inclusion of a global themed curriculum can have on the importance of diversification, acceptance, and team work within the existing curriculum can also be measured. This intended use of easily inserted, in-lecture applications, and country-highlighted activities within curriculum may help students to broaden their global business knowledge.

Limitations and Future Study

While this study's population limits the generalizability of the study, it can be easily replicated to include a wide variety of participants in both educational and professional settings. The self-reporting of the data by the students is the main limitation of this study. Those who have completed the survey are subject to biases. However, former research concludes that self-reported data are useful for

understanding the participants' psychological experience and are not as strongly limited as we assume, because people often realistically perceive their social environment (Balzer & Sulsky, 1992; Funder, Kolar, & Blackman, 1995; Murphy, Jako, & Anhalt, 1992; Spector, 1994). The high-level of self-reporting of data in regard to the importance of international business suggests that students are coming into the classroom with inflated ideas of their current knowledge base. Future studies could include a test that records factual knowledge testing of the countries' data that was highlighted throughout the semester.

Another limitation of the study could be the possibility that the professor was more enthusiastic when introducing the intervention and, therefore, possibly impacted the students' positive response. Future studies could investigate whether lecture is a more reliable way to introduce international business into the undergraduate introduction to business curriculum in order to positively enhance students' global mindset. "Flipping the classroom" (the reversal of time allotment for lecture and homework) has become a common pedagogical tool for active learning (Brame, 2013; Berrett, 2012) and has largely replaced the standard format where the professor lectures and students take notes (Hughes, 2012). Various studies have supported significant learning gains using this method of instruction (Crouch and Mazur, 2001; Deslauriers et al., 2011; Hake, 1998). In fact, a preponderance of research favors an active-learning classroom environment over a lecture approach for enhanced student learning. Additional study could also include the inclusion of technology-based gaming within the undergraduate introduction to business curriculum to determine whether this technology positively enhances students' ability to increase their engagement in the classroom. These findings could raise the question whether global mindset can be

changed by introducing a mini-lecture coupled with the use of hands-on gaming during each class to introduce students to the cultures of international students on campus.

Table 1: Means of Items by Group and Time

Item	Treatment		Control	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Engagement between domestic and international students is important	4.38	4.46	4.48	4.37
Increasing my knowledge of international business practices is important	4.57	4.55	4.51	4.44
Identifying and analyzing ethics in international business is important	4.54	4.57	4.47	4.52
I am aware of the currencies of other countries	3.37	3.98*	3.20	3.50*
I am aware of the economies of other countries	3.15	3.89*	2.96	3.19
I am aware of the imports of other countries	2.98	4.02*	2.70	3.23*
I am aware of the exports of other countries	2.98	3.99*	2.76	3.26*
I am aware of the cultural business practices of other countries	2.87	4.15*	2.38	3.13*
I know all the countries in which the COB has students	2.08	3.12*	1.79	2.34*

* $p < 0.05$

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Factors that Influence a College Student's Choice of an Academic Major and Minor

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Eileen M. Stock
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Paul A. Stock received his PhD in Economic Education from Ohio University. He has been a college professor for over 20 years. His research specializes in macroeconomics. consumer behavior, and higher education. He is a U.S. Army veteran with 24 years of active duty as a field artillery officer.

Eileen M. Stock received her PhD in Statistical Science from Baylor University. She is currently employed as a Statistician by the U.S. Veterans Administration. Her research includes the study of service dogs to help military veterans with PTSD.

Abstract

This study examines the decision by undergraduate students at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor in Belton, Texas to choose an academic major and/or minor. A total of 386 students in the McLane College of Business were surveyed in this study. They were asked to provide the top five factors that influenced their decision of an academic major and minor. The survey also collected data on how frequently students changed their major or minor. The results of the study are also analyzed by demographic variants such as age, gender, academic major, academic minor, and class standing (i.e. freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior).

Global Learning in Short-Term Study Abroad: Assessing Business Students after Global Consulting Program

Mary Tucker
Ohio University

Katherine B Hartman
Ohio University

Colin Gabler
Thom Luce

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Abstract

Business schools are increasingly conducting study abroad programs as a way to build student knowledge and skills, enhance intercultural communication, expand global knowledge, and instill a multicultural awareness and appreciation for diversity. Given the increase in short-term study abroad programs and the belief that such programs

have practical benefits for students, assessing the learning is critical. Our analysis uncovers strong correlations among important learning outcomes. For example, students who demonstrated strong knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks demonstrated a strong ability to solve real-life problems in a global context. Likewise, students who demonstrated strong cultural diversity demonstrated strong drive and the ability to adopt a different perspective. We argue that the relationship among the former relationship requires a knowledge-centric focus while the latter requires an attitude-centric focus, and then explore implications of these relationships

Key Words: Short-Term Study Abroad, assessing learning, business students

Introduction

"To succeed and prosper in a global economy and interconnected world, U.S. students need international knowledge, intercultural communications skills, and global perspectives." (Institute of International Education, p. 5)

The global community is now a reality; the charge for educators is how to best prepare students and future employees for success (Gutierrez & Bhandari, 2009; Hovland, 2009; 2014). Consequently, business schools are increasingly conducting study abroad programs in an effort to develop international and cultural competencies as well as a general appreciation for diversity inside and outside the classroom (Mintzberg & Gosling, 2002).

The Institute of International Education (IEE, 2017) reports that 325,339 U.S. Students studied abroad for academic credit in 2015-2016; 20.9% of were business

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students. The majority of these study abroad programs (63 percent) were short-term (eight weeks or less). These programs are often promoted as a differentiator when interviewing for employment and career advancement. Indeed, IEE reports that study abroad contributes positively to required 21st century job skills and career success, including intrapersonal, cognitive, and interpersonal competencies (Farrugia & Sanger, 2017).

The increase in short-term abroad programs coupled with the presumed benefits requires an assessment tool to ensure that student growth is actually taking place. For example, according to Varela (2017), study abroad research has assessed students' cultural learning (Varela & Gatlin-Watts, 2014), changes in students' attitudes and affect (Gullekson, Tucker, Coombs, & Wright, 2011, Gullekson & Tucker, 2012) and how students acclimate to new cultures and customs (Savicki, 2010, Wood & St. Peters, 2014). The current paper extends these techniques and presents a post-trip guided reflection paper as a means to assess global learning. It is important to note how this study defined global learning and the next section details this performance metric.

Global Learning Definition and Dimensions

While assessing the Global Competiveness Program at Ohio University, we were guided by two key undergraduate objectives from the College of Business: 1) "our graduates will have competencies in socio-cultural skills relevant to the business profession," and 2) "our students will demonstrate the ability to critically analyze and engage complex, interdependent, global systems and to evaluate their implications for social and market contexts" (https://business.ohio.edu/academics/our-commitment-to-you/). We advance that this second objective, Global Learning, is particularly relevant to

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short-term study abroad programs. Derived from the AAC&U Global Learning VALUE (Rhodes, 2010), there are six performance dimensions measuring global learning:

1. *Cultural Self-Awareness*. Ability to understand one's own identity within a local and global community.

2. *Knowledge of Cultural Worldview Frameworks*. Ability to understand and analyze complex, overlapping worldwide social systems (e.g., cultural, economic, and political systems).

3. *Drive and Perspective Taking*. Ability to engage and learn from perspectives and experiences different from one's own and to understand how one's place in the world both informs and limits one's knowledge.

4. *Cultural Diversity*. Ability to recognize the origins and influences of cultural heritage as well as its limitations in providing all that one needs to know in the world.

5. *Personal and Social Responsibility*. Ability to recognize ethical responsibilities to society - locally, nationally, and globally within individual societies.

6. *Application of Knowledge to Global Contexts*. Ability to apply knowledge to real-life problem-solving methods that demonstrate a systematic understanding of different perspectives associated with complex challenges facing cultures and societies on the local and global levels.

These global learning objectives were developed for the short-term global consulting program, which is described in the following section.

Overview of College of Business Global Competiveness Program

The Global Competitiveness Program (GCP) is a short-term (2-3 week) international program in which Ohio University students conduct a consulting project abroad. Specifically, OU students work with host national students to complete a consulting project for a local company in one of seven countries: China, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, and Spain (countries may change year to year). The project is designed to be consistent with the cluster project all business majors complete at the home (Athens) campus in their sophomore year. The cluster is a problem-based holistic teaching approach where students apply cross-discipline concepts to solve real-world problems.

The GCP learning goals are:

- To apply your business training and skills learned at Ohio University to address an international business consulting problem
- To develop project management, team and interpersonal skills in a challenging environment
- To learn how to interact with clients and manage relationships with them
- To develop tolerance for ambiguity and adversity
- To gain new perspectives on conducting business in an international setting
- To develop an appreciation and respect for the country's culture
- To learn and practice proper business etiquette in the context of a different culture
- To learn to create meaningful and high-quality deliverables
- To have a great learning experience in a foreign country

Upon returning home, students complete a guided reflection paper (See Appendix A) that is used to assess their global learning from the GCP experience.

Methodology

Data were collected using evaluations of student reflection paper assignments after the study abroad experience. Variables were created using a six-point scale for each of the performance dimensions.

Measurement Instrument

Assessment development for the study abroad program followed AACSB recommendations for direct assessments. Specifically, assessments must be evidence of learning demonstrated at the individual level, which are then evaluated by a qualified assessor. To capture students' learning, the reflection paper assignment (See Appendix A) and corresponding rubric (See Appendix B) were developed. Students were also encouraged to keep a journal of their experiences during the program to facilitate in the final reflection. Reflection papers asked students to answer the following questions (using an essay format):

1. Describe what you learned about yourself through the GCP experience, including but not limited to your cultural self-awareness, your growth in knowledge of other cultures, and your ability to see things from different cultural perspectives. How do you think this experience will impact your behavior in the future both personally and professionally?

2. Based upon what you learned during your GCP context, identify three environmental and/or sociocultural factors (e.g., history, values, politics,

communication styles, economy, lifestyle, etc.) that were different in the international culture as compared to your native culture? How did these factors influence business operations and/or people living in this society?

3. Describe at least two specific examples in which you engaged in and learned from the perspectives and/or experiences of people from a culture different than you own. If any, how did these influence your abilities to (1) use multiple perspectives to assess situations, (2) understand how perspective impacts problem-solving and (3) recognize the limitations / biases of your own perspectives?

4. What did you learn about the impact of social institutions/systems (e.g., cultural, economic, and political systems) on solving business or societal issues? How do you now see your ethical responsibilities to society (locally, nationally, and globally)?

5. Discuss the intercultural challenges (team, local, and global perspectives) you experienced and how these were addressed. Assess how what you learned (in completing your GCP project) will help you going forward in your college experience and in your professional career?

6. Describe in detail the most meaningful experience (i.e., had the greatest impact on you as a person) that happened to you during the entire GCP program. What did you learn? How will it affect the way you behave or approach new experiences in the future?

Reflection papers were collected and organized by the Director of Assurance of Learning. The Director of the Global Consulting Program met individually with faculty members leading study abroad programs to emphasize the importance of Global Learning, to share the learning objective and corresponding performance dimensions,

and to plan the reflection paper assignment. Reflection papers were evaluated by a trained, independent assessor who was not a participant in the study abroad program.

Sample and Variables

The sample included students participating in one of thirteen short-term study abroad summer business consulting programs through Ohio University College of Business. Country destinations include cities in China, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, and Spain. Prior to the in-country experience, students took a semester-long course to learn about the country, language, culture, and the business consulting techniques. The length of the short-term study-abroad programs ranged from two weeks to four weeks. Each team of U.S. students partnered with university students in country to complete a consulting project with a local organization.

Two-hundred and thirty-six students participated in the programs either in summer 2016 (48%) or summer 2017 (52%). All students were undergraduates, including freshman (11%), sophomores (35%), juniors (34%), and seniors (19%). Student majors were primarily business and included accounting (13%), finance (19%), information systems / analytics (10%), international business (9%), management (7%), marketing (21%), sports (6%), and non-business (13%). After excluding students with missing data, the final sample used for analysis was 200 students.

Six variables were collected using a six-point scale ranging from below expectations (1) to outstanding (6). As expected, average performance ratings were above expectations: cultural self-awareness (M= 5.23, SD= 0.94), knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks (M= 5.26, SD= 0.86), drive and perspective taking (M= 4.98, SD= 0.92), cultural diversity (M= 4.90, SD= 1.07), personal and social responsibility (M= 4.62, SD= 1.54), and application of knowledge to global contexts (M= 5.30, SD= 0.83).

Results

We implement correlation analysis and one-sample *t* tests to determine the impact of our global consulting program on the learning outcomes. Because major, class rank, and program year provided no significant differences among the groups, we report results for the full sample. The six variables are noted as self-awareness, knowledge, perspective, diversity, responsibility, and application.

One-Sample *t* Tests

One-sample *t* Tests were employed to determine whether or not the sample means for each of the six performance dimensions differed significantly from a hypothesized mean (μ). Based on exceptions for student achievement of learning, the hypothesized mean for each of the six variables was 5.00 (i.e., meets expectations). There were no significant differences between the hypothesized mean and the mean of perspective and the mean of diversity, $p > .05$. Student performance for three variables significantly exceeded the hypothesized mean: self-awareness, knowledge, and application, $p < .01$. Student performance for responsibility was significantly less than hypothesized, $p < .01$. Table 1 provides the results of the six one-sample *t* tests.

Table 1: One-Sample *t* Test Results for Global Learning Performance Dimensions

Measure	μ	*M*	*SD*	*df*	*t*
Self-Awareness	5.00	5.23	0.94	199	3.47*
Knowledge	5.00	5.26	0.86	199	4.29*
Perspective	5.00	4.98	0.92	*ns*	*ns*

Diversity	5.00	4.90	1.07	*ns*	*ns*
Responsibility	5.00	4.62	1.54	199	-3.54*
Application	5.00	5.30	0.83	199	5.05*

* *p* < .01

Correlations

Next we use Pearson correlation analysis to determine the strength of the relationships among the six performance dimensions. As expected, all correlation coefficients were positive, *p* < .01. The strongest correlation was between diversity and perspective (r(200)= .66); the weakest correlation coefficient was between knowledge and responsibility (r(200) = .48). Table 2 provides the correlation matrix.

Table 2: Correlations Between Global Learning Performance Dimensions

Measure	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5
1. Self-Awareness	5.23	0.94	-				
2. Knowledge	5.26	0.86	.49*	-			
3. Perspective	4.98	0.92	.52*	.51*	-		
4. Diversity	4.90	1.07	.57*	.52*	.66*	-	
5. Responsibility	4.62	1.54	.50*	.48*	.50*	.57*	-
6. Application	5.30	0.83	.61*	.65*	.60*	.57*	.60*

* *p* < .01

Discussion

Given the rise in study abroad programs and the need for higher education to be held accountable to learning outcomes, assessment of student achievement of learning from study abroad education is paramount. One method for meaningful, authentic assessment is to use evaluations of semi-structured reflection papers that allow students an opportunity to demonstrate achievement of learning goals. Using AAC&U's Global Learning VALUE rubric (Rhodes, 2010), programs may assess student achievement of

abilities related to cultural awareness, cultural self-awareness, knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks, drive and perspective taking, cultural diversity, personal and social responsibility, and application of knowledge to global contexts.

The results of the one-sample *t* tests suggest that students met expectations of learning for drive and perspective-taking and for cultural diversity, and even exceeded expectations for cultural self-awareness, knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks, and application of knowledge to global contexts. However, students did not achieve learning expectations for personal and social responsibility. We argue that real growth in personal and social responsibility may require more time. Therefore, these outcomes may see stronger influence from a long-term study abroad program, allowing more time to adequately adjust, develop, and mature to the cultural environments.

The results of the correlation analysis suggest strong relationships among related learning outcomes. For example, students who were able to understand complex worldwide social systems demonstrated a strong ability to apply knowledge to real-life problems. Likewise, students who could recognize the origins and influences of cultural heritage were better suited to engage and learn from perspectives and experiences different from their own. These findings may suggest a difference between knowledge-centric and attitude-centric learning outcomes.

Conclusion

The business world is increasingly a global marketplace, and therefore, for universities it is no longer a question of "Are there benefits to studying abroad?" Instead the question is "What is the optimal learning potential from a study abroad program?" This paper tackles this question in two ways. First, we introduce an assessment tool that could be adapted to many different contexts to uncover student

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growth. Second, we reveal concrete implications for colleges and faculty looking to integrate global learning into their curriculum. We find that short-term study abroad programs develop some very important skills among undergraduate students. Specifically, through just a few weeks, these students exhibited self-awareness, knowledge, and application of this knowledge in a global context. Further, students seemed to achieve high growth across several related outcomes, which shows the additive benefits to these programs. However, we also note areas where 2-4 weeks was simply not enough time or exposure to truly influence student outcomes.

Our findings suggest that significant development of personal and social responsibility require a longer-term program. Perhaps the final takeaway is that there is no "one-size-fits-all" strategy for study abroad programs, which represents an important area of future research for pedagogical research. Scholars should continue to investigate the advantages and disadvantages to all lengths of study abroad programs. Just as there is no perfect program, there is no perfect student to experience it. There is, however, the perfect program for every student, which represents a viable future research agenda.

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APPENDIX A: GCP Reflection Paper Assignment (with Learning Objectives Noted)

It is strongly recommended that you keep a journal of your experiences while you are abroad. This information will assist you when completing the reflection paper.

Each student must complete a reflection paper that addresses the issues listed below. Reflections files will be posted to Turnitin on the GCP Blackboard **and** emailed to your country faculty. Name your file using your last name and your site location, for example: Taylor Jones Reflection Paper. Each topic discussion should have 2-3 well-developed paragraphs. The paper should be 12-point font and single spaced with double spacing between paragraphs. Typical length is 4-5 pages.

1. Describe what you learned about yourself through the GCP experience, including but not limited to your cultural self-awareness, your growth in knowledge of other cultures, and your ability to see things from different cultural perspectives. How do you think this experience will impact your behavior in the future both personally and professionally? (LO #1: Cultural Self-Awareness)

2. Based upon what you learned during your GCP context, identify three environmental and/or sociocultural factors (e.g., history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, lifestyle, etc.) that were different in the international culture as compared to your native culture? How did these factors

influence business operations and/or people living in this society? (LO #2: Knowledge)

3. Describe at least two specific examples in which you engaged in and learned from the perspectives and/or experiences of people from a culture different than you own. If any, how did these influence your abilities to (1) use multiple perspectives to assess situations, (2) understand how perspective impacts problem-solving, and (3) recognize the limitations / biases of your own perspectives? (LO #3: Perspective Taking)

4. What did you learn about the impact of social institutions/systems (e.g., cultural, economic, and political systems) on solving business or societal issues? How do you now see your ethical responsibilities to society (locally, nationally, and globally)? (LO #4: Personal & Social Responsibility)

5. Discuss the intercultural challenges (team, local, and global perspectives) you experienced and how these were addressed. Assess how what you learned (in completing your GCP project) will help you going forward in your college experience and in your professional career? (LO#5: Application)

6. Describe in detail the most meaningful experience (i.e., had the greatest impact on you as a person) that happened to you during the entire GCP program. What did you learn? How will it affect the way you behave or approach new experiences in the future?

7. What could have better prepared you for your project, traveling and cultural experiences?

APPENDIX B: Global Learning Rubric

Evaluation Criterion	Below Expectations (Rating 0 or 1)	Meets Expectations (Rating 2 or 3)	Exceeds Expectations (Rating 4 or 5)	Outstanding (Rating 6)
Cultural self-awareness	Shows minimal awareness of own cultural rules and biases (even those shared with own cultural group(s)) (e.g. uncomfortable with identifying possible cultural differences with others.)	Identifies own cultural rules and biases (e.g. with a strong preference for those rules shared with own cultural group and seeks the same in others.)	Recognizes new perspectives about own cultural rules and biases (e.g. not looking for sameness; comfortable with the complexities that new perspectives offer.)	Articulates insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g. seeking complexity; aware of how her/his experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description.)
Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks	Demonstrates surface understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.	Demonstrates partial understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.	Demonstrates adequate understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.	Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, ommunication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.
Drive and Perspective Taking Motivated to engage and learn from perspectives and experiences different from one's own and to understand how one's place in the world both informs and limits one's	Fails to address perspectives/experiences different from one's own OR recognizes different perspectives yet maintains a value preference for own perspective without understanding or critical analysis.	Identifies and explains perspectives/experiences different from one's own yet fails to demonstrate an understanding about how one's own position informs or limits knowledge	Identifies, explains, and synthesizes perspectives/experiences different from one's own and demonstrates a basic understanding about how one's own position informs or limits knowledge	Identifies, evaluates, and applies perspectives/experiences different from one's own to complex subjects and demonstrates a comprehensive understanding about how one's own position informs or limits knowledge even in

knowledge				the face of multiple and even conflicting positions
Cultural Diversity and Strategy Ability to recognize the origins and influences of one's own cultural heritage as well as its limitations in providing all that one needs to know in the world	Fails to recognize the origins and influences of one's own cultural heritage OR describes the experiences of others primarily through one cultural perspective; demonstrates very limited openness to varied cultures and worldviews.	Explains and connects two or more cultures with some acknowledgement of power structures; demonstrates limited yet respectful interaction with varied cultures and worldviews.	Analyzes connections between the worldviews, power structures, and experiences of multiple cultures, incorporating an understanding of respectful interactions with other cultures.	Adapts and applies a deep understanding of multiple worldviews, experiences, and power structures while initiating meaningful interaction with other cultures to address significant global problems.
Personal and Social Responsibility Ability to recognize one's ethical responsibilities to society - locally, nationally, and globally within individual societies	Fails to recognize one's ethical responsibilities to a society OR identifies only basic ethical dimensions of some local or national decisions that have global impact.	Explains the ethical, social, and environmental consequences of local and national decisions on global systems yet does not address individuals' ethical responsibilities	Analyzes the ethical, social, and environmental consequences of global systems and identifies a range of actions informed by one's sense of personal and civic responsibility.	Identifies informed and responsible action to address ethical, social, and environmental challenges in global systems and evaluates the local and broader consequences of individual and collective interventions.
Application of Knowledge to Global Contexts Ability to apply knowledge to real-life problem-solving that demonstrates a systemic understanding of different perspectives associated with challenges facing	Fails to define global challenges OR defines global challenges in basic ways using a single perspective.	Formulates practical yet simplistic solutions to global challenges that use only one or two disciplinary perspectives (such as cultural, historical, and scientific); does not effectively consider either local or global	Formulates practical and comprehensive solutions to global challenges that are appropriate to contexts using multiple disciplinary perspectives (such as cultural, historical, and scientific); effectively considers local or global perspectives.	Formulates practical and sophisticated solutions to global challenges that are appropriate to contexts using interdisciplinary perspectives; effectively considers local and global perspectives.

cultures and societies on the local and global levels		perspectives.		

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Human Resource Managers' Perceptions of Workers with Learning Disabilities

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Abstract

In this qualitative research, a phenomenological research method design utilizes a cross-sectional industry approach investigating information gleaned from human resource professionals' views on the impact of individuals with learning disabilities in public and private work environments in Nassau, New Providence Bahamas. Learning disabilities are a global phenomenon, and due to globalization, organizations are being forced to interact with individuals from diverse cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds more than ever before. Furthermore, for an organization to accomplish success, leadership is crucial to implementing and promoting diversity policies to attain disability equality with efficient and effective job performance. To retrieve this information, in-depth interviews with open-ended questions utilize data collection from ten (10) senior human resource professionals with a minimum of ten (10) years of experience in the workforce. Overall the findings of this study shed light on the phenomenon of learning disabled workers in Bahamian society from human resource managers' emic perspective.

Keywords: human resource management, learning disabilities, leadership, diversity, The Bahamas, workforce

Introduction

Life in organizations is packed with happenings that can be interpreted in a number of ways (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Due to the globalization, organizations cross-culturally are being forced to interact with individuals from diverse cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds more than ever before (Sam & Berry, 2010). According to Schein (2006), leadership is a critical variable in defining success or failure of organizations and every leader has a responsibility to make sure that when the organization changes it not disruptive (Preziosi, 2009). Indeed, companies' public and private sectors are recognizing that diverse employee backgrounds enhance competitiveness in the global economy (Ball, Monaco, Schmeling, Schartz, & Blanck, 2005).

An illustration of a particular group growing in the work environment are employees with learning disabilities (LDs) and may be considered a widespread phenomenon in modern societies. Kulkarni and Gopakumar (2014) reported statistics from International Labor Organization (ILO) on how a tenth of the world population or 650 million people, live with a disability and 470 million are of working age. However, learning disabled groups remain excluded from organizations, underutilized, or understudied in terms of their career management, because, given an enabling environment, one's disability becomes secondary to ability of the focal employee (Ibid, 2014). Also, managing careers for those with a disability may seem tougher than for their counterparts without a disability (Ibid, 2014). Creating a work culture of inclusiveness and diversity comes down to focus and persistence of the human resources management department (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Kulkarni, Boehm, & Basu, 2016) and top management's leadership (Boehm & Dwertmann, 2015).

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Leadership

Leadership has been a topic of interest, speculation, and a highly valued commodity for a long time (Yukl, 2013; Northouse, 2010; Ivanevich, Matteson and Konopaske, 2018). Yukl (2013) mentions that leadership is of great importance since it defines direction regarding traits; influences interactions, behaviors, and role relationships; and identifies the occupation of an administrative position. Furthermore, Yukl (2013) alludes understanding leadership as a shared process in groups, teams, and organizations and defines what is effective or ineffective in the organization (p. 2).

Ivanevich, Matteson and Konopaske (2018) state how leadership encompasses three crucial variables: the people who are led, the task that people are performing, and the environment in which the people exist (p.402). Northouse (2010) postulates how leadership encompasses particular central components: 1) leadership is a process 2) leadership involves influence 3) leadership occurs in groups, and 4) leadership involves common goal (p.3). Moreover, Northouse (2010) theorizes that these components help defined leadership.

Conversely, Silva (2016) discusses the concept of leadership as difficult because it is evolving and encompasses an influence interaction process occurring in a given context whereby some individuals accept someone as their leader to attain common goals. With this in mind, Gardner, Lowe, Moss, Mahoney, and Cogliser (2010) reveal how leadership resurged, while behavioral science scholars introduced popular contemporary leadership theories. For instance, leader-member exchange (LMX) (Dansereau, Graen and Haga, 1975; Graen and Cashman, 1975; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) transformational leadership (McGregor, 1978; Bass, 1985), charismatic leadership (Conger and Kanungo, 1987; House, 1977; House and Aditya, 1997), spiritual leadership

(Fry, 2003), and servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) which emphasize leadership in worldwide organizations, are among these contemporaries.

According to Ivancevich, Matteson, and Konopaske (2018) leadership must be practical and not generalized in a global context. In comparison, Carroll, Levy, and Richmond (2008) state how leadership-as-practice (LAP) focuses on the everyday practice of leadership including its moral, emotional, and relational aspects, rather than its rational, objective, and technical issues. Raelin (2011) eruditely explains how leadership-as-practice concerns less about what one person thinks or does and is more concerned about what people may accomplish together.

It is paramount that leaders are concerned with what is most meaningful for people, and they try to get people to agree about important things to be done (Yukl, 2013, p.6). Schein (2006) declares how leadership is a critical variable in defining success or failure of organizations. Leaders have the impact on the lives of followers and the fate of organizations; depending on how they use their power, preferably wisely and effectively, as the determining factor for integrity or ethics (Yukl, 2013).

Likewise, Hughes, Ginnett, and Curphy (2009) indicate how leaders face dilemmas that require choices competing for sets of values and priorities. However, effective leaders recognize and are confronted with a commitment to do what is right or ethical (p.132). Also, Hughes et al. (2009) highlight how leaders should internalize a strong set of ethics, principles of right conduct or a system of values (p.133). Winston and Patterson (2006) further posit how leaders must exemplify ethical means by seeking the greater good of the follower(s) in the process of action steps, such as personal, emotional and physical development. Vis-à-vis, the leader also achieves this same state as a leader exemplifies personal growth, renewal, regeneration, and increased stamina (mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual) through the leader-follower interactions

(Ibid, 2006, p.7). Leadership has been studied in a variety of contexts in private and public sectors as well as social organizations, ranging from the national, military, business (Yukl, 2013).

Learning Disabilities

Büttner and Hasselhorn (2011) report learning disabilities (LDs) are a widespread phenomenon in modern societies whereby reading, writing, and arithmetic are necessary skills in everyday life. According to Zhao, Zhang, and Yu (2008), the related stigma of learning disabilities has a profound impact on individuals which leads to possible discrimination and rejection during their social interactions.

Büttner and Hasselhorn (2011) cite the most prominent assumption about causes of LDs is that some individuals have biological based cognitive deficits that hinder their performance. However, for a number of reasons, it is difficult to identify those causes empirically. Respective literature identifies cognitive deficits as closely associated with specific LDs while it remains unclear whether the identified cognitive deficits are causal factors or a mere consequence or even a covariate of the disability (Ibid, 2011).

Penney (2018) defines LDs concerning deficits in various psychological processes that affect certain areas of academic achievements, such as working memory and attention. Additionally, Penney (2018) adds how learning disabilities are seen as being neurological disorders in various mental processes that make it challenging to acquire specific skills, notably in reading and mathematics. However, Penney (2018) discusses how the terms "disorder" and "disability" are inept and misinforming.

A point often overlooked, Klassen, Neufeld, and Munro (2005) assert how operational definitions of learning disabilities are undergoing a slow but critical shift in North America. Correspondingly, Fletcher, Coulter, Reschly, and Vaughn (2004) and

Barrera, (2006) both reveal an increasing concern expressed in the United States about common definitions and procedures for identifying students with learning disabilities. Barrera (2006) also mentions, from the inception of Public Law 94-142 through its current version with Disabilities Education Improvement Act 2004, provoking disagreements.

 Kozey and Siegel (2008) disclose how in the USA, policy definition and process of LD identification historically has been highly politicized and heavily regulated. Furthermore, there are many attempts to refine and revise the definition (Barrera, 2006). Interestedly, cross-culturally, Canadian D'Intino (2017) specifies how the meaning of LD varies according to province and territory and the lacks a consistently applied definition of LDs in Canada. According to Raja and Kumar (2011), this phenomenon is found across all ages and in all socio-economic classes, affecting individuals differently at different stages of life from early childhood, elementary school years, adolescence and on into adulthood.

Important to realize, the causes of LDs are complex and not well understood which cultivates confusion regarding the origins of LDs (Raja and Kumar, 2011). In comparison, Sparks and Lovett (2009) substantiate that the definitions of LDs offered by many professional associations do not include any guidance concerning assessment or classification criteria at the level of detail useful for diagnosticians. However, Rao (2005) discovers that learning disabilities are created by educational, physiological, psychological or environmental factors. Barber (2014) triangulates what LDs are not: a mental illness; a result of sin, or a sign that the person is holy or saintly; nor catching; and is not something to be feared. In detail, Sparks and Lovett (2009) specify how the rise in learners with learning disabilities pursuing postsecondary education rose compared to other disability groups.

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Furthermore, Sparks and Lovett (2009) present how, in 2000, more than 40% of first-year college students with disabilities had a diagnosis of either a LD or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. Bellanca and Pote (2013) signify and cite how researchers found that children with ADHD, depression, and LDs are stigmatized which lowers peer status of those without such difficulties.

All and all, most of the LD literature focuses on children, but it establishes that LDs affect individuals throughout their life, and in some cases, some symptoms become worse over time (Luria, Kalish, & Weinstein, 2014). Luria, et al. (2014) concludes that LDs are relevant to personal and organizational psychology because almost one-fifth of employees may have LDs that may influence their performance.

Learning Disabilities in the Work Environment

Salge (2018) reports that U. S. Census Bureau, in 2015, estimated approximately 12.6% of the total non-institutionalized American population reported having some disability. According to Studer, Lichtenauer, Wyder, and Parpan-Blaser (2017), populace with disabilities in the work or employment environment have several meanings: engaging in meaningful activity, experiencing self-affirmation and competence, establishing social contacts, having a structured daily routine, and strengthening social status (as cited in, Kradorff & Ohlbrecht, 2010). Interesting, Salge (2018) highlights how Congress enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990 to protect the rights of people with disabilities and to prevent discrimination. Wooten and James (2005) mention because of the circumstances of the ADA signed by Bush, organizations grapple with creating a work environment that accommodates the needs of their employees with disabilities while leveraging their talents and skills. The ADA and Title I concerns people with disabilities in the workplace while preventing

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employers from discriminating against individuals with disabilities in all areas of employment; e.g., hiring, promoting, termination, compensation, training, and employee benefits (Salge, 2018).

Employment and disability support policies have done little to rectify the under-representation in mainstream workforces of disabled people (Hemphill & Kulik, 2017). Another critical point, as long as the individual with a disability is qualified and proficient during the hiring situation, the employer cannot ask job applicants if they have a disability or ask questions about the nature or severity of a disability (Salge, 2018).

Gutierrez (2014) and Wehman (2011) both postulate that employment presents many benefits for adults with LDs because it enhances communication, socialization, academics, physical health, and community skills and promotes the economic well-being of people with disabilities. To emphasize, Wehman (2011) alludes how employment increases chances for monetary stability and self-sufficiency for workers with disabilities. Conversely, Gutierrez (2014) and Barnow (2008) both noted that while employment rates for people with disabilities remain low, it is important to recognize that particular barriers and challenges exist for adults with LDs in the workforce.

Kulkarni and Gopakumar (2014) provide that globally, people with disabilities (PWD) continue to be underemployed as compared to their counterparts without a disability, whereby many experience a destitute living. As an illustration, in the USA about 20% of those with disabilities obtain fulltime work as compared with about 50% in the general population exhibiting a financial gap of $10,500 of the median earnings (Ibid, 2014).   In another illustration, the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (2015) in the Bahamas report more than 10,000 persons with disabilities in the last census. However, the organization also mentions that by applying the WHO's

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formula, approximately 35,000 to 45,000 persons in The Bahamas live with a disability (National Commission for Persons with Disabilities, 2015).

Indeed, LDs may affect and influence an individual's life negatively. However, Luria, Kalish and Weinstein (2014), Love (2011), and Landin (2017) all imply how LDs affect successful managers and company founders of our time. For instance, Steve Jobs (Apple), Henry Ford (Ford Motor Company), John Chambers (Cisco Systems), Ted Turner (Turner Broadcasting), Bill Hewlett (Hewlett Packard), Richard Branson (Virgin Group), and Charles Schwab (Charles Schwab Corporation) all succeeded in their traditional business and/or education and went on to become corporate leaders despite their learning differences.

Children with ADHD, depression, and LDs are stigmatized, which lowers peer status of those without such difficulties. All and all, much LD literature focuses on children, but it has established that LDs affect individuals throughout their life. And, in some cases, some symptoms become worse over time (Luria, Kalish, & Weinstein, 2014). Luria et al. (2014) conclude how LDs are relevant to personal and organizational psychology since almost one-fifth of employees may have some LD that may influence their performance.

Diversity

According to Jones and George (2008), one of the most critical management issues to merge over the last 30 years has been increased workforce diversity (p.171). Moreover, Jones and George (2008) and Yukl (2013) both define diversity as dissimilarities or differences in race, age, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, education, experience, physical appearance, capabilities/disabilities.

Perhaps a most inclusive definition by Arrow, McGrath, and Berdahl (2000) reveals the following:

> Members of groups could be diverse on a broad assortment of attributes, including knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs); values, beliefs, and attitudes (VBAs); personality, cognitive and behavioral styles (PCBs); and demographic attributes such as sex, age, race, religion, and ethnicity, plus attributes that indicate a person's standing or role in a particular social context, for instance, status, immigrant versus native-born, or reputation in a professional community (p.76).

Yukl (2013) adds how diversity has increased in the USA and Europe (p.376), and it raises important ethical and social responsibility issues (p.171). Moreover, in the last decade, diversity has increasingly been seen as including employees with different forms of disabilities (Ruggeri-Stevens and Goodwin, 2007).

Everyone is unique; however, managers forget that they need to recognize the individual differences in their employees as they capitalize on workers' unique strengths (p.45). Robbins and Judge (2018) categorize diversity into two levels. The first is surface-level diversity, defined as the differences in easily perceived characteristics such as gender, race, ethnicity, age or visible disability. Deep-level diversity is defined as differences in values, personality, and work preferences that become progressively important for determining similarity as people get to know one another (p.46). Furthermore, Robbins and Judge (2018) differentiate how surface-level diversity assists with activating stereotypes and assumptions about others from various backgrounds. Deep-level diversity focuses on sharing essential characteristics rather than concerning demographic differences (Ibid, p.46).

According to Green, López, Wysocki, and Kepner (2002), diversity is beneficial to both associates and employers, because even though associates remain reliant in the workplace, respecting differences can increase productivity thus helping to reduce

lawsuits and improve marketing opportunities, recruitment, creativity, and business image (Green et al., 2002). Also, Roberson, (2006) excoriates how organizations in the 21st century realize that demographic workforce changes effectively and efficiently manage because it affects organizational functioning and competitiveness.

Indeed, diversity is beneficial. In contrast, Green, et al (2002) reveals challenges: managing diversity is more than merely acknowledging differences in people, but it involves recognizing the value of differences, combating discrimination, and promoting generality. Additionally, Vega and Colón-Berlingeri (2016) also conjecture how workforce diversity should not be based exclusively on achieving representation of different groups, but the value of integration and contribution of those from different backgrounds, including those from the majority culture, in the quest to succeed.

Leading Diversity through Innovation

Eagly and Chin (2010) mention how there are many processes through which diversity can affect leadership. Indeed, diversity challenges and opportunities impact all nations around the world to one extent or another (Visagie, Linde, & Havenga, 2011). Winston and Patterson (2006) state that to lead diverse followers one must recognize the diversity of the follower(s) by achieving the unity of shared values and directions without destroying the uniqueness of the person. By the leader utilizing innovative and flexible means, such as education, training, support, and protection, he/she can provide each follower with the necessities within the reason and scope of the organization's resources and accommodations will enhance the organization's objectives as well as the growth of the follower (Winston & Patterson, 2006).

Visagie et al. (2011) similarly states being successful in today's market, companies need a competent, flexible and dedicated workforce, flexible and innovative

management, and the capability to hold on to developed talent. As a result, Dreachlin (2007) indicates how a leader's skills are tested at a deep and personal level in this new era of diversity management. Hesselbein and Goldsmith (2009) establish that diversity has a direct connection to innovation which leads to the creation of new wealth (p.329). Innovation is considered the cornerstone of continual growth and sustainable competitive advantage in large global firms (Mors, 2010).

Tremblay (2010) signifies that to create a work culture of inclusiveness and diversity, leaders need to follow five steps:

> (a) communicate the importance of diversity; (b) disseminate accountability and responsibility among senior and middle managers throughout the organization; (c) mandate inclusive hiring practices; (d) advocate respect through sensitivity training and mission statements; and (e) value, recognize, and reward contributions (p.36).

Uniquely, Andriopoulos and Lewis (2010) claim that diversity increases the breadth of capabilities and experiences within a group, thus facilitating idea exchange that encourages further individual expression.

Leadership Role of Human Resources Management

Jin, Lee, and Lee, (2017) reveal how rapidly increasing diversity in the US workforce has prompted a need for public and private sector organizations to acknowledge diversity management in their human resource management practices. Moreover, Jin, et al (2017) posits how the involvement of managers and team leaders is vital for diversity management efforts to be active and further promote an inclusive

organizational climate. Human resource managers must be actively involved in managing diversity issues since they determine and oversee the details of practice implementation.

Overall, Bebbington and Özbilgin (2013) emphasize how effective leadership and management counter challenges and achieve disability equality. Managing and valuing diversity is a critical component for effective people management, which can improve workplace productivity (Kulkarni & Gopakumar, 2014). Promoting diversity comes down to focus and persistence of the human resource departments (Bolman and Deal, 2017) and top management leadership (Boehm and Dwertmann, 2015).

Furthermore, Boehm and Dwertmann (2015) explain how top managers are responsible for strategic decisions that affect the direction, operations, and performance of the whole company. In the context of disabilities, inclusive HR practices must exemplify flexibility and adaptation to particular needs (Ibid, 2015). Also, when leaders create a culture where organizational members are encouraged and rewarded for thinking systematically, the organization effectiveness rises (Wooten & James, 2008). Visagie, et al (2011) surmises that to achieve objectives, a company needs a talented HR department with vibrant, top management leadership so as to accomplished particular corporate goals.

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Research Question

Padgett (2017) and Patton (2015) both posit how qualitative research questions pave the way for qualitative study. Padgett (2017) mentions how qualitative research questions assume two forms: central and associated sub questions. Agee (2009) and Padgett (2017) both imply how the purpose of qualitative research questions articulate what a desired researcher seeks to represent from the complex worlds of respondents in a holistic, grounded manner. To demonstrate, Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, and Ormston (2013) list how research questions need to meet a number of requirements:

> clear, intelligible and unambiguous; focused, but not too narrow; capable of being researched through data collection; not too abstract, or questions which require the application of philosophy rather than of data; relevant and useful, whether to policy, practice or the development of social theory; informed by and connected to existing research or theory, but with the potential to make an original contribution or to fill a gap; feasible, given the resources available; be of at least some interest to the researcher (p.48).

Important to realize, a qualitative research question paves the way for a qualitative study (Padgett, 2017, p.60). In conclusion our research question becomes: How do human resource professionals in the Bahamas view workers with learning disabilities in the work place?

Methodology

Corbin and Strauss (2015) defend qualitative research whereby the "researcher not only collects and interprets their research", but they are part of the research project as they keep an "open and flexible design" (p. 4). Patton (2015), Padgett (2017), and Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls and Ormston (2013) reveal qualitative findings are based on three kinds of data: in-depth interviews; direct observation; and written communications. The qualitative design chosen is the phenomenological approach. Moustakas (1994) indicates that the phenomenological approach is concerned with ideas and essences (p.46). Likewise, Patton (2015) stated how phenomenology aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences (p.115).

The chosen method for data collection is in-depth interviews which Moustakas (1994) explains as phenomenological interviews involving an informal, interactive process that utilizes open-ended comments and questions (p.114). An in-depth interview is ideal for profoundly exploring respondents holistically (Guion, Diehl, and McDonald, 2001) and (Patton, 2015). Similarly, Creswell and Creswell (2018) indicate how in-depth interviews are exceptional for intensely exploring the interviewee's holistic understanding of their perspective because as Patton (2015) specified, it is suitable for investigative analysis.

This qualitative research also seeks to provide *praxis*, since "it is knowledge that is infused with human organizations and human interest, as represented in the situation under study," (Evered and Louis, 2001, p. 390). The implications of learning disabilities within the workplace are often infused and not directly or separately identified, as is the case of this research.

Population and Sample

Cozby and Bates (2018) disclose particular APA ethics codes to follow that actively promote ethical practice while conceptualizing, planning, executing and evaluating research (pp.49-50). Furthermore, Cozby and Bates (2018) posit how ethical principles support and nurture healthy sciences (p.50).

The selected participants in this research are senior human resource professionals (HRPs) who have worked in human resources for at least ten (10) years in Nassau, New Providence, Bahamas. However, before the study commences, Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Cozby and Bates (2018) both expound on how a researcher gains permission from the gatekeepers, the individuals who give access and permit to them to conduct research. Permission is obtained through invitation to department heads, open calling, social media, newspaper classified ads, and flyers posted on bulletins that an experimental research design is commencing, and meant to attract

particular HRPs. Moreover, Cozby and Bates (2018) highlight that the HRPs are presented with a detailed consent form outlining study parameters and authorizing participation following the APA five ethics principles. Upon receiving written consent, the study commenced and the restricted sample of (10) ten respondents generate this in-depth information utilizing the phenomenological approach.

Data Collection

The data collection begins by collecting information through unstructured or semi-structured observations and interviews. Padgett (2017) alludes to basic types of interviews, observation and documents. However, interviews are the linchpin of success for qualitative studies. Moustakas (1994) specifies when preparing a phenomenological study, the researcher must review professional and research literature connected with the research topic by assessing prior relevant studies so as to distinguish their designs, methodologies, and findings from the own investigator's study to indicate new knowledge (p.111).

For example, finding an HRP addressing how learning disabilities (LDs) in particular are increasing in the workforce and how the HRP must strategize to diversify, accommodate, and include such in the job culture. The interviewer prepared

an interview guide with a list of open-ended questions to be included in the course of

the interviews. The proposed open questions are:

1)   What are your views on learning disabilities?

2)   Have you ever encountered any employee with a learning disability (ies)?

3)   Do you believe individuals with a learning disability can add to the diversity

of thought that brings a fresh perspective and innovation to the workplace? If so can

you give me an example of a situation in the workplace?

4)   Do you believe an individual with a learning disability could be a workplace

leader?

5)   What accommodations have been incorporated into the workplace to

facilitate the productivity of persons with a learning disability?

6)   As a senior HR professional, what measures can be implemented to improve

the HRP's industry knowledge of LDs in the Bahamian workforce?

According to Patton (2015) the researcher is the instrument in the study, and

importantly Guion, Diehl, and McDonald (2001) clarified how the interviewer must be

open-minded, flexible and responsive, patient, observant, and a good listener. Padgett

(2017) postulates a good interviewer must encourage participants to speak without

interruptions (p.109). Moustakas (1994) indicates that the researcher should provide the

participants with information and instructions to help the participants gain an

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understanding of the subject under study (p.103). Additionally, while conducting in-depth interviews, the interviewer will record responses only by the consent of the interviewee along with notes written in a secured notebook.

Padgett (2017) and Patton (2017) both recommended debriefing time after each sitting. All data retrieved from the tape recording was transcribed on a computer via Bluetooth, SD card, or USB drive. The names of the interviewees are not disclosed during the tape-recorded interview, but rather have been coded by the researcher. The method selected a cross-sectional or one point in data collection due to time and inexpensiveness (Cozby and Bates, 2018).

Interviews occurred during one week of data collection with ten respondents consisting of nine females and one male participated in this qualitative study on improving awareness of disabilities in the Bahamas workforce. Table 1 below identifies respondents' characteristics.

Table 1. Respondents Characteristics

Number of Respondents	Minimum of Years	Type of Industry	Gender
1	10	Private	Female
2	25	Private	Female
3	20	Public Service	Female
4	15	Public Service	Female

5	13	Private	Female
6	20	Private	Female
7	35	Quasi-Government	Female
8	25	Quasi-Government	Male
9	15	Private	Female
10	35	Quasi-Government	Female

Most of the interviews took place at the prospective respondent's place of employment, lasting between 15 and 30 minutes. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. Questions were informal, open-ended and focused on experiences from actual daily life situations. The interviewer invited the participants to describe their professional experiences and how they managed particular situations they chose to describe. After each interview, the researcher recorded observations and reflections related to the participant's professional performances and descriptions of experiences, noting discrepancies, and applying coding techniques identifying data. Researcher's follow-up notes facilitated an understanding of the participants' experiences during analysis of the interviews. Overall, Paradis, O'Brien, Nimmon, Bandiera, and Martimianakis (2016) posit how the interview data collected generates themes, theories, and models.

While 90% of the respondents were female, according to the Department of Statistics for the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, HR managers are 85% female compared to the U.S. statistic of 73% female.

Data Analysis

According to Patton (2015), we live in an interview society. Each interview for this study was recorded by Otter voice app software on the Mac laptop. The researcher transcribed interviews and made appropriate grammatical modification to the interviews as the transcription was created and exported. Furthermore, the selected software name Otter is a smart note-taking app for English only that creates quick voice notes that combine audio, transcription, speaker identification, inline photos, and key phrases. Once the data was collected and aggregated, all typed transcriptions were saved as Microsoft Word documents by the researcher.

After the interviews were transcribed, the researcher analyzed the data using a phenomenological analysis. This analysis seeks to grasp and elucidate the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience of a phenomenon for an individual (Patton, 2015, p.573). According to Padgett (2017) in the phenomenological study, the researcher must in the first step, *epoche*, whereby the researcher engages in removing prejudices, viewpoints or assumptions regarding the phenomenon under investigation (p.159). Patton (2015) adds how this step is a primary and necessary phenomenological procedure that epitomizes the data based, evidential and empirical research orientation of phenomenology (p.575). Furthermore, Patton (2017) described the steps of phenomenological analysis as follows: 1) Epoche, that is to remove all judgment and 2) Phenomenological Reduction which identifies data in its purest from to include interpreting key phrases and their meaning (p.576).

For this data set, the researcher reads and listens to all of the research interviews repeatedly to identify significant statements in the data and group these into themes by giving each statement given equal value. Moustakas (1994) emphasizes this procedure

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as horizontalization, whereby the data creates meaningful units and then is clustered in common themes removing overlapping statements, and lastly, develop the textual descriptions of the experiences (p.119). Whitehead (2002) expounds how the thematic analysis is designed to uncover meaning, promote understanding, and interpret arising themes while closely scrutinizing the transcripts, studying other sources of literature and self-reflection of personal experience. Equally important, analyst triangulation also utilizes to reduce potential bias that comes from a single researcher (Patton, 2015; Padgett, 2016). Furthermore, moving between the data, the collected research, and understanding until a meaningful interpretation of the actual experiences of the selected respondents evolves.

The purpose of this study is to investigate how leadership impacts workers with learning disabilities in the Bahamas. The experiences that the HRPs encounter while working with the Bahamian workforce are evaluated on how they rectify employees with learning disabilities. Overall, corresponding Tham, Borell and Gustavsson (2000) state establishing trustworthiness and limit bias, each step of the analysis and each interpretation is subject to peer examination performed by the other researcher not present during the interview process.

Findings

Five themes emerge from the analysis of the transcribed data. They were: discrimination, sensitivity/confidentiality/distrust, leadership, lack of training, and diversity. Table 2 below identifies these themes.

Table 2: Percentages of common responses of the Participants
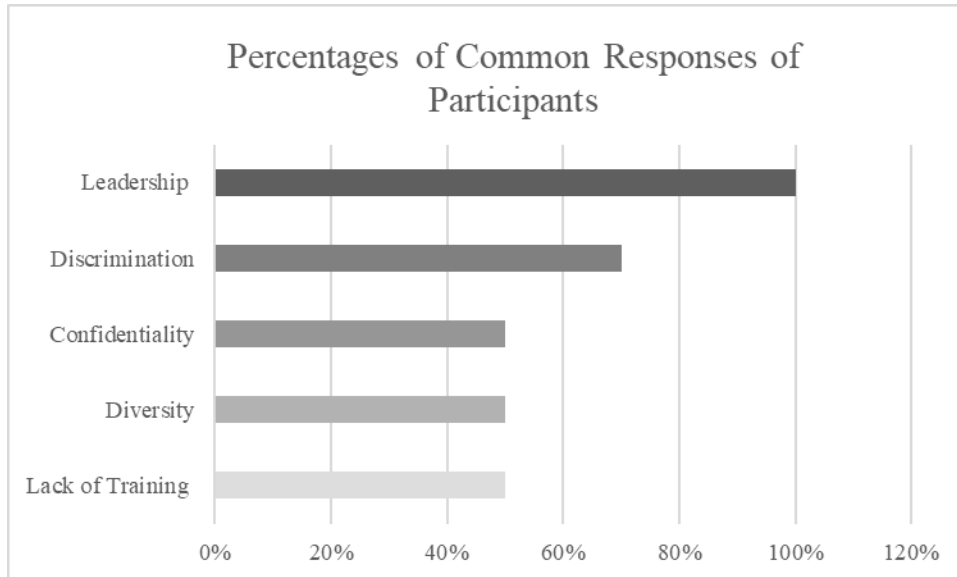
Discrimination

Biases exist when we select candidates simply because of selfish or self-induced reasons. 70% of the respondents report that that some form of discrimination exists when it comes to hiring people with learning disabilities in the Bahamas. "Persons with learning disabilities are at disadvantage when it comes to looking for a job…in the Bahamas" (R1). While another respondent reported, "Recognize them for who they are, don't sort of make pre-judgments about what they can do or what they may not be able to do," (R7). "It's very discouraging for someone who has a learning disability…but they are really an excellent worker," (R4)

Biases exist not just from the employers' perspective but from the potential workers themselves, according to several human resource managers' perspectives. "For several reasons learning disabled employees don't want to be labeled because they don't want to be discriminated against" (R5). This is further supported by yet another

respondent: "I have been in the field and I knew I have one worker with dyslexia, but no one volunteers that information," (R8). And finally,

> We can also have learning disabilities simply because we want to be prejudice towards someone who has a disability, and that person might not be able to open up to you because of the way you treat that person, (R9).

Sensitivity/Confidentiality/Distrust

There are several stories of people who do not trust those in the HR department; their lack of confidentiality level yields caution, as reported by several respondents. Clearly 50% of the human resource professionals revealed that they perceived workers as being insensitive, lacking confidentiality and overall distrust for the HR professional.

> There is also the perception that HR is more pro-company than pro-employee, although HR should be the balance between both, but you are viewed as bad HR (by the firm) when you are considered pro-employee, (R2).

Another respondent shared a more detailed perspective offering how a lack of confidentiality or sensitivity is perceived causing distrust:

> Whenever we see somebody with a disability, we get defensive, . . . we don't know how to handle it and it makes the whole situation uncomfortable; I think its insensitivity and lack of exposure; and reality we are not very sensitive; and I think people need to be more sensitive; need to be human, because like, I said, once you become a part of executive team, they lose sense of humanity; not treating people like they should, (R3)

And yet another respondent revealed that:

> Most of our actions are based on emotion so we really need to take time to analyze situations, try to be objective. When we're looking at a situation, we are looking at an individual, (R4).

Distrust is clearly identified by this respondent's view of a learning-disabled worker: "We don't trust each other, there is no trust and I am talking about what I have seen in the company where I worked" (R9). And finally, another respondent elaborated:

I think we need to be a little more sensitive about people. That, I found, to be a serious challenge. People tend to not be sensitive to people…we must stop looking at titles, that doesn't make a person. We have to be sensitive on how we handle people today. We have to be very mindful of our environment and situations…we must learn to talk positive… we can talk positive. I must be sensitive to the person. I must be sensitive to the need. And, one of the things that I have to guard very carefully is confidentiality, which seems to be a problem today, (R10).

Leadership among Learning Disabled Workers

Interestingly, all human resource managers (100%) believed that leadership potential transcends any learning disability. Responses include: "Yes, I think anyone can be a leader," (R6). Another respondent had a very inclusive view of leadership: "We certainly can…We can't seem to be segregating disability from the person who has the ability," (R10). Other HR managers shared their views on leadership among workers with learning disabilities that include:

Someone with a learning disability could be an awesome leader in that they may be someone who can do public speaking, who can do all of these things, but their ability to learn is just different, (R1).

I think we know of people who are leaders now in the world and their various professions who profess to have a learning disability like dyslexia or something else, okay. They are running multimillion dollar companies and they are speaking publicly and they've been able to master it, you know, many of them, (R2).

I think that we are all leaders in our right, and similarly, if we have that person that might not be as academic as the other it does not mean that they don't have anything to offer … And so I think that when we start to look at disabilities,

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especially learning disabilities, we're thinking about academics purely. When I think about a learning disability, I'm also thinking about the fact that you might have some other enhancement and we can't cross them out, (R3).

So a person with a learning disability could be a leader in the workplace and leadership is comprised of a lot of things . . . emotional intelligence. Leadership is comprised of someone who can make good decisions. . . able to influence others…a learning disabled has the ability to coach and mentor new employees. And so the reality is . . . people with learning disabilities definitely can be leaders in the workplace, (R5).

Learning and Development/Lack of Training

Half of the human resource managers believed that a lack of training on the part of the overall workforce affects perspectives of those with learning disabilities in the workplace. "Learning and development is another thing we don't focus on in fact …tailor the learning and development towards employees with learning disabilities to help them grow," (R1). Some saw their role in HR as the impetus for growth here:

We have a need to make this a consideration especially for those of us in the learning and development within HR, because we would be the ones who will come in contact with persons and understanding how they learn, along with the management teams that the frontline managers and supervisors that will work with people directly…we need to, first of all understand what learning disabilities are, how they may show up at work, and then how we ought to deal with it. What are the strategies that managers can use? What are the strategies that learning and development professionals can use to assist those persons to play a role within their organization as contributing employees? So I think this is a really great project to bring this awareness, (R2)

The view that HRPs need additional training is captured below:

I think we need to do a better job with placing people in HR . . . you have to be a good listener, you have to be compassionate, you got to be able to input empathy, and so we have a lot of people who say they want to work in HR but they cannot work with people or deal with people, (R4).

Again, training is vital as this respondent states, "in addition to learning disabilities, there are other areas as well...organizations do not accommodate," (R5). And finally, "I would say communication…if they want the company to succeed…It's a win-win situation for both." (R6).

Diversity

Finally, the issue of diversity and how the company and the employees benefit by all aspects of diversity were expressed by half of the human resource managers.

Special individuals who tend to think, I call it, from the left side of their brain, or, you know, because a regular person would operate from the right, but they're able to, you know, shed light on things that you may not even have thought of as a company. Or if they can diversify the company on the whole, like, I've seen individuals who come in, you know, you just never thought about it, and they brought something to the table (R1).

I also strongly believe that everyone can learn and so for me, I don't see learning disabilities as limitations. It's just different ways that people learn… but I guess strategies on how to approach how they process information so that they can excel. (R2).

I believe with diversity, its strength. And a learning disabled employee can add to the workplace because, you know, when you can really see the difference in people and what they bring to the table. While I might have strength in one area, somebody else might have that weakness until we can help each other out. And similarly, I think that we if we embrace that type of diversity, especially with the disabled, we can get back because I think everybody has something to do that they have to give (R3).

I guess the unique thing about working in the public services that we have to accept and work with everybody. We don't get to choose who we work with…we find persons, colleagues in the public service who have learning disabilities (R4).

Discussion

It appears that the ever-evolving climate of knowledge development in human resource settings is demanding 'higher-order skills' of professionals due to globalization and diversity. The feature in this discovery process, represented by ten participants by this phenomenological analysis, provides the emic perspective toward workers with learning disabilities.

The results were collected from various types of industry (private, quasi-government, and public service) providing an overall view of how learning disabled employees are viewed in the workforce. Not all of the respondents knowingly encountered employees with LDs on the job because they were not aware it was a problem unless it was physical. When questioned, a few respondents' views on LDs allude to physical disabilities which reveal they view all disabilities similarly and may not be aware of the subject matter in such a definitive way.

As it was mentioned by 70% the interviewees, the Bahamas workforce discriminates against LDs. This may be because they are not aware of what it is and its effects on the workforce. One of the respondents said that corporate may not have caught up this specific disability yet. However, interestingly all the respondents agreed that an individual with an LD could be a leader in the workplace. Also, employees with LD's can bring diversity to any environment which can assist with new innovative thinking and creativity.

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Furthermore, half of the respondents expressed how there are no accommodations in the Bahamas for LD employees. While interviewing, a few clients were emotionally moved because of the unfairness of how individuals are treated in the workplace.

Further research should investigate the impact of how post-colonialism affects this workforce. Several respondents mentioned the impact of post-colonial perspectives and how HRPs view their employees. Moreover, these HRPs perceive that employees exemplify distrust towards human resource departments because of a lack of confidentiality and sensitivity. Globalization is impacting our society, forcing companies to compete on an international level, and if companies do not adopt policies and initiatives to help them stay competitive, then the HRPs will face increasing challenges due to lack of understanding and knowledge.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provides evidence that everyday discrimination does occur in the workplace and that it negatively affects LD employees. Moreover, the results of this study highlight the fact that the HRPs in the Bahamas are not aware of addressing learning disabilities in the workforce in a most efficient way. As researchers are beginning to turn their attention toward understanding the experience of LDs employees, a target of discrimination when hiring, should not be ignored. Overall, human resource managers in the Bahamas need to embrace diversity, enhance training and development and make workplaces welcoming workplaces to employees with learning disabilities.

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Implementing, Measuring, and Improving Blended Learning

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Abstract

This workshop presents blended learning as a strategy to improve student learning. During the workshop, the knowledge accumulated during four years of hands-on experience in implementing this strategy in university classes will be shared.
We will cover the selection of ingredients for blending your course. These include out-of-class and in-class learning materials, learning spaces, the appropriate role of the student and instructor, and appropriate technologies. The unique opportunity presented by blended learning to concurrently develop teamwork abilities and subject matter knowledge will be illustrated.

A framework for the continual improvement of learning that uses Michael G. Moore's Theory of Transactional Distance to measure learning outcomes will be presented. These measures of learning outcomes will be the basis for implementing Deming's PDSA cycle of continual improvement.

International Knowledge Spillovers in the U.S. Pharmaceutical Industry

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Abstract

Production in the global pharmaceutical industry is gradually shifting to low income countries. The traditional product cycle models view North countries as innovators and South countries as imitators. Over time, though, innovation can shift South. One indicator of how firms view competitors is if they learn from them. We measure such knowledge spillovers with patents held by U.S. pharmaceutical manufacturers that cite

foreign patents or have a foreign inventor. Controlling for R&D and pharmaceutical imports, we evaluate if U.S. manufacturers learn from rivals in the South. We find evidence of South-North technology transfers, contradicting standard views of innovation and imitation.

Introduction

The global pharmaceutical industry is dominated by companies from high income economies. PharmExec's (2017) ranking of the 50 largest pharmaceutical companies in the world indicates that 47 are from high income economies, with only three from emerging economies (namely South Africa and India). An analysis of trade in pharmaceuticals does show that a changing pattern over time.

The world's largest market for pharmaceuticals is the U.S.A., which accounts for 40% of global spending and 17% of the industry's global employment (IFPMA, 2016). Data from the U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC) show that U.S. pharmaceutical imports from low and middle income economies have increased from approximately $500 million in 1997 to $11.4 billion in 2016. Over this same time period, the share of pharmaceutical imports into the U.S. coming from low and middle income economies has grown from 3.5% to over 10%.

As competition in the U.S. from firms in low and middle income countries intensifies over time, the ability for manufacturers in the high income countries to learn from their counterparts in lower income economies increases. Such learning from others is contrary to the standard view of innovation which views manufacturers from

high income economies as innovators and manufacturers from lower income economies purely as imitators.

In this paper we look at the extent to which firms in high income economies take advantage of "knowledge spillovers" from their competitors from lower income economies. Specifically, we analyze patent spillovers from pharmaceutical manufacturers in low and middle income countries to their counterparts in the U.S.A.

Literature Review

There is an extensive literature in economics featuring innovation in a North-South setting. Arising from Vernon (1966) and Krugman (1979), and with notable extensions from Romer (1990), Grossman and Helpman (1991a, 1991b, 1991c), and Aghion and Howitt (1992), these models describe a world of innovative firms from the high income "North" competing with one another and with firms from the lower income "South". A defining aspect of these models is that South firms are imitative of the North firms, and are not innovative in their own right. North firms create new products, and enjoy a monopoly for some period of time while they are the sole provider. They face competition, however, from other innovative North firms, and from South firms who eventually copy the new product. The dual nature of the competition pushes North firms to continuously invest in innovative efforts in their quest for greater profits.

While this categorization of South firms as purely imitative might be accurate for certain products, certain countries, and certain times, it does not hold for all, and businesses in low and middle income economies are increasingly investing in research and development.

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As companies in low and middle income economies move from imitation to innovation, their counterparts in the North might start to learn from them – the knowledge of the innovator "spilling over" and being utilized by third parties. One way to measure such knowledge spillovers is by using the information contained within patents. Patent documentation includes two pieces of information which capture the idea of international spillovers: (i) the location of the inventor/co-inventor of the patent, and (ii) citations of previously granted patents by country of origin that are considered to be instrumental to the development of the new patent. Patent citations have been extensively used in the literature to measure international knowledge spillovers, with Jaffe, Trajtenberg, and Fogarty (2000) finding that "aggregate citation flows can be used as proxies for knowledge-spillover intensity…between countries" (p. 218). Patent citations are used by Branstetter (2006) for spillovers from Japanese multinationals undertaking direct investment in the U.S., and by Hu and Jaffe (2003) for spillovers from the U.S. and Japan to South Korea and Taiwan.

Methodology

Following Jaffe, Trajtenberg, and Henderson (1993), Pavitt and Soete (1997), Jaffe, Fogarty, and Banks (1998), and others, we use patents to measure innovation.

We base our initial specification on Simons and Linde (forthcoming), and model that patent-based knowledge spillovers in a particular year depend on the number of patents a company is granted, its size, how much it spends on research and development (R&D), and the competition it faces. The competition for U.S. firms come from three sources – other U.S. firms, firms in other high income economies, and firms in low and middle income economies. Thus, we have:

(1) $SPILLOVERS_{kt} = f[PATENTS_{kt}, REVENUE_{kt}, R\&D_{kt}, REVENUE_{USt} - REVENUE_{kt},$

$IMPORTS_{G1t}, IMPORTS_{G2t}]$

Where

- $SPILLOVERS_{kt}$ is the number of granted pharmaceutical patents that were applied for in the U.S. in year t, which cite a patent from a Group 2 country or which have an inventor from a Group 2 country, where firm k is the assignee

- $PATENTS_{kt}$ is the number of granted pharmaceutical patents that were applied for in the U.S. in year t, where firm k is the assignee.

- $REVENUE_{kt}$ is firm k's revenue in year t.

- $R\&D_{kt}$ is firm k's spending on research and development in year t.

- $REVENUE_{USt}$ is overall pharmaceutical production in the U.S.A. in year t.

- $IMPORTS_{G1t}$ is pharmaceutical imports into the U.S.A. from Group 1 in year t.

- $IMPORTS_{G2t}$ is pharmaceutical imports into the U.S.A. from Group 2 in year t.

- Group 1 – high income economies

- Group 2 – low/middle income economies

- Subscript k designates individual U.S. pharmaceutical firms, and t is years. All monetary amounts are in millions of real 2009 U.S. dollars.

For robustness, we use natural logarithms for two additional specifications of the model, based on the function shown in equation (1):

(2) $SPILLOVERS_{kt} = f[PATENTS_{kt}, \ln(REVENUE_{kt}), \ln(R\&D_{kt}), \ln(REVENUE_{USt} - REVENUE_{kt}),$

$\ln(IMPORTS_{G1t}), \ln(IMPORTS_{G2t})]$

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(3) $\ln(\text{SPILLOVERS}_{kt}) = f[\ln(\text{PATENTS}_{kt}), \ln(\text{REVENUE}_{kt}), \ln(\text{R\&D}_{kt}), \ln(\text{REVENUE}_{USt} -$
$$\text{REVENUE}_{kt}), \ln(\text{IMPORTS}_{G1t}), \ln(\text{IMPORTS}_{G2t})]$$

For convenience, we refer to the above as Models 1-3, respectively. To account for differences across firms we use a firm fixed affects model. Because SPILLOVERS is a non-negative integer, we use a Poisson regression.

The time period for our study is 1997-2015. We restrict our choice of U.S. pharmaceutical firms using the following criteria: The firm must (1) be among the world's top 50 largest pharmaceutical producers and (2) have a minimum of 10 consecutive years of sales and R&D spending within the time period of our study.

We apply criterion (1) by using the 2015 ranking of firms by the industrial research company Pharmaceutical Executive (PharmExec, 2015). We use companies' financial reports and the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission's EDGAR database to retrieve data on their research and development (R&D) spending and overall revenues. After dropping firms that do not satisfy criterion (2), we use data for the following 13 U.S. firms (listed in order of revenue size): Pfizer, Merck & Co., Johnson & Johnson, Gilead Sciences, Amgen, Eli Lilly, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Baxter International, Biogen Idec, Mylan, Celgene, Abbott Laboratories, and Alexion Pharmaceuticals.

We obtain data on pharmaceutical imports from the U.S. International Trade Commission's DataWeb database (dataweb.usitc.gov), measuring imports by country of origin for NAICS code 3254 (Pharmaceutical and Medicine Manufacturing). This data only goes back to 1997, which explains the starting year for our study.

We aggregate the import data into two groups. Group 1 comprises countries of origin which are categorized as being high income in the World Bank's 2018 classification (available at

https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519). Group 1 is our proxy for "North" countries. Group 2 comprises countries of origin which are categorized by the World Bank as low, lower-middle, or upper-middle-income economies. Group 2 is our proxy for "South" countries.

We obtain data on domestic U.S. production of NAICS code 3254 from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis' (BEA) online database (available at www.bea.gov), and convert all monetary amounts in our data set into real 2009 dollars using the BEA's U.S. GDP Deflator (available at www.bea.gov).

We use the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's online patent database (http://www.uspto.gov) for all of our patent and spillover data. Because the patent application process can take several years, we use 2015 as the ending year for our study.

Results

Tables 1 and 2 give the summary statistics and regression results.

The positive and significant coefficient on Patents indicates that US firms that patent more learn more from innovators in low and middle income economies. The positive and significant coefficient on Revenue indicates that larger US firms learn more from innovators in low and middle income economies. The positive and significant coefficient on ($REVENUE_{US}$ – $REVENUE_k$) indicates that US firms learn more from low and middle income economies as competition in the US increases. The negative and significant coefficient on imports from Group 1, means that US firms learns less from firms in low and middle income economies when they faces greater competition from high income economies. We postulate that this might be due to a substitution effect –

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greater competition from the North encourages a firm to learn more from their northern competitors and, in so doing, focus less and learn less from the competitors in the South. The positive and significant coefficient on imports from Group 2 indicates that as the US imports more from low and middle income economies, US firms are learning more from innovators in those economies. This is our best indication that US firms as seen the firms in these countries as innovative competitors, rather than just imitative competitors.

Discussion

The above results indicate that South-North spillovers increase as pharmaceutical manufacturers in the U.S.A. face more competition from manufacturers in low and middle income economies. Traditional North-South models of innovation assume that South manufacturers are merely imitative, leaving no rationale for South-North spillovers. In contrast, our analysis indicates that North manufacturers view South manufacturers as, in part, innovative.

There are, of course, some issues with our work. First, in our analysis we count how many patents have an inventor or cite a patent from Group 2 countries. We do not count how many inventors or citations from Group 2 are contained in each patent. This implies that we are underestimating the amount of knowledge spillovers.

Second, and more problematically, some of the U.S. imports of pharmaceutical products are likely from overseas subsidiaries/production facilities of U.S. companies. Our analysis treats these imports from subsidiaries as "foreign competition", though there would be no reason for a U.S. firm to view these imports as coming from

competitors. Unfortunately, data limitations prevent us from identifying these imports separately from those coming from companies with no U.S. ownership.

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Tables

Table 1					
Summary Statistics					
Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N.
SPILLOVERS	6.401	11.291	0	93	247
PATENTS	79.065	85.616	0	377	247
REVENUE	17371.939	17464.688	1.015	68298.844	247
R&D	2537.908	2512.96	11.639	10976.971	247
$REVENUE_{US}$	190497.569	29509.603	124865.405	234782.569	247
$IMPORTS_{G1}$	59714.226	21822.885	17453.077	90906.803	247
$IMPORTS_{G2}$	3580.519	2739.127	633.657	8977.816	247
Note. All monetary amounts are in 2009 $millions					

Table 2			
Regression Results			
Variable	**Model 1**	**Model 2**	**Model 3**
PATENTS	0.00601**	0.00599**	0.516***
	(0.00249)	(0.00250)	(0.138)
$REVENUE_k$	1.71e-05	0.376**	0.259**
	(2.41e-05)	(0.186)	(0.131)
$R\&D_k$	5.50e-06	-0.0900	-0.243*
	(3.00e-05)	(0.226)	(0.141)
$REVENUE_{US}$ - $REVENUE_k$	1.26e-05*	2.1246**	0.902
	(7.60e-06)	(0.875)	(0.625)
$IMPORTS_{G1}$	-8.62e-06	-1.148***	0.135
	(1.42e-05)	(0.405)	(0.396)
$IMPORTS_{G2}$	0.000262***	1.239***	0.462***
	(5.10e-05)	(0.270)	(0.0996)
Robust standard errors in parentheses *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$			

Patient-Centric Marketing Strategies: A Shift in Market Orientation for the Pharmaceutical Industry

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Abstract

The objective of this exploratory study is to examine the shift in market orientation in the pharmaceutical industry called patient centricity. This shift has been identified as significant to the industry because of its central focus on the patient. A preliminary investigation of the websites for 10 leading pharmaceutical companies were searched using select keywords identified through an extensive literature review. The findings suggest that leading pharmaceutical companies mention the use of patient centric strategies to varying degrees. These strategies include the use of digital monitoring devices, patient engagement, drug access programs, data transparency, and changes in

organizational structure. Future research is needed to identify which patient centric strategies are most commonly used in the industry; what impact these strategies have on patients; and whether or not these strategies have an impact on lowering drug prices and improved clinical outcomes for patients. The implications of this research suggest that patient centricity shows promise for the industry because the focus on the patient may improve its negative image with the public. However, it is proving difficult to implement for some firms due to the traditional emphasis on "pill" marketing strategies and the costs involved for the shift in strategy. Methods for measurement of the success of patient centricity will be needed.

Receptiveness of Healthcare Workers with Stress, Anxiety, or Depression to Use a Web-Based MBCT Therapeutic Intervention

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Abstract

Workplace absenteeism and presenteeism has become pervasive and costly to American businesses due in large to mental disorders such as stress, depression, and anxiety. The Center for Disease Control (2016) reported that depression is estimated to cost U.S. employers approximately 200 million lost work days each year, an expense ranging from $17 to $44 billion. Occupations that are highly interactive caring for others as is the case for healthcare workers were reported to have the highest rates of absenteeism and presenteeism (Rhodes & Collins, 2015). The purpose of this quantitative, ordinal regression study was to predict the receptiveness of healthcare workers to use a web-based mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) intervention to help reduce stress, depression, and anxiety.

EDUCATION PROCEEDINGS

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Absorptive Capacity of School Districts in a Research-Practice Partnership

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Abstract

This case study was grounded in the theoretical frameworks of Change Leadership and Absorptive Capacity. The study focused on the absorptive capacity of one school district during its first three years of a five-year strategic planning partnership with a university-based research organization to identify leadership strategies for change. This long-term collaboration between a school district and a research organization is an

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example of Research-Practice Partnerships (RPP). The research questions that guided the study were:

1. What internal leadership practices did the school district use to increase absorptive capacity?

2. What external support did the research organization use to increase absorptive capacity?

Findings showed that strategies which promoted increased absorptive capacity of the district included specific leadership strategies and resources provided to partners. These strategies then became sources for further research for the university partner. Each of these strategies were broken into specific actions that promoted absorptive capacity of both partners within the RPP. A framework of how these strategies were mutual to both partners within the RPP was provided to serve as a tool to provide a structure for thinking strategically about how RPPs can build capacity across long-term initiatives.

*Keywords***:** absorptive capacity, change leadership, research-practice partnership

<center>**Introduction**</center>

Problem Statement

American schools are faced with an increasing demand for large-scale school improvement (Farrell & Coburn, 2017). To meet the demands, many schools often engage with external research organizations for support to help shape the school's practice in meaningful ways (Fishman, Penuel, Allen & Cheng, 2013). In turn, such a partnership between schools and research organizations can assist the researchers to ask questions that are of importance to all practitioners (Farrell, et al., 2018). As partners, schools and research organizations can identify ways to bring research and practice together in Research-Practice Partnerships (RPPs).

RPPs are true partnerships in that they are long-term collaborations between practitioners and researchers that investigate problems of practice utilizing past research while generating new research (Fishman et al., 2013). Researchers and school leaders share a commitment to build and sustain a working collaboration for organizing coalitions for action and reform (Penuel, Coburn & Gallagher, 2013). The goals addressed are mutualistic in that both parties have their own objectives but also have shared goals that focus on problems of practice: key challenges that practitioners face. RPPs involve professionals from both arenas who are focused on changing people's thinking and behavior (Cohen, 2011). Within effective RPPs, there are intentional strategies to foster relationships, well-defined roles, and protocols to facilitate discourse. RPPs also involve analyzing data as identifiers for goals as well as developing indicators of success for system-wide change (Barnett, Hall, Berg & Camarena, 2010).

RPPs have been shown to have promising results including positive impact on student learning (Booth, et al., 2015), positive effects on teaching and assessment

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practices (Yarnall, Schechtman & Penuel, 2006), and on curriculum implementation (Fishman, Marx, Best & Tal, 2003). Studies have also shown that partnerships can promote the use of research in decision making (Tseng, 2012), address persistent problems of practice, and improve educational outcomes (Donovan, 2013). Other studies have shown that RPPs provide schools with greater access to research (Kerr, Marsh, Ikemoto, Darilek & Barney, 2006). However, there is mixed evidence about whether participation in RPPs is associated with increased use of this research (Coburn & Penuel, 2016).

The willingness and/or ability of practitioners to use research is referred to as absorptive capacity. As stated earlier, RPPs involve professionals who are focused on changing people's thinking and behavior, therefore, both organizations' capacities to assimilate, transform and use new knowledge by integrating changes into existing practice or to engage in abrupt change is fundamental to the purpose of an RPP.

Conceptual Frameworks

Absorptive Capacity

Some organizations may be better positioned to engage with partners than others. The degree to which an organization can engage productively with another partner is found in its absorptive capacity. Absorptive capacity has been determined to be crucial to RPPs because once the practitioner organization ceases investing in its absorptive capacity, it may never assimilate and fully utilize new information from the research organization, regardless of the value of that information (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990). An organization's ability to recognize the value of the new information, make sense of it, and apply it to specific problems within the organization is vital to the partnership (Farrell et al., 2018; Zou, Ertug & George, 2018).

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Research on absorptive capacity has shown contributing factors include the level of district support, the intellectual capacity of individuals and the values of the organization (Zuckerman, Wilcox, Schiller & Durand, 2018). Other contributing factors are communication within and between organizations, resources to support the work, and leadership activities that connect and align the work (Farrell et al., 2018). Other authors have posited that prior knowledge, communication pathways, leadership, and resources are also conditions that impact absorptive capacity (Farrell & Coburn, 2017). All of these factors can be housed under the characteristics of change leadership (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003).

Change Leadership

Absorptive capacity requires participants within both partnering organizations to learn new knowledge and to then change behaviors based on that learning. This kind of change requires strong leadership at multiple levels. During times of change, leadership has been shown to have the greatest impact on student learning, second only to teacher practices (Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008). As leaders work to implement meaningful change in educational settings, they are charged with seven basic responsibilities. These change agent responsibilities have varied but positive effects on increased student learning:

Responsibilities	The extent to which the principal....
Knowledge of instruction, assessment and curriculum	is knowledgeable about current curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices
Optimizer	inspires and leads new and challenging innovations
Change agent	is willing to and actively challenges the status quo
Intellectual stimulation	ensures that faculty and staff are aware of the most current theories and practices and makes the discussion of these a regular aspect of the

	school's culture
Flexibility	adapts his or her leadership behavior to the needs of the current situation & is comfortable with dissent
Monitors/evaluates	monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning
Ideals/beliefs	communicates and operates from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling

Figure 1: Adapted from Principal leadership responsibilities by Waters, T., Marzano, R.J. & McNulty, B. (2013), Balanced Leadership: What 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement.

During times of change, change leaders play important roles as sensemaking agents, interpreting and passing on innovative practices to teachers (Coburn & Woulfin, 2012). Leaders create structures and mechanisms that support teachers learning (Coburn, Hill & Spillane, 2016). School leaders navigate change by moving along a continuum of too tight to too loose leadership style (Fullan, 2006). Leaders can "make it happen" in top-down managerial strategies or they can "help it happen" by negotiating shared understandings through social and technical support mechanisms (Fullan, 2003; Greenhalgh, Robert, MacFarlane, Bate & Kyriakidou, 2004). Of these two, the "help it happen" style been found to be more impactful during times of change. "Helping it happen" relies on the three leadership strategies of bridging, buffering, and brokering (Durand, Lawson, Wilcox & Schiller, 2016).

Not only do change leaders work to support teachers and staff in implementing innovations, but they also are responsible for helping to create a more widespread understanding of the changes. By providing coherence to larger numbers of people, change leaders develop a deeper sense of what needs to be done, why it needs to be

done, and the roles that each stakeholder group can play in the implementation of the change (Zuckerman, Wilcox, Schiller & Durand, 2018). Through two-way communication and shared goal setting, change leaders build coherence across all stakeholders. In addition to coherence, change leaders are also charged with the alignment of innovative practices across buildings, grades, and classrooms. By creating shared instructional practices, change leaders work to align instructional practices (Lawson et al., 2017). This continuity across educational levels creates shared expectations for teachers and students and contribute to the absorptive capacity of schools.

Change leadership focuses on ways in which adult learning across multiple roles and organizational levels can improve teacher practice and student learning (Knapp, Honig, Plecki, Portin & Copland, 2014). Taken together, change leadership responsibilities and practices combined with coherence and alignment skills, contributes to absorptive capacity that allows schools to integrate innovative practices.

Research Questions

Given the increased use of RPPs, the inexperience of many school leaders in sustaining systemic change, and the common challenges found within RPPs, research that targets specific strategies for successful partnerships are needed. This study sought to move beyond the call for more RPPs or extolling the power of RPPs. With the literature on absorptive capacity and change leadership in mind, the researchers of this study focused on specific leadership strategies that have proven to increase the absorptive capacity of school participants. This study was therefore guided by the following two questions.

1. What internal leadership practices did the school district use to increase absorptive capacity?

2. What external support did the research organization use to increase absorptive capacity?

Despite the growing interest in RPPs, there is a need to know more about how two organizations with different organizational cultures and purposes were able to forge and maintain collaborative partnerships so that absorptive capacity was maximized.

Methodology

Context

This study examined the work, perspectives and feedback from participants and facilitators involved in a year-long strategic planning process followed by three years of implementation of the five-year strategic plan in one school district. This process involved partnerships among one school district and the K20 Center for Community and Educational Renewal at the University of Oklahoma. This school district serves over 3,500 students in six elementary schools, one middle school and one high school. The ethnicity of the district is comprised of a student population of 62.4% Caucasian, 4.8% black, 0.9% Asian, 19.8% Hispanic, 4.8 % Native American, and 7.4% two or more races. Of this student population, 61.0% were eligible for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The research partner, the K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal, is a statewide research and development center that promotes innovative learning by cultivating a collaborative network engaged in research and outreach. The Center practices democratic principles as it brings together stakeholders consisting of students, teachers, parents, administrators, school board members, community members, and business and government leaders to identify and analyze problems,

share ideas, observe best practices for improving teaching and learning and improving the common good for all.

The school district partnered with K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal at the University of Oklahoma to engage in a five-year strategic planning process referred to as Continuous Strategic Improvement (CSI). This strategic planning model was developed through a separate partnership between the K20 Center and the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. This strategic planning model consists of four phases: Phase I (Engage); Phase II (Plan); Phase III (Action): and Phase IV (Achieve). When embarking on the CSI process, a school district begins by informing the community of the process and how they can be engaged in the various phases. Promotional materials such as flyers, newspaper releases, and web page designs are provided by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association.

The district and the research partner began their RPP through the CSI four-phase strategic planning process. Phase I sought community input through an online survey as well as through multiple face-to-face forums. The data from Phase I was analyzed and added to other school data to provide a basis for future decisions. During Phase II teams of heterogeneous stakeholders, including teachers, parents, administrators, community members, and students, who are representative of the community's demographics, met to discuss and analyze data to identify goal areas and objectives. Phase III used the same stakeholder's teams to examine research relevant to the identified objectives. From this research, teams developed initiatives, action steps and performance measures that will guide change in district practices. The team also developed a five-year timeline to provide structure and accountability for the strategic plan. Phase IV brought representatives from each building site to examine the district's five-year strategic plan. These teams created a plan year one implementation at their

specific grade/building site. Phase IV also supported goal area chairs and district administration in the development of an accountability plan which included a calendar for meetings and school board presentations. These four phases were completed during the first year of the partnership. At the end of the first year of implementation, the CSI facilitators returned to guide goal area teams in reviewing the progress of implementation and the initiatives and action steps outlined for year one. The process for year-one review was then used annually by the district to measure the absorptive capacity of the school for embedding the research-based practices described in the plan. At the end of three years, the school district continues to "work the plan," by recognizing the value of new information, making sense of it and applying it to their specific needs/problems that were addressed in their final strategic plan. The partnership between the CSI program and the school district fulfills the requirements of an RPP. It is long-term, it is mutualistic in that the goals of both organizations are fulfilled, and it involves the K20 Center, a research organization, and a practitioner organization, the school district.

This paper employed case study as the appropriate methodology for the examination of the mutualistic partnership found in an RPP. A case study is fitting for the study of an RPP in that it is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context (Yin, 2009). Case study also provides an in-depth investigation of the interdependencies of parts and of the patterns that emerge within the RPP (Swann & Pratt, 2004). Case study is also the appropriate methodology to explain how things happen and the story behind the numbers (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The school district in this study was successful in its implementation of a strategic plan; this paper helps to explain why.

Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis

Qualitative data were collected from field notes, artifacts and semi-structured interviews with eight school district leaders (Patton, 2015). Interviews with leaders from across the school district were conducted by facilitators from the research-based organization and were recorded and transcribed by someone outside of the research study. Leaders included building principals, program directors, district administration, school board members, and the superintendent. Field notes included detailed minutes of the CSI process from the initial planning meetings to the year one follow-up meetings. An in-depth program evaluation was conducted by an outside evaluator and was also used for additional data. Artifacts included materials used throughout the process as well as the final report and documents provided to the school district as a result of the CSI process. All data were coded individually by three researchers and then compiled against the research questions and sorted into tables (Saldana, 2015). Triangulation of data was performed by comparing findings from the multiple data sources to confirm results.

Results/Findings

The data analysis provided evidence of both internal leadership practices as well as external supports provided as a result of the Research-Practice Partnership between the school district and the K20 Center, as they brought research and practice together. This section will examine the change leadership responsibilities found in the data, as well as the external resources that supported the leadership qualities.

Internal Leadership Practices

All seven of the change leadership responsibilities (see Figure 1) were found to be utilized by the district superintendent. The responsibility that was referred to by all

interviewees was that of acting from a set of *ideals and beliefs* as a foundation for operation. This ability to act according to one's beliefs distinguishes the majority of leaders from the few. The superintendent shared multiple times how her "moral purpose" guided her actions, as well as how she believed in empowering others. "When you empower teachers and you empower building principals to do their work, they're more connected to their moral purpose. They understand what their mission is." This foundation of empowerment through shared leadership was realized by everyone who worked with the superintendent. A building principal recognized the superintendent's belief in empowering others when she said, "She does a really good job of keeping…a high level of expectation and high level of accountability for all of your team leaders, but she does it in a way…where you feel empowered by her." A school board member agreed and added, "It's not about being right but it's about giving everyone a chance to be heard and that's probably individually…her greatest characteristic." A district administrator summarized this act of empowerment by sharing, "She just empowers her people to do what they need to do because she has done a good job of assessing her team to know their weaknesses and their strengths." Another belief that was shared by the superintendent was basing all decisions on what is best for students. She shared:

> It's something that is connected to our mission, it makes sense in the bigger
> scheme of things that we're doing, it feels right, it feels as if it is the appropriate
> thing to do for student learning because we have to focus on students.

Another building principal confirmed this belief by stating, "Everything that we do, everything that we ask, she'll go back to: is this what's best for kids. And that has been her mantra the entire time that I've known her."

With these strong ideals beliefs in shared leadership and doing what is best for students firmly in mind, the superintendent was able to enact the other six change

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leader responsibilities. As she continuously sought input from various stakeholders, she lived her values of shared leadership and empowerment. "Her leadership style is shared leadership. She wants everyone who has a part in every aspect of our plan or our goals for our district to be a part of it," a program director shared. This appreciation for shared leadership was also stated by a school board member. "I think her leadership style is collaborative...collaborative because she has such a good team that she works with and the way she's delegated...I think it is important because everyone feels that they're contributing."

This style of shared leadership is coupled and supported with consistent *monitoring and evaluating* practices by the superintendent. The superintendent shared, "I'm definitely not going to yell at anybody if they're not meeting their checkpoints, but I would need truthful information." Truthful information in the form of data is collected and analyzed on a regular basis so that the process became part of the culture. A middle school principal explained:

> She follows up…she'll come over and ask how it's going, wants to see specifics every so often of how our discipline numbers and how that's working…our goal areas report once every year at the board meetings…We share out every so often at admin meetings…I keep a report going for her on how we're meeting each goal area and so she has access to that as well land can ask questions based on that.

Leaders throughout the district use digital documents to share data and monitor progress. A program director shared, "We have a Google document that we drop information in and she monitors what we are doing at these meetings." Through the regular team meetings, everyone from the building level to the district level is held accountable to the actions outlined in the strategic plan. Even the board members are

asked to participate in one of the goal area teams so that they can help to monitor and evaluate the progress of the plan.

With relevant data available through ongoing sharing and analysis at meetings and through the use of digital documents for documentation, the superintendent is a *change agent* and is able to challenge the status quo. The school board president shared that the superintendent reminds everyone, "this is what we signed up for; this is what our community wants; this is what you said you wanted so here it is. This is what we're doing." When change becomes difficult, the superintendent couples her strong relationships skills with her drive to accomplish "the plan". The middle school principal said, "She doesn't believe in obstacles getting in our way; we have to figure out how to maneuver around them or completely eliminate them." Another participant added, "She's not afraid to have a hard conversation to get her point across to where we need to go." Lastly, the school board member summarized the superintendent's constant push for getting better by challenging the status quo by saying, "The more we get accomplished the more she wants to accomplish."

Along with the constant monitoring and occasional challenging, the superintendent also exhibits the *intellectual stimulation* needed for continued growth. The sharing of the latest research and information begins with the superintendent's communication with school board members. "She's constantly bringing me articles um you know resources in that respect. She sends me emails when she sees something that connects to my goal area that I might you know that might help me." Another person added:

She provides us literature; she gives us articles; she gives us books. She has also given us networking contacts to reach out to because you know we're all in one

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location, but she's visible to a lot more people than we are and she provides us and connects us to the right places.

Through the use of change agent leadership qualities and through her caring and energy, the superintendent was able to be a constant *optimizer* and source of inspiration. A change agent optimizes innovation and risk-taking by inspiring and leading new and challenging practices. The superintendent's positive nature was contagious. One interviewee shared, "She doesn't have a sense of the work it's a sense of excitement and that that then rolls over to everyone around her." The same excitement was shared by another interviewee, "She's very motivated and motivational and so she motivates us to want to do this because we want to work in an environment to where we are successful. We are that school or schools that are moving forward." The school board member likened the superintendent to the "energizer bunny." He shared, "it's (energy) catching. It catches to the board. It catches to administrators, to staff, to support. It's just a very positive thing when you see that type of energy being expended." A middle school principal described this responsibility of the superintendent by stating:

> Everything we do is tied to it (the strategic plan). Two or three years ago we
> would throw an initiative out there just because we thought it was going to do
> something good, but it wasn't tied to anything. Now everything we do...is tied
> back to the actual (strategic) plan and an objective in that plan."

A school board member confirmed this by saying, "The more we get accomplished, the more she wants to accomplish."

During the successful implementation of a strategic planning process such as CSI, it is vital that the superintendent has a solid foundation of *knowledge of instruction* and is knowledgeable about current curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices. In speaking on the superintendent's leadership during the implementation process, a

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school board member stated, "she's very thorough about getting information that's needed, she is very research-oriented, knows what best practices are, knows what standards are and presents those." He further went on to say:

> I know on the implementation of student achievement she's giving them standards, she's feeding them, we're hearing those reports that they're understanding what's expected and moving towards reaching standards and reaching goals...she's taken it to a whole other level because she does have the ability to know what's current, to know what the research says, what the standards are and what we need to be moving towards and it was all those things.

Finally, a successful leader must be *flexible* and adapt his or her leadership behavior to the current situation and is not threatened by dissent. A district administrator described this characteristic of the superintendent by stating:

> ...you know a strategic plan is only really as good as that accountability piece and follow through and (she) does a really good job of having that accountability piece and making sure of that and understanding that you are going to have bumps in the road and that you might have to alter . . . that the end goal is still there and you're still heading towards it."

Even when there might be dissent, the superintendent adjusts and supports the staff. A district program director shared:

> She's very supportive with us and tells us that is the direction that you need to go. Let's see what that will look like and let's see if it will align to what we had at first, or she will just say 'let's start over'.

These seven leadership characteristics are all focused around the need for change, change initiatives and actions that have been spelled out in detail within the

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district's strategic plan document. Armed with a firm knowledge of the research-based instructional and curricular requirements found in the strategic plan, the superintendent keeps the focus on the plan. Several interviewees referred to "#worktheplan". An elementary principal shared, "We talk about the strategic plan a lot. With everything that we do, how does that relate back to the strategic plan?" The superintendent's knowledge is appreciated by those "working the plan." A district administrator who has been with the district for 21 years shared, "We've done a lot of strategic plans in the district…and this is the first one that I feel like we've really revisited…but now we are working the plan…we've never worked the plan." The administrator went on to share:

> She's (the superintendent) a bulldog when it comes to focusing on the plan…she's not gonna back down from we said (in the plan)…She's flexible…we feel supported, but…she's gonna hold us all accountable for the work we are doing because it's important.

This knowledge of and commitment to plans based on research, along with embedded change leadership qualities, has led the superintendent and the district to continued success in absorbing the practices outlined in the plan.

External Supports

Knowing that leadership is an important aspect during times of change, this study highlighted specific change leadership characteristics that were supported by the Research-Partner Practice with the K20 Center and contributed to the absorptive capacity of a school district's strategic plan process. These external supports are summarized in Figure 2. As noted by the school member during an interview, "You can't teach morals, you can't teach listening, you can't teach all of those things. Those

are natural traits and she had those and then she's taken it to a whole other level."
Accepting this idea that leadership is mostly an innate quality, what can external
organizations bring to a partnership that supports change leadership responsibilities?

Figure 2: External Supports Aligned to Leadership

First, with leadership that is firmly founded in strong *ideals and beliefs* of shared
leadership and empowerment for the good of all students, the alignment of
foundational beliefs between partners is imperative. In this study, the external research
organization was guided by the following mission statement: "Our mission is to
cultivate a collaborative network engaged in research and outreach that creates and
sustains innovation and transformation through leadership development, shared

Internal Leadership Responsibility	External Support/Resources
Knowledge of instruction, assessment and curriculum	• Online research • *For the People* document
Optimizer	• Presentations at conferences • Copies of resulting research • Focus on advocacy
Intellectual stimulation	• Online research • *For the People* document • Professional development opportunities • Copies of resulting research
Change agent	• Data analysis • Data-driven process • End-of-year follow-up
Monitors/evaluates	• Accountability plan • Digital scorecard • Initiative templates • Final report • Debriefing after sessions
Flexibility	• Accountability flowchart • Diversity of teams
Ideals/beliefs	• Democratic decision-making process • Core Values, Core Beliefs, and Learner Expectations

learning, and authentic technology integration." This mission statement aligns well with the beliefs of the superintendent in shared leadership and empowerment.

This mission was upheld by the continued emphasis on shared leadership and decision making. The planning process began with community forums and surveys to determine the shared values, beliefs, and expectations of not only the school district but of the town's people. The findings of these forums and surveys were posted during each subsequent session so that decisions were focused on the core values, beliefs and learner expectations of all. Activities such as a card sort and rationale statements provided participants time to align their decisions with those core values, beliefs, and expectations. There was also a requirement from the external research organization to have all decisions made by heterogeneous teams of diverse stakeholders. Five teams, each made up of students, teachers, parents, community members, administrators, and board members, shared in the leadership of developing the district's five-year strategic plan. Utilizing team members from such diverse backgrounds with different levels of skill in data analysis, goal setting, and discourse could be problematic, therefore, the external research organization provided activities that help to empower all participants to contribute meaningfully to the decision making process. Team building activities were used throughout the process to build relationships and comradery. Overall, the diversity of teams and mutual accountability provided *flexibility* during the planning process. In addition to the diversity of teams, the external facilitators provided digital templates that allowed for *flexibility*. The external facilitators emphasized that although decisions are made based on the best data, research, and procedures, changes will need to be made along the way. Timelines can be changed, performance measures can be increased or decreased, new persons can be assigned responsibilities.

The RPP provides external supports in the form of various activities and exercises to assist the team members in being *change agents* for the good of all. Team members were empowered with activities to acquaint them with the large amount of data provided in the data notebook. All participants were given a data notebook containing data on student achievement, programs, demographics, and perceptions. To facilitate the analysis of this data, individual team members and/or teams were given data analysis guides. These guides provided instructions on which specific data to examine, what questions to ask, and how to record findings. Following each data analysis sessions, teams participated in gallery walks to share their findings with the at-large group for feedback and transparency. Facilitators provided activities that emphasized the importance of all team members to serve as advocates of the plan and the planning process. After one year of implementation, the RPP continued to work with the school district and provide an end-of-year follow-up for reflection. Altogether, these resources provided the necessary supports so that all team members felt empowered to contribute to the shared leadership of data-driven decision making.

So that decisions made would be research-based, facilitators provided team members with information on best educational practices related to *knowledge of instruction, assessment, and curriculum.* In their *For the People* document, Oklahoma State School Boards Association reported on instructional best practices and how they aligned to state-level strategic goals. That document was given to participants to first align their goals to those of the state, and second to refer to for actions to implement as part of their district's five-year strategic plan. In addition to this document, the external research organization directed participants to conduct online research and locate best practices that aligned to their districts' goal areas. This RPP then provided an activity focused on root cause analysis that served to help teams narrow their focus in

determining initiatives based on the most recent research-based knowledge of curriculum and instruction. The two documents also provided the superintendent with information that could be shared later with others, teachers, community members, and school board members, for intellectual stimulation and to gain continuing support for the strategic plan. When challenged by members of the district or community about the direction of a particular initiative or step, the research documents provided the necessary support that what was being done was what was best for students. Altogether, these activities and resources provided *intellectual stimulation* for the members as they engaged in developing the plan.

Once the district's strategic plan was completed, the superintendent received several resources to support her leadership to aid in *monitoring and evaluating* the implementation of the plan. Copies of the final report, both in print and digital, were provided to the district so that everyone had access to the details of the plan. The final report included names and positions of each team member; each goal area with relevant objectives and action steps; the data used to identify that goal area; rationale statements for each objective that aligned to the community's core values, beliefs, and/or expectations; performance measures for success; and a timeline for implementation. Digital templates of each initiative which provided additional details were also provided. These templates included the persons responsible for each action step, any resources that would be needed, and the expected date for completion. These templates became useful shared tools for the superintendent to monitor and evaluate on a regular basis the asked for change in practice. Another digital resource provided was a digital scorecard that allowed the district to report annual progress to the community. This tool made the monitoring and evaluating of practice a very transparent process.

The external research facilitators guided teams and administrators in developing a plan for accountability to further monitor and evaluate the implementation of the plan.. An accountability plan helped everyone to know who would report to who and when. The only requirement from the external partner was that the plan had to be an agenda item at every school board meeting. Who would report to the board was a decision left to the teams. The facilitators also led leadership through developing a year-one schedule for team meetings. These meetings, plus the shared digital templates became the foundational support for accountability. Team chairs, administrators, and program directors knew that they would be asked to share their data with the group. As one building principal shared, by making the data and success public in regular meetings, "We don't want to let anybody down…They want to be accountable to that and they've stepped up to the plate and said, 'this is our baby'. We want to make sure it's taken care of." Finally, facilitators met with all building level administrators and teacher representatives to fine tune the district plan for year-one implementation at their specific grade/site.

The external researchers have taken a leading role in *optimizing* to inspire and lead challenging innovations in strategic planning by conducting research on the CSI model. Research articles have been written and presented at different conferences and one article has been published in a peer-reviewed journal. The superintendent and board members have served on panel discussions at state conferences to highlight their success. The research facilitators continue to encourage the school district to advocate for the plan by keeping it flexible and transparent to all stakeholders and sharing research findings with the district.

In summary, the findings show that although many of the change leadership responsibilities may be innate, they can be enhanced and supported by an external

research-based organization in an RPP. As the school board member shared, "It's what the community wanted, it's what the school board wanted, it's what the schools wanted. Now it's just aligned and moving forward. I can't describe it other than, "Hang on, it's fun!"

Discussion

This study examined the leadership qualities required during times of change and how a partnership with an external research organization supported the leadership in implementing research-based practices across the district. The absorptive capacity of the school district relies heavily on district leadership, but the data has shown that change leadership is enhanced and supported by external resources (See Figure 2).

RPPs are true partnerships in that they are long-term collaborations between practitioners and researchers that investigate problems of practice utilizing past research while generating new research (Fishman et al., 2013). It is the generation of new research that makes the partnership truly mutualistic. Not only were the goals of the school as the practitioner partner met, but the goals of the research organization were also met. In this study, the goal of the research organization was to partner with schools for the purpose of not only improving instruction but to also share the results of the partnership through the dissemination of research. This goal was achieved by the data collected from the school district throughout the CSI process and the data that was gathered in the form of feedback surveys following every session. These surveys were Likert-scaled questions aligned to the specific objectives of the sessions. Field notes capturing not only the step by step process but the reactions of participants to different activities, were also taken during each phase of the process. Each session was also followed by a meeting with district leadership for their input as to the effectiveness of the session. Interviews were conducted with representative participants for their in-

depth perspective on the program. Additionally, an external evaluator was employed to provide an external voice to the entire process. Lastly, because the digital scorecard is placed on the district's web page and accessible to anyone, the research organization can use that data to gauge the success of individual action steps, initiatives, and/or goal areas. All of these resources provided the external research organization with tools for the ongoing improvement of the process and to the development of new research.

Changes initiated within the research organization as a result of the partnership have been the improvement of the CSI model itself. With the aid of the feedback surveys and the field notes, the program developers and facilitators have been able to add to and/or edit activities and resources. Improvements in the process/activities include providing unique data analysis guides for each school district, creating and maintaining a unique research folder with resources individual to each school district, facilitating the process through the use of online collaborative Google Docs, and developing an advocacy activity for team members to educate stakeholder groups about the strategic plan. In addition, the research organization has been able to present research articles at state and national conferences and have an article published in a peer-reviewed educational journal. Additionally, the facilitators have increased their knowledge not only of strategic planning for improvement but also in the area of presentation skills, adult learning theory, and research-based initiatives. A comparison of presentations from this first partnership with that of our now fifteenth partnership shows that the input of past participants has played a vital role in the growth and improvement of the CSI model. The practitioner to researcher partner is summarized in the following diagram.
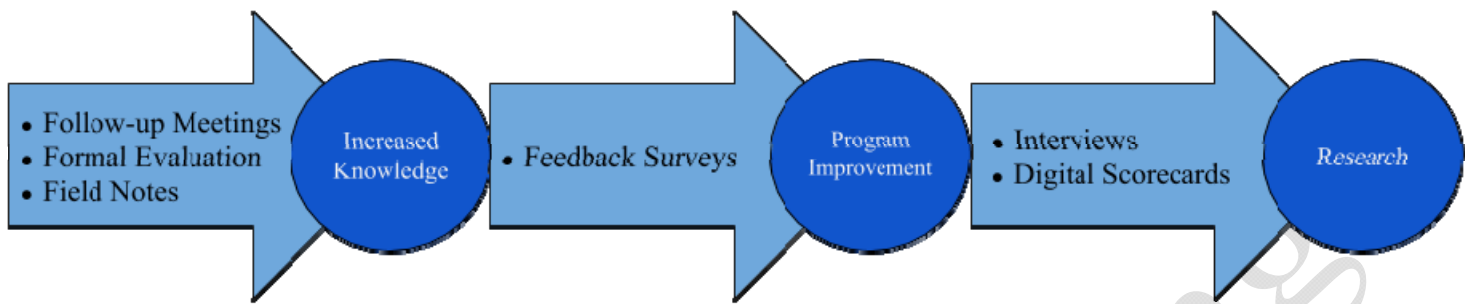
Figure 3: Practitioner to Research Organization Resources

Figure 3 shows how resources from the school district led to increased knowledge by the facilitators and developers which led to program improvement with the end result being the development of informative educational research.

Together, these two diagrams show the mutualistic nature of RPPs. As American schools are faced with an increasing demand for large-scale school improvement (Farrell & Coburn, 2017), schools can engage with external research organizations for support to help shape the school's practice in meaningful ways (Fishman et al., 2013). In turn, such a partnership between schools and research organizations can assist the researchers to ask questions that are of importance to all practitioners including themselves (Farrell et al., 2018). As partners, schools and research organizations can identify ways to increase the mutualistic absorptive capacity of Research-Practice Partnerships (RPPs).

Limitations

This study is one case study of one school district. Although its findings on the importance of change leadership qualities have remained fairly constant with other partnerships through the CSI program, further research needs to be done. Do these findings hold true for schools of all sizes, geographical locations, demographics, or experience level of the superintendent? This study was with a first year superintendent

new to this school district.Does experience within a district impact implementation of research-based practices? Does experience within a position impact implementation of change initiatives? To answer these questions, more targeted research is needed.

Implications

This study has strong implications for educational leadership programs, school boards training, and program development. How can educational leadership programs prepare future leaders to lead change? What qualities should school boards look for in hiring superintendents to lead change? How can research-based organizations better partner with schools for improved student learning? As schools are called to implement more and more changes, the implications for further possible partnerships between research-based organizations and practitioners are endless.

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Administrator's Perspectives of Inclusion in Preschool

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LeAnne Syring is Assistant Professor and coordinator of the Special Education programs at Southwest Minnesota State University. Syring earned her Ph.D. in Early Childhood Education w/Special Education emphasis 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 Composing Texts, Bemer, A., Baker, L.B., Lucas, L., & Smith, A.N. (Eds.). (2016) and was the keynote speaker for the Undergraduate Teacher Education Action Research Conference. Syring received an Excellence in Teaching Award from The National Society of Leadership and Success.

Abstract

Inclusion classrooms incorporate students with special education needs participating with their nondisabled peers within the same classroom. In spite of research documenting benefits of inclusion classrooms for children with special education needs and their typically developing peers, less than 40% of preschoolers with special education needs attend preschool in an inclusion setting. The purpose of this study was to examine why, despite the federal mandate that directs school districts provide preschool children with special education needs classroom placement in free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment, the majority of

preschool students with special education needs are not placed in inclusive preschool classrooms. Administrators' perspectives were studied and results will be shared, along with recommendations for administrative training and further research recommendations.

Attitudes of Superiority: "Are Study Abroad Students Entitled"?

Terrance McCain
Central Washington University

Terrence McCain is a professor of 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. As part of his teaching he regularly leads study abroad programs.

Abstract

This presentation will focus on the attitudes and behaviors of study abroad students in relation to their international hosts. I have developed several study abroad programs and have witnessed a variety of student attitudes and behaviors. It is my experience that students who participate in study abroad programs where English is not the common language often assume that they really don't need to learn the language or anything about the culture. This of course could be due to many factors. They may believe that their language and culture are more sophisticated. They may believe that everyone should be able to speak English. They may assume that the population has sufficient English speakers to meet their needs. Do the students who participate in these programs carry a sense of entitlement and cultural superiority with them? Do they impose this view on their international hosts? I will discuss these questions in this presentation.

Beyond the Gradual Release of Responsibility – Obstacles and Opportunities for Student Teachers Implementing Inquiry-Oriented Instruction

Paul Sylvester

West Chester University of Pennsylvania

Growing up in the extreme segregation of the suburbs of Detroit led Dr. Sylvester to his work in urban schools. He began his work at youth programs in Detroit and Spanish Harlem, and taught elementary school in Boston and Philadelphia. He worked as the Dean of Faculty at an environmentally focused charter school in Philadelphia, coordinated the master's elementary program at the University of Pennsylvania, and lived in Costa Rica working as a consultant to a rain forest preserve developing its educational programs. Dr. Sylvester earned his PhD at the University of Pennsylvania and his research and teaching interests include curriculum development, classroom management, and teaching for social change and sustainability.

Abstract

Objective / Research questions: The objective of this interactive session is to understand student teachers' perspectives regarding the obstacles and opportunities for planning instruction that is inquiry-oriented rather than using the prevalent gradual release of responsibility ("I do, we do, you do") format. While the gradual release of responsibility (GRR) is recognized as an efficient method for teaching discrete skills, it is problematized for being –by definition—designed to have students to copy the teacher rather than to develop creativity or skills for non-routine problem solving. Method /Data sources. This study uses a phenomenological approach to understand the emic

perspectives of student teachers. Data includes both qualitative evidence from the work of a curriculum inquiry group and survey results of a broader pool of student teachers (n=80). Results: The results of this study detail the ways that student teachers found openings for inquiry-oriented lessons within a context where the gradual release of responsibility (GRR) is overwhelmingly used for rapid coverage and assessment of discrete skills. Specifically, student teachers found the most opportunities for inquiry teaching were during math period and through reversing the order of textbook assignments so that students first grapple with a problem and then discuss it, rather than the reverse. The most common obstacles cited by student teachers to implementing inquiry-driven instruction were the norms and expectations of their mentor teacher; the press to use the most time-efficient methods for teaching skills needed to pass standardized tests; and the fact that students were not used to struggling with problems. Implications: The findings of this study raise an important question for teacher educators: How do we support student teachers in planning and implementing inquiry-oriented lesson when they may not be seeing this kind of instruction being modeled and may experience resistance for doing so?

Book Clubs-The Power of Choice: What's the Impact on Reading Achievement?

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Dr. Robert Ingram is an assistant professor in the college of Education at Peru State College in Nebraska. He is the chair of The Open Door Program at the college. Robert earned his doctoral degree from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, obtaining the UNO Distinguished Alumni Award in 2001. His academic areas of research include literacy, first-year college success, and at-risk learners. Robert is an experienced educator with 13 years of classroom teaching and serving 22 years as a building administrator. He currently supports his community by serving as Education Chair for The Tuskegee Airman Education Scholarship and as chairman of the Education Advisory Council in his church. He has taught higher education for 4 years. Robert is dedicated to developing and supporting college/school partnerships.

Dr. Kelly Kingsley is an educator, writer, and speaker who truly loves assisting in the learning of others. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from the University of Nebraska-Kearney, her Master in Curriculum and Instruction from Doane University, and her Ed.D. at the University of Nebraska Lincoln as part of

the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate with an emphasis in Teaching, Learning, and Teacher Education. Kelly was an an elementary teacher in Bellevue, Nebraska with a primary focus on third grade for 26 years, and has been an Associate Professor in the School of Education at Peru State College for the last 5 years working in teacher education and preparation. Her research interests are using mindfulness in the classroom, book clubs and their impact on literacy learning, and the retention of college freshman through learning communities. Kelly believes teaching is a lifelong learning process and effective practice is nurtured by collaboration and teamwork.

Dr. Gina Bittner, Associate Professor, Peru State College earned a Bachelor of Science in Elementary and Special Education K-8 from Nebraska Wesleyan University and a Masters of Science in Special Education: Moderate Needs from the University of Northern Colorado (UNC), followed by a Ph.D. in Leadership in Educational Administration. Gina was a K-3 special education teacher and a 2nd and 3rd grade teacher in Weld County Re-3(J), Colorado school district for nine years, and has been teaching elementary reading and math methods courses for the last 13 years at Peru State College in Southeast Nebraska. Dr. Bittner remains rooted in K-12 academia through her roles as a mom, foster mom, classroom and children's church volunteer, higher education partnerships with public schools, and as a scoring leader for national teacher education assessments. She is passionate about making learning real and meaningful and developing innovative coursework that engages teacher candidates with not only content but with public schools.

Abstract

In our research study, we addressed the impact of weekly book clubs on student achievement in literacy. Three groups are identified: a control group, receiving only classroom instruction, a girls' book club, receiving regular classroom instruction plus a 45 minute weekly book club intervention, and a boys' book club, receiving regular classroom instruction plus a 45 minute weekly book club intervention. The experiment offered insight in the relationship between student engagement during book clubs where students select the books being read and the effects on reading scores. The purpose of this study was to determine if participation in book clubs where books are selected by students results in improved reading comprehension scores as measured on the Measure of Academic Progress and the district reading benchmark assessments. This presentation will identify the levels of success as well as practical application of strategies aiding in success of the clubs.

Introduction

Literacy achievement is an expectation that schools, parents, teachers, and students have for all students. Literacy skills are measured, analyzed, used for planning and instruction, and measured again. However, what instructional strategies are being used? It is known that students who read for fun are more likely to achieve higher test scores (National Education Association, 2017). It is also known that in 43 different countries, girls are outperforming boys in reading through the age of 15. Research suggests some common themes with regard to literacy achievement and gender. Based

on published research, and a gap in knowledge of the impact of book clubs on literacy achievement, with particular attention to literacy achievement of both boys and girls, it is hypothesized that adding in a weekly book club, led by adult educators, will have a positive long-term effect on the impact of achievement of the participants compared to the control group who receive no additional support.

Literature Review

Numerous studies have shown that students are more motivated to read when they can freely choose their own reading material (Gambrell, 1996; Palmer, Codling, & Gambrell, 1994; Spaulding, 1992). Genuinely free selection of books, of course, could potentially come into conflict with the goal that students read books at their own levels. Miller (2009), argued that students need to have opportunities for absolute autonomy when selecting the books that they want to read. It is only through such autonomy and agency that students can begin to own the reading process and begin to value reading as an important act of discovery.

Much has been written that promotes the use of book clubs in reading and language arts classrooms (Daniels, 1994, 2001; McMahon, Raphael, Gaoately, & Pardo, 1997). Independent book clubs, held outside of the classroom, should also be promoted. Harmon and Wood (2001) explain that book clubs in the classroom provide for lively conversations among groups of students and their peers. Additionally, book clubs help to expand students' understanding and appreciation of the books read. Book clubs that emphasize reading as an experience rather than an academic task can attract students,

even reluctant ones, to participate because they view the club as a social event rather than the typical demands of daily classroom assignments (Mitchel & Harris, 2001).

Although the choice to participate in a book club is important, the freedom to select books read by book club members is central to success. It is important that students at all ranges of reading ability be given the opportunity to select books that stimulate their interest based on their own personal criteria. Choice in text selection empowers readers and thereby promotes literacy development. Readers are, by nature, prone to discuss books that appeal to them which leads to deeper discussion and an expansion of their perspective and opinions (Johnson, Giorgis, and Brown, 2003). Roller & Beed (1994) concur by adding that enthusiastic involvement with books is important as it may provide a venue for students to enter the world of well-read discussion and literary engagement.

Conclusion

The need for accurate information about the impact of weekly book clubs on student literacy is important in order to ensure that we are providing quality, research-based strategies that improve literacy outcomes for learners. The purpose of this study was to determine if participation in book clubs where students select the books they read results in improved reading comprehension scores as measured on the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) and the district reading benchmark assessments.

The study's dependent measures were academic achievement as measured by fall to winter 2017 grade-five normative Reading Assessment and MAP-Reading. Overall, 79% of the grade five students participating in the book club scored at the proficient or better range on the MAP Assessment. This score was consistent with this same group of learners fourth grade MAP Reading Assessment. The district reading benchmark assessments for this group of fifth grade readers showed results that demonstrated progress that mirrored this group's fourth grade district reading benchmark assessments.

We learned by creating a survey we administered to students, teachers, and parents to gather data on their perceptions of the impact of the book club. The researchers feel that even though the academic data demonstrates students made similar growth in reading when comparing comprehension scores from grade four to grade five, the survey responses demonstrate Social-Emotional attitude data that reflects positive attitudes towards the book clubs that speak to the importance of looking beyond the academic impact of the book club. Just one question and several responses from students demonstrates what we saw. Question – "What does the book club mean to you?" "It means a lot to me." "It is a place we can get free books. A place to meet people and enjoy reading. It helps me with my comprehension and confidence in making friends."

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Calming the Storm

Lainey Sandberg
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Lainey Sandberg is a licensed Special Education teacher; grades K-12 with emphasis in Specific Learning Disabilities and Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities. Ms. Sandberg received her undergraduate degree from Minnesota State University-Moorhead. Ms. Sandberg is currently in her 2nd year of Graduate school and earning a Masters in Education: Teaching, Learning, and Leadership through Southwest Minnesota State University-Marshall. This research and presentation fulfills the graduate programs requirements. Ms. Sandberg has 13 years of experience in the areas of Specific Learning Disabilities, Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities, and teaching students how to improve their executive functioning skills. Teaching others how to improve and practice executive functioning skills is of special interest to Ms. Sandberg because of the students she enjoys working with on a daily basis.

Alesha Bates has been an Emotional Behavior Disorder , Autism Spectrum Disorder teacher for the past three years with Brainerd MN public schools. She did her undergraduate work at Southwest Minnesota State University, and is currently in her second year of Graduate school through Southwest Minnesota State University pursuing a Masters in Education: Teaching, Learning, and Leadership.

Abstract

This action research plan was put in place due to the amount of observable lack of executive functioning skills in students within the special education setting. The question guiding the research was, "How will implementing soft skills influence academic interventions and specific soft skills in special education?" For this research, five students were selected to participate in a behavior tracking system while being taught three specific soft skills; task initiation, emotional regulation, and flexibility. The five students received direct instruction in task initiation, emotional regulation and flexibility for three months while being tracked behaviorally by teachers and paraprofessionals in their classrooms. The results of the action research determined that teaching specific soft skills can improve executive functioning skills in students within the special education setting.

Challenges in Measuring K-12 Student Learning

Caryn M. King

Grand Valley State University

Former middle school teacher, assistant and associate professor of education. Currently professor and serving as Associate Dean. Literacy and learning are my research interests.

Abstract

National accreditation for teacher education programs require preparers to present evidence that teacher candidates have a positive influence on K-12 student learning. However, some states do not report K-12 student achievement back to teacher education programs. Being in one of those states, we've designed a solution to measure the impact of teacher candidates on K-12 student learning during a clinical experience. Data from over 600 teacher candidates collected over an academic year indicate these teacher candidates did have a significant difference in the learning of their K-12 students. This presentation will explain the assignment required of teacher candidates as well as the statistical test used to measure effect sizes.

Charter School Leadership – Charting a New Course

Dennis Lamb
Southwest Minnesota State University

Tanya Yerigan
Southwest Minnesota State University

Abstract

As research indicates, the demand for charter school leaders is rising. Estimates in Minnesota put the number of charter leaders needed over the next five years at over 800. There are currently 164 Charter Schools in Minnesota, serving approximately 57,000 students K-12. Currently, Minnesota does not require Charter School leaders to be licensed by the state as administrators. Come and learn about how a new program is being developed to serve this need.

College Freshmen Perceptions of Textbook Readings and Assignments in their First Semester at a University

Gina G. Berridge
University of Southern Indiana

Clarissa Willis
University of Southern Indiana

Dr. Berridge, Associate Professor in Teacher Education, has a Ph.D. In Educational Leadership and Administration. She has been in the K-12 public school system as a teacher, principal, assistant superintendent, and superintendent and has spent the last eleven years teaching undergraduate and graduate level courses. Her research interests include student's beliefs and perceptions of education and their own learning. Along those interests also includes student's beliefs and perceptions about online learning and research-based strategies used in online courses for maximum engagement and learning.

Clarissa Willis, PhD, is an associate professor of Special Education at the University of Southern Indiana. She has written 19 teacher resource books, including Teaching Young Children with Autism. She is the senior author of Learn Every Day The Preschool Curriculum and Learn Every Day The Program for Infants, Toddlers and Twos. Her latest books include Inclusive Environments for Young Children (Corwin Press) and Guidelines for Children with Special Needs (Frog Street). She has a PhD in Special Education from the University of Southern Mississippi and her research

interests include teacher efficacy and quality learning environments for children with autism.

Abstract

To investigate the perceptions of college freshman in a mid-western university on textbook reading assignments and preference, the authors' surveyed 1735 college freshman one month after their first semester had begun. Using an online survey, students answered questions about whether they preferred to read the assignment online or printed, when they read a textbook assignment, if faculty had provided any guidance on reading the textbook in their discipline, and how prepared they felt for the type and level of textbook reading needed to be successful. Results indicated that students preferred a printed textbook to an online format, were guided by faculty on how to read the textbook in their discipline, and were held accountable through exams and quizzes.

Dyslexia…Now What?

Jameha S. Gardner
Athens State University

Finee' Downing
Athens State University

Dr. Jameha Gardner has an extensive background in education, with over 20 years experience. She has earned a Ph.D. in Reading and Literacy, Education Specialist Degree, Reading Specialist Certification, Dyslexia Certification, Administration Degree, Master's Degree in Education, and BS degree in Elementary Education. Dr. Gardner has taught grades 3-5, served as a Reading Specialist and Vice Principal. Currently, she is an Associate Professor of Education at Athens State University, overseeing Reading and Literacy in the College of Education. Dr. Gardner is a lifelong learner, always striving to help others.

Finee Downing has been in the educational arena for over 20 years. She has served as an elementary teacher, reading coach, educational consultant, elementary curriculum supervisor, and currently an Elementary/Early Childhood professor at Athens State University. Her passion is to empower others to be best that they can be.

Abstract

Dyslexia is a growing issue among many children, as well as adults. Research states that on an average 10-15% of the population is dyslexic. A growing concern is how to

address this epidemic. In this workshop, you will learn strategies that are designed to support the dyslexic student.

Elements of Cultural Proficiency: Adopting a Critical Multicultural Instructional Approach

Franklin Thompson
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Franklin Thompson has been an educator for 41 years, with 25 of those years served in the College of Education at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Prior to that he taught in the Public and Private schools of Omaha for 16 years. His academic areas of expertise are race and human relations, multicultural education, urban education, working with at-risk youth, and counseling. He also spent 16 years on the Omaha City Council as an elected official. Thompson also currently serves as the Director of Human Rights and Relations for the City of Omaha.

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify instructional strategies and practices that help promote lifelong learning in the area of multicultural education. In addition to conducting a review of research aimed at uncovering those practices, this study also seeks to identify a few authentic instructional pieces that are not traditionally found in the literature. Utilizing a 9-point Likert Scale, education majors (N=1085) gave strong support for a multi-disciplinary brand of instruction called Critical Multicultural Instruction (CMI) that enhanced student overall personal diversity awareness and skill level (M=7.11, SD=1.58). A multiple regression analysis revealed that the variables important to predicting meaningful learning are instructional practices that [1] adopt a non-politically correct, critical pedagogy style of information delivery (t=2.878, p=.004),

[2] simultaneously appeals to both the intellect (head) and the emotions (heart) of students (t=11.270, p=<.0005), [3] encourages dialogue and teaches students how to disagree without being disagreeable (t=6.342, p=<.0005), [4] utilizes a brand of videos that doesn't sugarcoat the harshness of racism and bigotry (t=5.099, p=<.0005), and [5] includes guest speakers who have a compelling personal story to share (t=3.495, p=<.0005). The linear regression equation for the five predictor model is Personal Growth = .053 + .097 (newteach) + .397 (emoteach) + .197 (dialogue) + .162 (strongvideo) + .084 (guestspeaker), Adjusted R Square = .491, p=<.0005. Today's students want multi-disciplinary, dynamic, and creative multicultural instruction that teaches all sides of a debate and pushes them to think about how we think, while also giving them the final say of what to keep and what to throw away.

Keywords: Lifelong multicultural learning, dialogue, praxis, thinking about how we think, disagreeing without being disagreeable, student

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Embedding Conceptual Understanding into Instruction

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. Research data were collected through reflective writings that analyzed and critiqued pedagogical decisions used in classroom learning experiences.

The data indicated that, when properly developed, conceptual understanding influences instruction and supports learning.

The Globalization of Student Achievement: A Comprehensive Comparison of Alabama's Youth to Their National Peers

Sonja Harrington Weston
Alabama State University

Dr. Sonja Harrington Weston received her Ph.D. in Educational Research from the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa in 1991. Dr. Harrington Weston has taught statistics, as well as quantitative and qualitative research courses for over 20 years at various institutions of higher education. She has conducted research on topics of interest such as student achievement, parental involvement, and school choice for underrepresented students. She enjoys teaching and mentoring students at all levels of education. Dr. Harrington Weston currently serves as a Center for Scholastic Inquiry (CSI) Advisory Board member, in addition to providing service to other national, state, and local organizations.

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to examine the state of education in Alabama, in comparison to its national peers. Over ten years of data from the Alabama State Department of Education, the National Center for Education Statistics, the National Center for Education Statistics School District Demographics 2000, and the United States Census Bureau, were gathered and analyzed to give an account of the educational state of students in schools throughout the state of Alabama. In addition, assessment data from NAEP was collected to present a comprehensive examination of

the economic and academic achievement position of Alabama's youth, compared to their national peers.

Impact of COMP on PreService Teacher Candidates

Terry A. Silver
The University of Tennessee at Martin

Terry A. Silver teaches undergraduate and graduate classes at the University of Tennessee at Martin. She has been utilizing Service-Learning as an Instructional Strategy for more than ten years. She trains K-12 teachers to incorporate Service-Learning in their classroom. She also trains K-12 teachers in Lions Quest, an SEL curriculum. Her research interests include classroom management, service-learning and online engagement.

Abstract

This session will present research associated with the effects of adding Classroom Management and Organizational Program (COMP, developed by Dr. Carolyn Evertsen) into a Classroom Management Course for PreService Teacher Candidates at the University of Tennessee at Martin. Multi-year data will be presented which includes Pre/Post survey results on candidate perceptions of classroom management techniques.

Integrating Service–Learning and Informal Science Education in a Science Methods Course for Prospective Teachers: A Case Study

Barbara S. Spector
University of South Florida

Debbi Stone
The Florida Aquarium

Dr. Spector, Professor of Science Education, a Fellow in the American Association for the Advancement of Science and in the National Institute for Science Education, is a pioneer in the science/technology/society reform movement and a national leader in marine education. Her research focuses on a systemic approach to how change occurs in education. A recent autoethnographpy,The Unorthodox Professor: Surviving and Thriving as a Change Agent in Education, documents half a century at the forefront of change in STEM education.

Debbi Stone, former middle school educator, is Vice President of Education at The Florida Aquarium. She oversees all aspects of education including standards-based school programs, outreach, teacher workshops, community programs, on-site visitor programs, camps, and overall departmental growth at an informal science center. As a 2018 LEAD STEM Fellow, she engages in leadership development for the U. S. National STEM Learning Ecosystem and serves on the Tampa Bay STEM Network Advisory Committee, community leaders guiding PreK-16 STEM learning. Her research focuses on advancing STEM through informal education. Debbi's aquarium education team consistently win awards for their contributions to STEM education.

Abstract

This was a retrospective case study of a science methods course for prospective teachers in middle schools to which a service-learning initiative was added. An informal science education institution (ISEI) identified its needs. Students were tasked with using core principles of the way middle school youngsters learn science to design products of their own choosing to meet the ISEI's needs. Course procedures required students to shift paradigms from didactic teaching to the 3-dimensional learning of the Next Generation Science Standards. Products developed were varied, high quality, and usable in the professional setting. Students expressed enthusiasm for using ISEIs as resources for future teaching.

Addition of this service-learning model surfaced conflict between internal and external motivation as a driver for prospective teachers' learning; highlighted the way grading in higher education limits learners' risk taking, inhibits creativity while engaging in open-ended inquiry consistent with doing scientific research, and restrains autonomous learning.

Introduction

I am a teacher educator who works with both prospective science teachers and teachers who are currently in the classroom. I have been innovating in science education for half a century in order to study how change occurs in science education, and by extension, and all of education. I did a study of my career as a change agent that was published in 2018. As you might infer from the title, The Unorthodox Professor: Surviving and Thriving as a Change Agent in Education, my career has had its share of ups and

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downs. I wrote the book hoping it would help prevent other people who want to innovate to improve education from slipping on the same banana peels that I did.

 My passion has been to change schooling from business as usual, to teaching the way people learn. In science education, we talk about this as the paradigm shift from a didactic, reductionist, mechanistic paradigm to a holistic, constructivist, inquiry and practice-based paradigm. The table below compares key elements of the two paradigms.

Table 1. Comparison of Paradigms in Science Education

Question	Didactic, Reductionist, **Mechanistic Paradigm**	**Holistic**, Constructivist, Inquiry, Practice-based **Paradigm**
What does I teach mean?	An authority (instructor or textbook) transmits-(tells-learners) ideas-(thoughts)-they must be able to reproduce	An authority facilitates learners to ask questions systematically, to seek input, gather and organize data, analyze and synthesize data (process data) to construct answers to their questions
What does I learn mean?	Guess what is in the teacher's head and give the teacher what he/she wants to hear: and, or, I give back precisely what the authority told me	Learner makes sense of input (data) from his/her experiences by constructing meaning and is able and empowered to act based on that meaning

What is the job of a student?	Commit to memory what was transmitted	Process input: Select and process data to construct answers to their questions Integrate thinking, feeling, and acting (thus empowering meaning making). Engage in reflection (about input processed) and metacognition (thinking about thinking processes)
What is the job of the teacher?	Transmit information	Facilitate students' construction of meaning
How does the class function?	Individuals compete with each other	Individuals cooperate and collaborate with all others sharing expertise as a community of practice/learners
What is the function of assignments?	Assignments are tests of students' ability to replicate information from an authority into a product	Assignments are experiences that provide sources of input for data and opportunities to process data to construct meaning and test meaning made with peers
How is instruction organized?	Around basics first	Around sensitive and intellectually complex phenomena
Who evaluates what?	Authority evaluates students' performance with grade indicating the extent to which the learner's assignment product matches a list – rubric- developed by the teacher	Learner evaluates sense being made, identifies where there are gaps in the sense being made, asks questions about the gaps, and seeks more data until gaps are filled
Who primarily directs the learning process?	Teacher	Student
What kind of learning occurs?	Passive	Active
What kind of learner emerges?	Dependent	Autonomous

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(adapted from Spector, 2016 P.22-23)

The story I will share with you today is about an innovation I tested last year in a course titled, Methods for Teaching Science in Middle School. Students came into that class expecting to learn tips for how to teach science the way they were taught science when they were in middle school. From what I said before about the paradigm shift, you've no doubt guessed what my problem is in this course. I don't meet their expectations and that makes them unhappy. I am, therefore, continually looking for new ways to entice these prospective teachers to accept the paradigm shift.

The Innovation

This past semester I integrated service-learning and the use of an informal science education institution into the methods course. My understanding of service-learning is that it has three key components: one is working with community members, the second is use of the subject matter learned in the course to meet a need of the community members, and the third is students reflecting on what they learned from experience. Benefits are supposed to accrue to both the university and the community partner.

I chose service-learning for this initiative because my university had made community engagement a major goal, and service-learning is the mechanism they have been promoting with workshops for faculty. I had been doing a student-directed version of service-learning with my students for about eight years, but after the workshop, I decided I would test the plan I was required to develop during the workshop. It uses a more teacher-directed model than I had been doing.

For my community partner, I chose The Florida Aquarium, which is representative of informal science education institutions (ISEIs) around the country. ISEIs are also called "free-choice" institutions because people go to the aquarium, museums, preserves, and other ISEIs for recreation, and they voluntarily learn science while they are there. My thought was if we could transform learning in schools to feel like learning in an ISEI, more students would be interested in science, develop ownership, and be successful science learners in schools. Thus, more teachers would be successful.

 I anticipate anyone who is interested in making learning and teaching more attractive to students will find the story useful.

Method

This was an emergent design qualitative study in the tradition of symbolic interaction and phenomenology (Jacobs, 19897).

Respondents

There were 13 prospective middle school science teachers enrolled. They were either biology or chemistry majors. Most of them had been to the aquarium when they were children, but not as adults.

Data Sources

Data sources included the following: Products students created for use by the aquarium; participant observation by the instructor and the community partner; emails exchanged among participants; students' by-weekly journals and three responses bi-weekly to each other's journals in the discussion board; service-learning logs students

kept about their projects; exit memos, which were knee-jerk reactions written at the end of each class; and anonymous university end-of-course evaluations.

Course Structure

The course was structured as a flipped classroom in which face-to-face classroom time was devoted to discussion. Multiple types of materials providing new information for students were accessed through a virtual resource center on the class website. Students were tasked with analyzing and synthesizing data from these resources with in-class discussions in journals uploaded to the discussion forums on the class website. They were expected to explain the processes they used to construct meaning, how they might apply that meaning to their future class rooms, and how the core principles describing the way middle schoolers learn could be incorporated into products for use by the aquarium. Their ongoing interactions with their aquarium partner were recorded in service-learning logs. Before mid-semester, each student sent three ideas for products to aquarium personnel to assess feasibility before he/she determined the actual project to be completed. The entire class served in an advisory capacity to each student as he/she went through an iterative process to develop his/her product for the aquarium. The cycle of product development, sharing-getting peer feedback-revising, occurred four times before the final product was delivered to the aquarium.

Research questions

The initial research question was, "What was the impact of service-learning in a science methods course for prospective middle school teachers?" The emergent question of particular interest here was, "What caused students' stress?"

Findings

1. **Service-learning enabled prospective science teachers to respond to a real-world problem, engage in scientific (systematic) inquiry, perform as autonomous learners, and create continuity between school and the real world.**

2. Students learned core principles.

Products produced by students for use in the aquarium were varied and of excellent quality. This was evidence students had experienced the core principles needed to teach middle school students and were able to apply them in a variety of ways. Additionally, students completed a survey in class toward the end of the semester in which they confirmed they had opportunities to meet the original science methods course objectives derived prior to the addition of service-learning to the course.

3. The context generated by the service-learning initiative enabled the conflict in student motivation for learning to surface.

Spontaneous statements by students as the semester progressed described their satisfaction and pleasure working within the holistic paradigm with its open-ended inquiry, where they selected the tasks, pursued their own interests, decided whether to work with partners or alone, and benefitted from advice from their peers throughout the development process. Yet, they lamented not having a rubric to follow that would ensure an A grade.

Further, students indicated they produced more creative products when focusing on working in the free-choice environment of the Florida Aquarium than they would have if they focused on formal middle schools, which they perceive are test driven. Each time they switched their attention to grading, however, they became stressed, frustrated, and angry, which inhibited their ability and willingness to take creative risks exploring ideas and options.

I interpreted the two preceding paragraphs as evidence of a conflict between intrinsic motivation of enjoying being productive and extrinsic motivation of the grade.

4. Time was a limiting factor: Hurricane Irma approached Central Florida the night we went to the aquarium to explore what assets existed there. Recovery from the hurricane made it unreasonable to establish specific deadlines ahead of time for steps as the projects evolved. Recovery also limited the time aquarium staff had available to interact with students.

5. Course structure differing from students' expectations was a source of stress.
 Students expected this course structure to resemble courses they previously experienced. They wanted the professor to determine the exact actions students could take to earn an A grade. They wanted procedures consistent with closed-ended courses in which they had past success. Instead, this course engendered decision-making by students while they were meeting needs of the client institution with which they partnered. Thus, the course was open–ended and organic.

Even though all the students objected to the constraints of test-driven school environments, replacing it with freedom to be creative and explore was not appreciated by some students. End -of-course university evaluations revealed some students retained their frustration because their original didactic course expectations were not met.

6. Even though deadlines were set based on emerging progress as students adapted to real world conditions, emergent deadlines were a source of stress.
Students who were primarily extrinsically motivated continued to expressed stress throughout the course, because they did not have deadlines set ahead of time.

Additionally, when students focused on not knowing if they were meeting the professor's expectation for an A grade, their stress increased. This limited progress in learning and producing useful products.

7. All the partners benefitted from the service-learning initiative.

Aquarium

Collaborating with the university helped keep the aquarium's work fresh and relevant. It is easy for an informal science practitioner to get insular in talking "to each other" and not outside of their profession. They do engage with teachers regularly, but many of them are also insular in talking to each other and not necessarily reflecting on their practice. The university students' products increased the resources for use in the aquarium. The interaction augmented the pedagogical capacity of the aquarium's education staff and furthered the aquarium's mission to educate, entertain, and inspire stewardship of the natural environment.

University

This initiative contributed to the university's goal of community engagement. It enabled the professor to recognize conflicts in student motivation and increased the strategies available to help prospective teachers shift paradigms to become consistent with national standards. In addition to the students learning noted previously, students learned to collaborate with their peers and other professionals, a skill especially necessary for middle school teachers.

Conclusion

Integrating both service-learning and informal science education in a methods course for prospective teachers of middle school science is an effective way to help students

shift paradigms from mechanistic to holistic. The latter is consistent with current national standards in science education, The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS Lead States, 2013). Further, it increased prospective teachers' self-efficacy and expanded their understanding and desire to use ISEIs as resources for their future science teaching in schools.

While the students were explicit about the rewards they experienced working in the holistic paradigm, these rewards were over powered by the stress generated by the absence of closed-ended criteria guaranteeing a grade of A at the end of the course. The difference between students who were intrinsically motivated to learn to teach science and those who were extrinsically motivated by a grade became apparent when a service-learning project was embedded in the holistic science education approach consistent with national standards. Students who were intrinsically motivated did not let their concern for earning a A grade interfere with their work flow. Externally motivated students were hampered in their work flow.

Prospective middle school science teachers partnering with informal science education institutions for service-learning is a promising strategy that higher education institutions can use to encourage students to resolve motivational conflicts inhibiting their productivity when shifting from dependent learners to autonomous learners. This change is inherent in the shift from reductionist, mechanistic paradigm to a holistic, constructivist, inquiry, practice-based paradigm required to make education consistent with the needs of today's society.

As is expected in service-learning endeavors, all the actors and institutions in the partnership benefited from this model.

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Invention Convention: Uncovering Changes and Impact upon Students Over the Years

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Dr. Tracey Huddleston earned her doctoral degree from Mississippi State University. As a professor at Middle Tennessee State University, in Murfreesboro Tennessee, she serves as Director of the Initial Licensure Program and Director of Invention Convention. Her research interests include curriculum development, teacher effectiveness and project-based learning. Staying connected and involved with the elementary classroom is most important.

Jessica Schwendimann obtained a B.S. in Sociology from Middle Tennessee State University. She enjoyed working with an after school program as well as an Educational Assistant for an integrated special education preschool classroom for two years. These experiences fostered her love and passion for teaching. While completing her graduate coursework in Elementary Education, Jessica works as a Graduate Assistant in the department. In the future, she looks forward to promoting a sense of community in her classroom; making every student feel like they belong to a big family is most important to her. Further, Jessica plans to continue her education working toward a Ph.D in Literacy Studies.

Kayla Croy obtained a B.S. in Communications Studies from The University of Tennessee. Before entering the Initial Licensure Program at Middle Tennessee State University, she worked in sales for the Tennessee Smokies, a Chicago Clubs AA Affiliate. Feeling drawn to working with children, she accepted a job as an educational assistant in a Pre-K classroom. It was then she realized she wanted to become a teacher. Kayla works as a Graduate Assistant in the Elementary Education department. She looks forward to providing a safe place for students to feel comfortable and excited to

learn. Further, Kayla welcomes opportunities to enhance her students learning through curriculum integration.

Abstract

For several years, an increased emphasis has been placed on the integration of content areas especially Math and Science. In addition, there has been an emphasis on more support and encouragement for girls to participate in these areas as well. Due to this increased focus, many STEM or STEAM programs and activities have emerged across the nation.

One opportunity for such an activity in the middle Tennessee area is the annual Invention Convention. Fourth, fifth and sixth grade students from the middle Tennessee area bring their inventions to compete against others in their grade level. With their prototype, students will present or "pitch" their invention idea to the judges. In the months prior, students have worked through the design process to create something new for our world.

After many years of collecting data from the Invention Convention coupled with the increased emphasis on Science and Math integration, three questions were asked: (1) Has there been an increase in female participation over the last ten years? (2) Did participating in the Invention Convention influence their career choices? Last, (3) is there any correlation between teacher practices and success rate at the convention? Participants will receive copies of the design process used for the Invention Convention; view a vignette of a presentation by a student, and hear results of the three research questions.

Investigating Kindergartners' Early Numeracy and Literacy Skills Using a Data Collection Performance Task

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Insook Chung is a professor of Education at Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, IN. She earned her doctorate with a specialty in Mathematics Education and a master's degree in Early Childhood Education from the University of Missouri, Saint Louis, MO. She teaches Elementary Education preservice teachers courses in mathematics education and early childhood education. Her primary research interest involves effective mathematical instructional methods and strategies to assist children in developing conceptual understanding. She is also interested in performance-based assessments and international comparative studies in the area of mathematics education. She has presented her work at regional, national, and international conferences including National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and International Congress on Mathematics Education (ICME).

A former elementary teacher, Katherine Higgs-Coulthard earned her doctorate from Northeastern University, Boston, MA. before becoming an Assistant Professor of Education at Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame. Dr. Higgs-Coulthard teaches courses in language arts, corrective reading, and content area pedagogy. Her research centers on

issues in literacy development. Her most recent research has explored the impact of scripted language arts curriculum on learner outcome and teachers' senses of self-efficacy.

Abstract

Various research studies suggest that early numeracy and literacy skills are related to and predictors of children's academic success in later school years. This study examined kindergartners' early numeracy and literacy skills using a data collection task. The specific objectives of this study were to investigate how kindergartners are able to 1) count the quantity of each concrete object after grouping them according to object, 2) record the quantity of each group of objects, and 3) organize the data in a worksheet. The subjects of this study were 37 public school kindergartners selected by a convenience sampling. An open-ended performance task was employed to assess the skills. Qualitative and quantitative data from the children's responses to both the performance task and the researchers' observations of the children performing the task were analyzed to accomplish the objectives of the study. Analysis of student performance yielded the following: 31 children (84%) accurately sorted the objects, 25 children (68%) correctly counted and wrote the quantity of each object group, and 18 children (49%) successfully recorded their findings using letters or words and drawings of the objects. Further research studies and recommendations are suggested.

Investigating Kindergartners' Early Numeracy and Literacy Skills Using a Data

Collection Performance Task

Introduction

Children develop early numeracy skills and literacy skills long before they enter school. They utilize this informal knowledge to explore their environment and make sense of daily life experiences. Early numeracy skills are defined as the skills of counting, knowing the number symbols, recognizing quantities, discerning number patterns, comparing numerical magnitudes, and estimating quantities (in Toll & Van Luit, 2014). According to Jean Piaget (1963), children begin to develop classification, one-to-one correspondence, and representation skills during the preoperational stage (ages 2-7) as well as skills for manipulating concrete objects and symbols and numerically representing their world. Children begin to develop early literacy skills, which include alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, letter writing, print knowledge, and oral language, in the preschool years (National Institute for Literacy, 2009; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998).

Various research studies reported that early numeracy and literacy skills are related to and predictors of children's academic success in later school years and career success (e.g., National Institute for Literacy, 2009 and National Research Council [NRC], 2009). Children with inadequate early numeracy and literacy skills experience academic difficulties at a later stage (Auola, Leskinen, Lerkkanen, & Nurmi, 2004; Purpura, Reid, Eiland, & Baroody, 2015). Therefore, it is critical for educators to precisely identify kindergartners at risk for math and literacy learning difficulties by assessing children's early numeracy and literacy skills in order to prevent academic

learning difficulties in primary school (Toll, Van der Ven, Kroesbergen, & Van Luit, 2011) and beyond.

Literature Review

Children begin school with varying levels of mathematic proficiency (Purpura et al., 2015). Early numeracy skills have typically been categorized into three related, but separate, domains: numbering, numerical relations, and arithmetic operations (Jordan, Kaplan, Locuniak, & Ramineni, 2007). Numbering includes both the ability to count and to understand the underlying principles of counting, which involves discerning the number of items in a set. Numerical relations involve understanding the relationship between two or more items (collections or numbers) and the "association between the numbers on the mental number line" (Purpura, Hume, Sims, & Lonigan, 2011, p. 206), and it may involve number patterns, numerical magnitudes, and estimation (Toll & Van Luit, 2014). Arithmetic operations pertain to children's abilities to comprehend changes in quantity.

These numeracy skills impact children's early academic performance as well as later success in mathematics and other academic outcomes in literacy, science, and technology (National Research Council, 2009). While little is known about the developmental dynamics of mathematics, the development of mathematical skills seems to progress in a hierarchical manner, with complex skills building upon prior knowledge of basic concepts (Aunola, Leskinen, & Nurmi, 2004). Counting ability is one example of a foundational skill needed for future math performance. Aunola et al. (2004) found that a child's initial level of counting ability is a strong predictor of both the level of math performance and its subsequent development. Learning to count is more than the rote memorization of number names, and in fact, involves the acquisition

of three core principles, first identified by Gelman and Gallistel (1978). These principles include the one-to-one principle, which states that only one numeral can be assigned to each item within the set; the stable-order principle, which identifies that the numerals used in counting always maintain the same order; and the cardinal principle, which designates the numeral assigned to the final item in the count as representative of how many items are in the set (Gelman & Gallistel, 1978; Sarnecka & Carey, 2008). Further, LeCorre and Carey (2007) concluded that children acquire counting principles through a systematic mapping procedure of small sets consisting of one to four items and that numerals beyond four are not part of the same process.

Research has also explored the role of early literacy components in predicting school success. The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2010) identified six variables that predicted later literacy even when accounting for other variables, such as IQ or socioeconomic status. The variables identified for their predictive value include: alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, rapid automatic naming of letters or digits, rapid automatic naming of objects or colors, letter production, and phonological memory (NIH, 2010).

The strongest single predictor of both short-term and long-term literacy performance is the possession prior to school entry of alphabetic knowledge, defined as the ability to name printed letters and produce the associated sounds (Stevenson & Newman, 1986; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). However, Adams (1990) has suggested that the predictive quality of alphabetic knowledge may be indicative of greater familiarity with other literacy processes, rather than alphabetic knowledge in and of itself. One potential intervening process is print conventions. Students who understand the conventions of print understand that English texts are read front to back, text flows left to right with a return sweep top to bottom, letters make up words, and words are

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different from pictures. This type of familiarity with print has also been demonstrated to predict children's future reading comprehension and decoding abilities even after controlling for other factors, such as vocabulary and metalinguistic awareness (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998).

Multiple studies have suggested that there is a link between numeracy and literacy development in young children (Aunola et al., 2004; Jordan, Kaplan, & Hanich, 2002; Kleemans, Segers, & Verhoeven, 2011; Purpura et al., 2011; Purpura et al., 2015; Toll & Van Luit, 2014). Some studies suggest that language ability is a prerequisite for learning early mathematical skills (e.g., Aiken, 1972; Duncan et al., 2007; Kleemans et al., 2011). Phonological awareness is most often associated with the development of mathematics skills (Purpura et al., 2011), with Krajewski, Schneider, & Niedling (2008) suggesting that it is actually the connection between phonological awareness principles and learning number words that impacts numeracy development. Purpura et al (2011) did not find evidence to support a direct link between phonological awareness and mathematical development, but instead determined print knowledge to be a better predictor of early numeracy (Purpura et al, 2011; Toll, & Van Luit, 2014).

Others suggest that numeracy and literacy mutually influence each other during development (Toll & Van Luit, 2014). This connection is easily apparent in the area of counting. Counting requires the linking of objects to numerical words with a one-to-one correspondence. A one-to-one counting correspondence occurs when a child recognizes that each item in a set corresponds with one and only one numeral. As noted by the National Research Council (2009), this also involves connecting the timing of counting with the spatial location of the object. Young children often fail at counting by mismatching the timing of the number word with the object they are trying to count.

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This results in some objects being counted twice or not at all (National Research Council, 2009).

Early childhood mathematics has increasingly focused on children's ability to interpret and represent authentic data (English, 2010; Mulligan, 2015; NCTM, 2006), yet there is little research to date regarding young students' ability to work with data (Jones et al., 2000; Nisbet, Jones, Thornton, Langrall, & Mooney, 2003). To support young children as they learn to use representational tools to communicate information about data, Mulligan (2015) and English (2012) suggest the use of data modeling, which is defined as the developmental process of investigating phenomena and organizing information about that phenomena (English, 2010). Jones et al. (2000) developed a framework for assessing elementary students' statistical thinking. The Jones Statistical Thinking Framework examined the performance of first through fifth grade students across four constructs of data processing: describing, organizing and reducing, representing, and analyzing and interpreting data. The framework employed a cognitive development model previously designed by Biggs and Collis (1982), to rate children's performance across these constructs according to four levels of statistical thinking: idiosyncratic, transitional, quantitative, and analytical. In a follow-up to the Jones study, Nisbet et al. (2003) asked first through fifth grade students to draw a picture or construct a graph based on data presented in a story. Nisbet et al. assessed students' use of the Jones Statistical Thinking Framework and found significant differences in the data processing abilities of first graders compared to older students. Specifically, the first graders in this study used incomplete or idiosyncratic thinking in organizing the data (Nisbet et al., 2003) whereas the older students were capable of better organizing the data, but their ability to do so differed depending on whether the data was categorical or numerical.

Interestingly, although Nisbet and Jones had participants complete similar tasks, there was a significant difference in the performance of first graders between the two studies. Nisbet attributes that difference to participants' potential familiarity with the data set. In the Jones study, the participants categorized Beanie Babies while in the Nisbet study participants categorized modes of transportation. As a result, Nisbet et al. suggest that further research should focus on the mode of presentation as well as the content of the data exploration in order to ensure that both the task and the content are suitable for young children.

Purpose of the Study

This study examined kindergartners' early numeracy and literacy skills. This study specifically investigated kindergartners' ability to 1) count the quantity of each concrete object after sorting them according to object, 2) record the quantity of each group of objects, and 3) organize the data in a worksheet.

Method

Participants

The population for this study consisted of kindergartners currently enrolled in suburban public schools within the Midwestern United States. The 37 kindergartner subjects (n=37) consisted of 24 boys and 13 girls with an average age of 5 years, 8 months. They were from low and middle socioeconomic families. In regard to academic ability, 12 children were classified by their teachers as above average, 18 average, and 7 below average.

Instrument

The researcher used the worksheet "My Inventory Bag" from the curriculum *Investigations in number, data, and space* (2nd ed.) (TERC, 2008). It coincides with an open-

ended performance task that assesses children's early numeracy, literacy, and data collection skills. The children were asked to sort and count a total of fifteen concrete objects they removed from a lunch bag. Each bag contained 1 banana counter, 2 candies, 3 teddy bear counters, 4 apple counters, and 5 lima beans. The children were asked to sort the objects into groups, count the number of each type of object, and write on the worksheet their quantity and the names of the objects or drawing of the objects. The researchers explained the directions verbally and had the children start the task. The verbal directions stated, "Here is a treasure bag. There are lots of surprises in the bag. Let's pour them out onto our paper. Your teacher doesn't know what you have in the bag. Write down the number of how many there are in each group, write the name of the items. If you cannot write the names, you may draw pictures of the item." The researchers took observation notes and digital photos of the children working on the task. It took the children between 10 and 15 minutes to complete the task. To ensure observation accuracy and recording, both researchers documented the kindergartners' behavior during the assessment session. One researcher observed and recorded how the children processed the task. The second researcher took photos of the children working. The children's worksheets were collected upon the completion of the task. The observation notes and children's responses on the worksheet were categorized based on three categories: Sorting and counting, writing numbers to quantify each set of objects, and organizing and representing the data using pictures and words. This study had been previously piloted in a public school with a sampling of five kindergartners. That studies' verbal directions were revised based on the children's response in the pilot study. The directions were adjusted from the original worksheet directions in order to create more of a real-life situation for the children.

Procedure and Data Analysis

Two classrooms were selected by convenience stratified purposeful sampling (Patten, 2005) from a public school district. The researchers distributed to the kindergarten parents/guardians via the classroom teachers a letter explaining the objectives of the study, a parent consent form, a student assent form, and an explanation of the task. The letters were sent the third week of October, and the parent consent forms were collected the fourth week of October.

The study took place during the first week of November. The children worked independently on the task, sorting the objects and completing the worksheet, while sitting at tables in small groups of three and four. It took between 10 to 15 minutes for the children to complete the task.

This study employed a qualitative and quantitative (mixed) research method to investigate the early numeracy and literacy skills of kindergartners. The children's worksheet responses were analyzed as quantitative data according to how many children successfully completed the task. The qualitative descriptive data were categorized according to three skills: 1) Sorting and grouping objects, 2) Counting and writing numbers to represent the quantity in each set, and 3) drawing pictures or writing words to organize the data. The categorizing and coding system, and the input data were cross-examined by both researchers.

Results

In regard to the sorting and grouping task, 31 children (84%) accurately sorted the 15 objects onto the worksheet into the five groups according to object type. Among these 31 children, three children (8%) sorted the objects into groups and arranged the

sets in sequence from least to greatest from the one banana to the five lima beans.

Sixteen children (43%) sorted the objects into sets and randomly placed the sets on the

worksheet. Three children (8%) put some of the object sets on the worksheet and left

the rest of the objects sets on the desk. Nine children (24%) sorted the objects correctly

into sets and placed the sets on the desk next to the worksheet. The six children (16%)

who did not gather the objects into sets dumped the objects on the worksheet but did

not group them prior to recording the data.

There were varying results in regard to the children's counting and number

writing skills. Only one child (3%) accurately wrote all the numbers that corresponded

with the objects. Twenty-five children (68%) correctly identified quantities in each set

of objects. Eleven children (30%) wrote numbers but none of the numbers

corresponded with the quantity in the set. One child (3%) did not write any numbers

for the sets. Of the children that wrote numbers, 11 of them (30%) wrote some numbers

backwards. Eight of them wrote the number 3 backwards, five children wrote the

number 2 backwards, three children wrote the number 5 backwards, and two children

wrote the number 4 backwards.

The third category for qualitative data collection involved the children's ability to

organize data and use words or draw pictures to label the objects. Eighteen children

(49%) correctly identified through drawing or words the accurate quantity of objects for

all the sets, while 19 children (51%) drew pictures or wrote words that didn't accurately

identify the quantity of objects in each set. Fifteen children (41%) only drew pictures to

illustrate the quantity of objects. Ten children (27%) wrote letters and drew pictures to

label the sets. Nine children (24%) attempted to write the name of the objects using

letters of the beginning or ending sounds. Next to the number of bananas, they wrote

the word "banana" in the following ways: Bnenu, BL, B, Binnd, BNE, BA, BM, Bnn, bu,

DCDE, BInnD, bn, and bny. They wrote "Candy" as K, Ce, Cd, KD, Cinoe, Ktei, CEDS, and OEI. "Bears" was written as B, Gum, Bue, BronIW, B, Besf, BErs, BS, and Ber. "Apple" was written as A, AS, APLZ, aBL Ahonm, Ab, AbfoP, APLS, and AP for. They wrote "beans" as Ben, buon, Bngs, BENS, BN, or BS. Three children (8%) did not write letters or draw pictures to illustrate the objects.

Discussion and Conclusion

A majority of the children (84%) successfully completed sorting the 15 concrete objects and separating them into groups according to object. However, recording the quantity of each set on the worksheet seemed to be hard for the kindergartners. Of the 37 children, six of them were not able to accurately record the quantity within the sets. Three children sorted the five groups of objects and placed them in the order of quantity. Of those children who placed the objects in order by quantity, only one child wrote the numbers in a sequence from 1 to 5. Kindergartners are expected to write whole numbers and represent a number of objects with a written numeral from 0 to 20 (Number Sense) and identify, sort, and classify objects by attributes (Data Analysis) according to the Indiana State Academic Standards (Indiana Department of Education, 2017) in math content. Nineteen children (51%) phonetically wrote the name of the objects, showing that they know their beginning sounds. This indicated that they had obtained certain alphabetical knowledge including phonological awareness, naming objects, and letter production (see Figure 1.1 & 1.2) One child correctly wrote the word "candy" (see Figure 1.3). Kindergartners, according to English/Language Arts Academic Standards (Indiana Department of Education, 2017), are to demonstrate an ability to write most uppercase and lowercase letters in the alphabet, correctly shaping

and spacing the letters of the words and moving from left to right and top to bottom while writing.

One child sorted the objects correctly and placed the sets in vertical order quantity from 1 to 5 on the worksheet (see Figure 2.1). This child did not record the data on the worksheet (see Figure 2.2) in the same sequential order as he had organized the objects. Another child arranged the sets in quantitative order on the worksheet (see Figure 2.3), but his writing on the worksheet did not demonstrate data analysis skills (see Figure 2.4). The researchers observed some children recording the quantity by drawing pictures on the worksheet with one hand while pointing to each object one by one with the other hand. Some of the children placed the objects on their pictures after drawing the pictures and writing the numbers. As identified earlier, 31 children (84%) accurately separated the objects according to their attribute and put them into corresponding sets. This suggests that they had learned numbering, could count using a one-to-one principle, and were able to discern the number of objects in a set. However, they were not able to record the results successfully on the worksheet. They seemed to have difficulty representing the quantity at Bruner's symbolic level (in Smith, p. 15, 2006). Jerome Bruner describes intellectual development as advancing from an enactive mode (learning by performing using concrete objects), to an iconic mode (representing the knowledge learned through an enactive mode by diagrams and pictures), and finally to a symbolic mode (representing the knowledge by letters and numbers). To help children successfully learn at the symbolic level, he recommends providing children with enactive mode learning experiences with concrete objects, especially when a new concept is introduced. The children who participated in this study need to have more enactive mode and iconic mode learning experiences in which

they have the opportunity to explore data with sorting and classifying tasks using various concrete objects, and record data using pictures, numbers, and words.

Limitations and Delimitations

This study was limited to one geographical area of the US, and the sample area may limit the generalization of results. The samples were drawn from two classes of a regular US public school. The classroom teacher selected the samples in order to include students with a variety of ability levels. This sampling would ensure that the research results would not be skewed to a high or low ability level.

Recommendations for further study

The observation notes and digital photos provided limited review information to identify how the children processed the task and reached the final work. To ensure a clearer picture of the children's working and thinking process, the researcher could interview a child working on the task. The conversation could be videotaped for further study so that the researcher could focus on the conversation and not the taping. This would provide researchers more solid data to study the acquiring of early numeracy, literacy, and data collection skills in young children.

This study was conducted during the first semester of a kindergarten year. Since kindergartners are starting to learn foundations of academic skills, it would be more developmentally appropriate to investigate the students' skills during the second semester. To address this issue, a follow-up study could be conducted with the same children at the end of the kindergarten year. Additionally, a longitudinal study could be conducted with the same group as they move to first and second grade.

This study could be replicated with kindergartners in other countries, particularly Asia, to compare results. International comparative studies such as Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies (TIMSS) reported in 2015 that some

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Asian fourth graders' knowledge and skills in math and science outperformed their counterparts in other countries. The countries with the top five ratings in TIMSS's 2015 report were Singapore, Hong Kong-China, Korea, Taiwan, and Japan, with Singapore having an average score of 618. US students, with an average of 539, ranked 15th among the 49 countries/regions.

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Investigation of How Teachers' Use of Bridging in Dual Language Immersion Programs (Mandarin/English and Spanish/English) Can Help Strengthen Student Literacy in Grades 3-5: Interim Report

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Abstract

The recent growth of Dual Language Immersion programs in the United States for students in pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade is in direct response to two trends in

public education: 1) the growing numbers of students whose first language is not English and 2) the ever-increasing recognition that global awareness is essential for citizens of the 21st century. This paper presents the Interim Report findings of a three-year U.S. Department of Education funded project to investigate instructional bridging activities that occur in dual language classrooms. The research project involves three schools with Dual Language Programs (DLP) (two in Spanish and one in Mandarin) in the same school district. In Year 1 the research team developed instruments, and teacher/coach-led curriculum teams strengthened the availability of bridging lessons in order to examine the degree to which DLI teachers were currently using Bridging in their classrooms. Year 2 saw beta testing of bridging activities that had been developed and pilot testing of a bridging observation protocol; a second round of curriculum development activities also is scheduled to occur. In Year 3 DLI teachers will be asked to have their bridging lessons observed and the relationship of bridging to achievement explored.

Learning in Motion: The Significance and Effect of a Third Grade Teacher's Classroom Redesign with Kinesthetic Learning Equipment

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Dr. Gilbert Duenas is an associate professor in the College of Education. He teaches undergraduate and graduate courses and supervises teacher candidates during their 10-hour field experience and 250-hour preschool internship. Research interests include gaining an insider's perspective of Mexican parents' lived experiences as well as influence on their own children's out of school literacy and math learning. Prior to his current assignment as university professor, he served a 30-year career in the Air Force and worked 7.5 years as a classroom teacher at a K-3 public school in central Alabama.

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.

Abstract

The objective of this qualitative, five-month study at a K-5 elementary school in the Southeast United States was to explore the following research questions via informal conversations with select classroom teachers: (1) How does one, third grade classroom utilize kinesthetic equipment in a general education setting? What kinesthetic

equipment does the classroom teacher use and what is the rationale behind the selection of those pieces. What are the benefits and challenges of facilitating a kinesthetic classroom? From a mixture of observations, semi-structured interviews, field notes, photographs, both researchers collected and analyzed the data to report results on a teaching practice with limited literature and research available on kinesthetic equipment in the classroom.

On Second Thought, I WILL Become a Teacher

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Abstract

In today's society, children who say they want to grow up to be teachers are often discouraged from following that vocation. Yet, 20 years into the future, those who mocked education as a profession are turning to second careers in education. This study, which is currently ongoing, is seeking to determine the factors that attract "late education bloomers" into the field.

Socially Responsible Leadership Development in College Students

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Dr. Kristin Kovar is an Assistant Professor at Southwest Minnesota State University. She earned her PhD from the University of Missouri in 2014. Her research interests include assessment of student learning and leadership development.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine factors impacting college student leadership development within a college of agriculture at the University of Missouri. This study employed descriptive relational survey methods to examine the impact of involvement factors (participation in organizations, community service and leadership education) on college student leadership development. The target population was all junior and senior students in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources at the University of Missouri (N=1,124). Out of the calculated sample size (n=287), 107 participants completed the online instrument (37.3%). In the examination of the leadership outcomes, the greatest mean was reported for the outcome of commitment and the lowest mean was reported for the outcome of change. Most students were involved with two to five different organizations during their college career. A majority (92.5%) of the students reported as having engaged in community service during their college

career, although 44.9% of respondents did not participate in community service on a regular basis. Students responded as being involved in one to two short-term leadership education programs, but no long-term leadership education programs. Eight separate linear regression models were analyzed to determine the impact of involvement factors on the development of socially responsible leadership.

Keywords: socially responsible leadership, college student, leadership development

Student Perceptions of Synchronous Session Techniques

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Dr. Carver graduated from Wheaton College with a BA in Education. She earned her M. Ed. in Developmental Reading K-12 from the College of New Jersey. She earned her Ph. D. in Literacy Curriculum and Instruction and has additional cognates in Educational Leadership and Instructional Design. She previously worked in public and private K-12 schools for twenty years as a classroom teacher, math specialist, reading specialist, and a reading coach. She is currently the Director of Program Approval and the Reading Program Administrator at Saint Leo University where she has designed and taught reading and assessment courses in the Reading, Exceptional Student Education, Instructional Leadership and Education Doctorate programs.

Abstract

The number of students taking online courses has increased significantly. Helping students be successful in this format is very important. Previous studies have attempted to identify the difficulties that have hindered student academic progress the online environment. Adding a synchronous component to an online course is one method that has been discussed as a way to help students be more successful in online courses. This study sought to answer two research questions: 1. How important do students feel synchronous sessions are to their mastery of online content? and 2. What activities within the synchronous sessions do students feel are the most beneficial? Through email, 200 graduate students in 6 different education programs from a Catholic, Liberal Arts University were invited to participate in an online survey. Participants were asked to rate the importance of online synchronous sessions and their various possible characteristics. Results indicated graduate students found the synchronous online sessions are an important addition to the online course. They also indicated that the content of the sessions was the most important consideration. When structuring synchronous sessions, the participants indicated that instructors should focus on explaining assignments, simplifying content, adding additional content, and supporting group work.

Key Words: Online courses, Synchronous components, Blended learning, Higher education

Relationship of Technology and Learning

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Abstract

Current technology clearly provides the means for acquiring greater amounts of data with more efficiency than ever before. Data and information are more readily available and more quickly accessible today, but that does not mean they are used more. Technological learning environments are often used for the delivery of instruction. According to many researchers, the current influx of data is primarily due to the continued development of computer technology, applications and the Internet and as a direct result, educators are often overwhelmed. 'Knowledge' is a collection of 'data' and 'information' items. It is also one's understanding of 'data' and 'information' using experience and familiarity with data and information and adding this to one's current knowledge base. When patterns exist between the data and information and one is able to recognize and understand these patterns along with their implications it becomes knowledge. The aim of knowledge is to organize and create knowledge out of data and information when it is needed. However, the presence of data does not always increase the degree to which educators process data into knowledge creation that will lead to the overall improvement of student learning.

The Relationship between Classical Background Music and Reading Comprehension on 8th Grade Students

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The author has been in education for the past 9 years. She began her career teaching middle school reading and later became a Testing Chairperson. She is currently assisting with administrative roles and is the ESE Program Specialist at SLAM North. Evelyn has an undergrad degree in Elementary Education and a Master's Degree in Special Education. She received her Doctorate in Leadership and Management in 2017. Her research has been particularly in education with a focus in reading.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine if there is any relationship on reading comprehension when background classical music is played in the setting of an 8th grade. Data was calculated using reading comprehension test scores. The participants for this research study consisted of a convenient sample of two classes consisting of 52 8th grade students. Each class was randomly assigned to the experimental group and the control group. Statistical analysis was obtained from independent t-tests. There was a significant effect for students in the experimental group to indicate that listening to background classical music increased reading comprehension proficiency.

Introduction

For the past 20 years, reading comprehension proficiency has been an overriding concern for all educational stakeholders. During this time, students in the United States have made minimal gains in the area of reading on national and international assessments with an outcome of only 36% of students in the United States reading at or above grade level (National Assessment for Educational Progress report of 2018). Furthermore, according to reading assessment results, approximately 24% of eighth graders scored below basic grade level, 40% scored at basic level, and 36% of eighth graders were at or above grade level (NAEP, 2018). The future of reading proficiency outcomes appear to be even more dismal due to the continuous demands and accountability of the implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Language Arts (CCSS, National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). These rigorous standards will affect both teacher practices and student outcomes, which will continue to challenge the presently struggling readers to attain grade level standards (Hiebert & Mesner, 2013). According to Slavin (1989) the factors that predict school success can be determined in the third grade, indicating that the prospect of reading proficiency for at-risk readers in the middle grades correlates to a low graduation rate (Howard &Anderson, 1978).

Given these recent and rigorous expectations for teachers and students alike, and the universal concept of music, we attempt to investigate a cost and time effective practice that can perhaps assist at-risk middle grade students in these cognitive challenges. Researchers have investigated a variety of conditions to determine the effect

on improvement in reading comprehension. One of these conditions is the use of auditory stimuli. Depending on the listener, all genres of music are powerfully effective to arouse a multitude of factors such as cognitive, affective, and motor responses.

There have been ambiguous and incongruent results when music has been embedded into the classroom curriculum with the goal to facilitate cognitive performance; therefore, more research is needed to determine music's effect for developing increased proficiency in literacy. Research indicates that music can either be a distractor or a facilitator on cognitive task performance. This study supplements the current research as we explore the relationship between classical background music and reading comprehension with eighth grade at-risk students. The research question: Is there a difference in reading comprehension scores of eighth grade students who test with classical background music and those who test without background music?

Review of Literature

Implications of Music and Brain Research

The theoretical framework for this study is based on Collins (2014) research to comprehend how music affects emotions, processes in the brain, and changes in development. Early brain research has determined that there exists two hemispheres in the brain: left and right hemispheres or verbal and nonverbal (Gazzaniga, 1992). The left hemisphere encompasses the verbal side of the brain for sequential information processing; the right hemisphere encompasses the nonverbal side of the brain which is emotional and disorganized. This side of the brain focuses on the arts (Jourdain, 1997). Even though study of the brain's functioning is still relatively limited, current knowledge contends that the human brain contains nearly 100 billion neurons that are able to activate simultaneously. Neuroscientists have tried to comprehend how music

affects emotions, processes in the brain, and changes development, which affects music and special imaging processing (Collins, 2014). Due to modern technology of electroencephalograms (EEGs), scientists have discovered the existence of permanent changes in the brain where learning is processed when engaged with music (Schlaug, Jancke, Huang, & Steinmetz, 1994). When listening to music, sounds begin with the ears and finish with the music vibrating one way or another throughout all four major lobes of the brain (Blood, Zatorre, Bermudez, & Evans, 1999). This produces multiple reactions throughout the body, inducing emotions and memory (See Figure 1).

Lozanov (1978) introduced the use of soft music to aid language learning in the late 1960s and pioneered the field of neurolinguistics. Additionally, according to Blakemore and Frith (2000), an enormous amount of information can be rapidly and unconsciously processed when we listen to music which can impact and affect processing of language. This in turn, affects reading and oral language ability. When conducting brain imaging during music instruction, data indicated that the main auditory cortex in the left hemispheres was larger for those listening to music compared to those who were not (Schlaug et al., 1994).

The "Mozart Effect"

Music therapy transcends multiple areas of treatment. Cognitive development, emotional and affective growth, autism, behavior change, social skills, and physical development have all been targeted in musical therapy. More than 30% of students struggle with literacy and no one method has proven to successfully remediate all at-risk students. The body of literature supporting music experiences to promote literacy is increasing. There is a large body of research in neuropsychology that introduced the Mozart effect which originally stemmed from a study in which students listened to Mozart's Sonata for Two Pianos in K Major, K. 448 (Rauscher, Shaw, & Ky (1993).

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Results indicate an increase in an individual's performance on visuospatial tasks. Their study consisted of 36 college students who were given three sets of spatial IQ tests from the Stanford-Binet intelligence scale. Prior to each set of tests participants experienced one of three 10-minute conditions: listen to Mozart's sonata, listening to a relaxation tape, or sitting in silence. The condition of listening to Mozart scored the highest, indicting temporary enhanced cognitive performance. Furthermore, Roskam (1979) reported on the development of music activities to teach specific reading skills for special needs students. In a meta-analysis which compared a variety of music interventions that consisted either a music education condition or a no-music condition, Standley (2008) discovered that there was a significant effect for students in the music condition.

The relationship of listening to classical music and cognitive development became known as the Mozart Effect when several researchers attempted to replicate the original study. A dichotomy of research, classified as the Mozart effect, soon developed. Rideout and Laubach (1996) reported that the experimental group listening to the Mozart sonata K448 for 10 minutes resulted in enhanced synchrony of the firing pattern of the right frontal and left tempo parietal areas of the brain. This persisted for 12 minutes while the control group who listened to a short story reported minimal brain activity from interference. Some scholars have attempted to link this music to cognitive performance (Črnčec, Wilson, & Prior, 2006; Hall, 1952; Mulliken & Henk, 1985; Roth & Smith, 2008), while others have attempted to link it to classroom behavior and motivation (Humphrey, 2014; White, 2007).

Hall (1952) found evidence that background music could improve the reading outcomes of eighth and ninth grade students by 58%. Mulliken and Henk reported that students who tested within a classical music environment outperformed those students

who tested with no music or the rock music treatment. Similar findings were supported by Wiley-Khaaliq (1990) and Dawson (2003), who contend that students who listened to classical music tend to indicate greater achievement than those in the control group with no music. Wiley-Khaaliq (1990) investigated the link between background music and the reading comprehension achievement of students with learning disabilities and reported that the experimental group who listened to music outperformed the control group. Other studies that used classical background music within the classroom contend there was an increase in motivation to learn, increase 'on task' time, and increase in positive behaviors (Humphrey 2014; White 2007). Perham and Vizard (2010) concluded that listening to background music before completing a task could increase attention and memory of a student while also increasing his or her positive mood.

Even though there have been many studies to support the Mozart Effect, other studies found no effect (see Schellenberg, et al. 2007). Črnčec, Wilson, and Prior (2006) argue that the Mozart Effect had no significant effect on student achievement leading Črnčec et al. to conclude that the effect cannot be dependably demonstrated in children. Other researchers, Kenealy & Monseth 1974; McKelvie & Lowe 2002) reported no Mozart effect. Similar findings reporting a direct relationship between music and student reading achievement have been documented in the literature (Chou, 2007; Dawson, 2003).

Most research on the Mozart effect is mainly based on taxing the right parietal context using visuospatial tasks. This present study will focus on musical stimuli's effect on cognitive tasks that involve the working memory. The theoretical framework for this study (see Figure 2), entails examining music's relationship to reading comprehension, which is based on the scientific research that shows how music affects

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the brain which in turn stimulates neurons that promote language development and cognition, which in turn leads to improvement in reading comprehension.

Methods

Participants and Procedure

This study explored the relationship between reading comprehension and background classical music during assessment. Participants consisted of 52 eighth-grade at-risk students in a charter school in south Florida. The composition was comprised of 22 female and 30 male students. All participating students scored 2 or lower on the Standard Assessment test in which the highest score was 5. The participants were predominantly second language learners (more than 90% were Latino). Both groups consisted of students from a low socioeconomic background and who received free or reduced lunch. None of the students have been diagnosed as having a language barrier or having a learning disability. In addition, all students received the same instruction throughout the school year.

One class was randomly assigned to the control group and the other to the experimental (intervention) group. Both groups were given appropriate grade level reading passages. Students had no previous access to the passages. The experimental group listened to background music during reading comprehension assessments; the control group received no treatment. All groups were exposed to the same environmental noise. Each group received a pre- and post-test at appropriate grade level (see Table 1) using valid assessments of narrative and informational reading passages to monitor comprehension progress from the Office of Assessment, Research, and Data Analysis (2015). The pretest consisted of four reading passages and 10 multiple choice questions based on the Common Core State Standards for language arts

(reading standards). Each multiple choice question consisted of a stem with four options. The ongoing assessments followed the same format. Only the passages varied.

During this five month intervention, a reading comprehension assessment was given to each group twice a month during the data collection phase. Both groups received the identical grade level probes. The teacher played classical music for the experimental group using a commercial free Internet radio at 50 dB to 60 dB while students completed the reading comprehension assessment. Music was randomly selected by the classical radio station. There was no emphasis on the frequency of composer nor the tempo of the music. Music played could be described as heavy or light or almost airy. Regular class instruction during this time was the same for both groups as the instructor was the same for all classes.

Results

Independent t-tests were conducted to compare reading comprehension scores within each experimental and control group. There was a significant difference in the scores for those students testing with classical background music (M = 7.68, SD = 1.398) and those testing with no treatment (M = 5.24, SD = 2.204) conditions; t (4.873) = 51, p = .000) (See table 2).

Overall, it is premature to assume that listening to music will improve reading comprehension proficiency. However, for some students, identified as having reading problems, results indicate the music treatment was effective. Even though past research has determined that music can either distract or facilitate cognitive task performance, improved performance in the presence of music might be directly related to the type of music that is heard (Hallam et al., 2002).

The limitations in this study include the low sampling. Furthermore, there was a lack of ethnically diverse students. Participants were mostly Hispanic with below-grade reading levels. Consequently, the data were analyzed for this sample only and may not apply to larger, more diverse samples or to the composition of the national population. Additionally, confounding variables such as outside noise, classroom interruptions, physical conditions of the student such as illness or inadequate sleep, as well as the time of day the test was taken could have played a part in the students' performance.

Discussion

Listening to music is a treasured pastime and an integral part of life for most individuals. All cultures have some form of musical expression and music has been used throughout history for expressing emotions. Evidence exists that listening to music leads to enhanced performance on a variety of cognitive abilities (Schellenberg & Hallam, 2005). The participants in this study were adolescent, at-risk, struggling readers. Research shows that as this group of students progresses to higher grade levels, the gap between good and poor readers becomes more pronounced (Rashotte, Torgesen, & Wagner, 1997; Torgesen, 1998). These results show that listening to music while undergoing comprehension assessments are noteworthy. It provides an intervention that is not time consuming nor task consuming for students making minimal progress in reading. Nevertheless, further research involving longitudinal studies are required in order to determine the elements involved in the transfer effects and the duration of these effects.

The results of this study have several implications for the implementation of background music in the daily classroom. According to the Center on Budget and

Policy Priorities, 31 states were provided 10 percent less state funding per student in 2014 school than in the 2008 school year (Leachman, Albares, Masterson & Wallace, 2015). Due to the drastically decreased funding for education, there was a shortage of funds to maintain the function of all school programs and extra-curricular activities. The arts curriculum, including music instruction in elementary education, is usually one of the first areas to be eliminated in the elementary school systems. Based on the results of this present study, it would be sagacious for educators and policy makers to examine the effect of music on the brain and reconsider and re-evaluate these decisions.

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Tables & Figures

Table 1

Group Statistics for Eighth Grade

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Gr 8 After Treatment	Classical Music	28	7.68	1.389	.263
	No Music	25	5.24	2.204	.441

Table 2

Independent Samples t-Tests for Eighth Grade

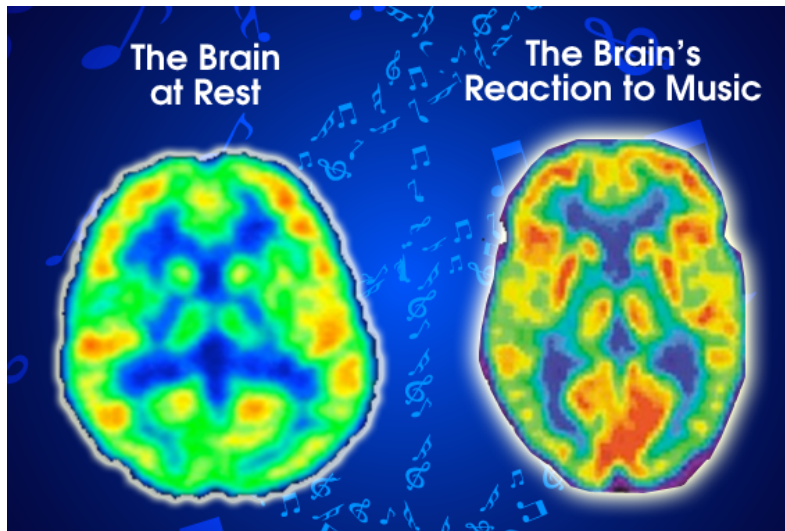|		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Gr 8 After Treatment	Equal variances assumed	8.476	.005	4.873	51	.000	2.439	.500	1.434	3.443
	Equal variances not assumed			4.753	39.618	.000	2.439	.513	1.401	3.476

Figures

Figure 1: The brain's reaction when listening to music (Blood, Zatorre, Bermudez, & Evans, 1999).
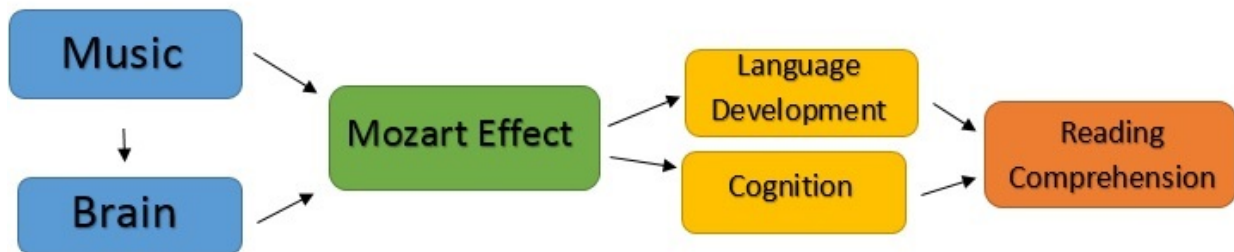

Figure 2: Theoretical framework of music's relationship to reading comprehension (Falcon & Massey, 2017).

Resilient School Leaders: The Need, The Demand, The Challenges

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Pamela A. Lemoine
Michael D. Richardson

Abstract

School leadership researchers suggest school leadership "is second only to teaching among factors as an influence student learning. Today's educational leaders are faced with continually evolving reform; principals are expected to be visionary leaders; to manage personnel, students, and parents; and to guide instruction. Resilient educational leaders are those who cannot imagine not doing what they do, challenge what is taken for granted, imagine many ways to accomplish what needs to be done and envisioning multiple answers to problems. Managing change is a critical; today's educational leaders have to be positive, organized, and flexible.

Resilience describes an individual's ability to persist by responding and adapting to changes, both internal and external. The basic tenet of resilience theory is that change is personal, perpetual and inevitable. The key to managing it successfully is to acknowledge it and prepare insightful, thoughtful and adaptive individuals to respond. Resilience requires individuals to look for ways to adapt and survive irreversible changes.

Rigorous Results from Rigorous Data in an Online Graduate Reading Capstone Course

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Abstract

Some see migrating a graduate program to an online format as a process decreasing program rigor—which is not at all the case. Yet, any ongoing effort to increase program rigor must be data driven, and rigorous data informs such decisions in online graduate level coursework. This session will examine multiple cycles of data sets gathered from a major capstone course in an online MSE Reading program with the objective of examining the connections between candidate effort on their course field project, results on course assessment, and candidate impact. Data sets will include candidates' reported perspective on their involvement in their field assignment, achievement data on a major course capstone assessment, and survey data gathered from literacy coaches who collaborated with candidates in the field. All of these will come together to illustrate ways in which the goal of increasing rigor can be informed and met.

Ultimately, this session will shed a greater light on the potential of an online graduate program to maintain adherence to standards, increase rigor, and achieve the aim of maintaining rigorous results.

Teacher Perception of Empowerment, Roles, and School Leadership and the Effect on Commitment to Stay using a Moderated Mediation Model

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Abstract

Teacher working conditions have been examined in North Carolina on a bi-annual basis since 2002 to address teacher turnover and recruitment concerns. In previous research teachers' perceptions of school administrators, empowerment, and the roles teachers assume in schools has been presented as important aspects of the professional lives of teachers. Consequently, in many states, school administrators have been required and evaluated on the degree to which they empower teachers and the roles administrators place teachers in. This study uses the results from the 2016 North Carolina survey of over 85,000 teachers in a moderated mediation model and found that 1) the perception of school leadership by teachers has a direct effect on teacher commitment to stay, 2) perception of school leadership has a conditional indirect effect on teacher commitment, and 3) when elementary, middle and high school teachers are compared the results vary

according to grade span. Suggestions for school leadership are provided to support teacher leadership.

Teachers' Perceptions of Teacher Bullying in K-12 Schools

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Dr. Laura Erhard Fiorenza teaches child development coursework and supervises field students and student teachers at West Chester University of Pennsylvania. She has spent many years researching school bullying and school climate issues. She is the co-developer of a graduate course that explores issues in school bullying and she has presented her research regionally and nationally.

Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative multi-case study is to examine the phenomenon of teacher bullying as perceived by K-12 teachers. There is a dearth of research pertaining to teacher bullying as an aspect of school bullying. A convenience sample of 11 educators in urban, suburban, rural, public, and parochial schools in southeastern Pennsylvania responded to a researcher-designed Teacher Bullying and School Climate Questionnaire and participated in semi-structured interviews with the researcher. Teacher bullying behaviors were identified in most schools as isolated incidents. Urban schools and schools with non-participative, authoritarian administrators had a greater prevalence of teacher bullying. Examples of teacher bullying were linked to teachers asserting their power when disciplining students. Some participants expressed concern about labeling teacher bullying without knowing the teacher's intention for the behavior. All participants expressed an increased awareness of teacher bullying

practices in their schools. Participating in the study initiated self-reflections about teacher-to-student interactions.

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to raise awareness of the phenomenon of teacher-to-student bullying by investigating the perceptions of teacher bullying through the experiences of K-12 educators in 11 schools in southeastern Pennsylvania. The results revealed teacher bullying existed mostly in isolated incidents and more pervasively in school climates with a greater tolerance for school bullying and teacher bullying. This study may serve as a catalyst to increase attention on the phenomenon of teacher bullying for intervention and prevention and encourage teachers' self-reflection about the quality of their interactions with students.

Literature Review

School bullying is an issue that has garnered much attention by the media, school district administrators, and the public. Bullying has been linked to social and emotional issues, depression, and suicide (Brunstein, Klomek, Marrocco, Schonfeld, & Gould, 2007; Cross, Lester, & Barnes, 2015; Hong et al., 2016). Students who are bullied are absent from school more frequently than other students (Grinshteyn & Tony Yang,

2016). Decreased academic achievement and a lack of motivation for learning have been associated with bullying (Ladd, Ettekal, & Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2017).

The phenomenon under investigation in this qualitative multi-case study is an aspect of school bullying that addresses teacher-to-student bullying. This study is vital because it investigates an area of bullying with limited research that may contribute to the larger issue of school bullying. Bandura (1977, 1986) asserted that learning occurs through the observation of behaviors that may be imitated. Bandura, Ross, and Ross (1961) examined the transmission of aggression through the imitation of aggressive models. Researchers used a Bobo doll (inflated pop-up clown) to model aggressive behavior while being observed by children. Once the researchers left the children alone with Bobo, the children were observed behaving aggressively with Bobo just as the researchers had demonstrated. Bandura et al. provided empirical evidence that learning through imitation had occurred. Applying this research to a classroom setting where teachers bully students, it is likely that bullying behaviors may be transferred to students' interactions. Individual students may be the intended targets of the teacher bully, but Bandura's theory suggested that the influence of the bullying may extend to students witnessing the bullying. Bandura's work is foundational to this study as it emphasizes the important role teachers assume as role models for behavior in the classroom.

Teacher bullying is a challenging topic to research because it is difficult to gain access to students that may be impacted by its effects. Teachers, school administrators, and school districts are apprehensive about exploring teaching bullying issues. Twemlow and Sacco (2008) included the phenomenon of teacher bullying in a category of school issues termed *undiscussables*. McEvoy (2005) indicated that one challenge

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hindering the investigations into teacher bullying is that the teacher bully is often a well-established, tenured teacher.

McEvoy (2005) explained that any behavior that represents a significant risk of harm to a student or causes the student emotional, social, or psychological harm or distress and/or creates a sense of fear in the student is teacher bullying. Teacher bullying is a pattern of behavior and conduct that is rooted in a power differential that is designed to threaten, harm, humiliate, or induce fear that results in substantial emotional stress for a student (McEvoy, 2005). Sharpe (2011) identified teacher-bullying behaviors such as physical bullying, using sarcasm, mocking, criticizing, yelling, utilizing unreasonable responses to students' behaviors, singling out of a student, and being overly critical or having unrealistic expectations for a student's work.

Most school anti-bullying programs address peer bullying and do not include interventions for thwarting teacher bullying (McEvoy, 2005; Twemlow & Fonagy, 2005; Twemlow, Fonagy, Sacco, & Brethour, 2006). School bullying statistics, nationally and internationally, do not isolate teacher bullying as a form of bullying in the reports. Teacher bullying statistics and their effects upon students are not typically measured by school districts or required by law.

Students' and fellow teachers' reluctance to report incidences of teacher bullying may limit any attempts to gain an accurate accounting of its occurrence. Another challenge to reporting teacher bullying may be forming a consensus about what constitutes teacher bullying. Reporting teacher bullying may be limited because some may consider teacher bullying behaviors acceptable when utilized to discipline or to motivate a change in students' behaviors. School norms for behavior may also influence the recognition and report of teacher bullying.

The topic of teacher bullying is sensitive as it may incriminate teachers and it may be difficult to prove. Twemlow and Sacco (2008) asserted that teachers' unions and school districts may have concerns related to liability issues when they are exposing incidents of teacher bullying. Even unfounded accusations made about teachers may affect the reputation of a school and the school district. Media reports about teachers who abuse, or bully students may shroud the teaching profession with negative perceptions, which may be detrimental to school districts, teachers, and students.

Bystanders may not report teacher bullying because these behaviors are common and part of the school's culture, and they may feel uncomfortable standing against it. As with other forms of bullying, bystanders may feel uncomfortable confronting the bullying teacher or reporting it to school administrators. Bystanders may have fears of retaliation or they may feel awkward about disrupting established professional relationships. School administrators' receptivity to reports of teacher bullying may also influence teachers' and students' willingness to report bullying incidences. All these concerns may impede the recognition of the teacher bullying phenomenon and limit the attention it receives in school bullying statistics and in anti-bullying programs.

Prior studies have identified teacher bullying globally and in all levels of schooling, from elementary to high school and in all school settings (public, nonpublic, urban, rural) (James et al., 2008, McEvoy, 2005; Terry, 1998; Twemlow & Fonagy, 2005; Twemlow et., 2006).

One of the earliest investigations into the phenomenon of teacher bullying was conducted by Terry (1998) in England with an investigation of seven urban high schools. Teachers in the study were asked if they thought their actions could be perceived by students as bullying. Thirty-seven percent of the teachers responded that in one or more cases that students could perceive the teachers' actions as bullying.

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McEvoy (2005) interviewed 236 (*N*=236) high school and college-age students concerning their experiences with teacher bullying. Ninety-three percent of the students were able to identify teachers that bullied. Twemlow and Fonagy (2005) surveyed 214 (*N*=214) teachers from eight elementary schools, four middle schools, and three high schools. Their study also confirmed the presence of teacher bullying behaviors in all the schools. Teachers bully students physically, emotionally, socially, psychologically, or by manipulating, or ridiculing a student beyond an acceptable disciplinary action. Since some of the teacher bullies had been bullied as children, Twemlow and Fonagy suggested that there may be a transgenerational element to teacher bullying.

Datta, Cornell, and Huang (2017) investigated the toxic effects of bullying by teachers and other school staff with a sample of 56,508 (*N*= 56,508) students in the 7th and 8th grades via a statewide school climate survey. The results indicated that 1.2% of the students had been bullied by teachers and staff only, and 1.5% of the students were bullied by peers, teachers, and staff. When compared to the students who were not bullied by peer or teachers and staff, students who were bullied by teachers and staff were more likely to: a) be less engaged in school, b) achieved lower grades, and c) perceive the school's climate negatively.

Teacher bullying is an international phenomenon. James et al. (2008) investigated teacher bullying with secondary school students in Ireland. Their study revealed that 31% of 282 students in one school and 32% of 710 in another school students reported being maltreated or bullied by a teacher. James et al. suggested that perhaps the teachers did not regard their comments and actions as maltreatment or bullying, but necessary for disciplining students. It is often difficult to confirm teachers'

abuses as they may be defended as appropriate behaviors for motivating, managing, and disciplining students.

The detrimental effects of peer bullying have been well documented (Cheng, Chen, Ho, & Cheng, 2011; Olweus, 1993; Rigby & Smith, 2011; Santalahti et al., 2008). Many schools have programs to address this type of bullying. By April 2015, 50 states in the United States of America had passed anti-bullying laws (Bully Police USA, 2017; "Laws and Polices", 2017). Currently, US federal laws address harassment issues related to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, or disability, but not bullying. Only when bullying includes harassment or discrimination are schools required to respond to complaints (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2017).

McEvoy (2005) has suggested that victims of teacher bullying suffer effects like those of peer bullying. Twemlow et al. (2006) believed teacher bullying to be more harmful to students than peer bullying. The effects of teacher bullying may be: a) physical, b) emotional-social, and/or c) psychological for the victimized student. Whitted and Dupper (2008) suggested that victims of teacher bullying may be victimized twice. The first victimization may be the offense and the second is the fear of further abuse if they report the offense. Teacher bullying warrants investigations that aid practitioners in finding ways to mitigate its influence on students and school environments.

Methodology

Sample and Procedures

This qualitative study explored K-12 educators' perceptions of teacher bullying in 11 urban, suburban, rural, public, and parochial schools in southeastern Pennsylvania. Informed consent was obtained at the beginning of the online questionnaire. The participants' rights and privileges were clearly outlined in

accordance with the requirements of the Institutional Review Board. This multiple case study, qualitative research design provided opportunities to understand the variables associated with the phenomenon of teacher bullying in several contexts. The following research question guided this qualitative investigation, "How do K-12 teachers in southeastern Pennsylvania perceive the phenomenon of teacher bullying in their schools?".

A sample of 18 participants who were employed as K-12 teachers who were pursuing a master's degree in education at a university in southeastern Pennsylvania completed an online questionnaire. Teachers accessed the online questionnaire via a survey link that was provided in the email invitation. A convenience sample of 129 (N=129) graduate education students received an emailed recruitment letter to participate in the research study. Only those who were currently teaching in a K-12 school were asked to participate in the study, and the teachers self-selected to participate in the study. Of the 18 teachers that completed the online questionnaire, 13 qualified (identified teacher bullying) for a personal interview with the researcher. A sample of 11 (n = 11) educators completed the questionnaire and personal interview with the researcher. All but one of the participants were teaching in a K-12 school at the time of the study. Table 1 displays the descriptive data for the participants by gender, grade level, years of teaching, type of teacher, type of school, and school location.

The Teacher Bullying and School Climate questionnaire was designed by the researcher to assist in identifying teachers who had witnessed or experienced teacher bullying in their schools. A definition of teacher bullying offered by McEvoy (2005) was included at the beginning of the questionnaire to provide all of the participants with a similar understanding of the concept. Examples of teacher bullying behaviors (physical actions, sarcasm, mocking, criticizing, yelling, unreasonable responses to students'

behaviors, singling out of a student, and an overly critical assessment or unrealistic expectations of a student's work) were included on the questionnaire (Sharpe, 2011). Specific questions which addressed the educators' knowledge of teacher bullying and its predominance in the school were asked of all participants.

Data were collected in three ways. The first source of data came from the online Teacher Bullying and School Climate questionnaire. The questionnaire captured participants' descriptive data. Open-ended and closed-ended questions addressed the participants' experiences with teacher bullying. The answers provided by the participants offered insights concerning the participants, teacher bullying, and the school environments where the teachers worked.

A second data source was gathered during personal interviews between the teachers and the researcher. The researcher utilized the clinical interview method and conducted semi-structured interviews and the prepared questions were enhanced in response to the answers provided by the interviewees. All interviewees received a copy of the interview questions prior to the one-on-one interviews and these interview questions provided teachers with an opportunity to expand upon the answers which they provided on the questionnaire with rich descriptive details about their experiences with the phenomenon of teacher bullying.

The data were triangulated with a third source of data that emerged from the researcher's descriptive notes and reflections in the researcher's journal. Reflective commentary included: a) the researcher's hunches, b) initial reactions, c) speculations, and d) interpretations (Merriam, 2009). Transcripts were organized and analyzed for a two-cycle qualitative coding process.

Data Analysis

Questionnaire. Data gathered from the 18 completed online questionnaires were cleaned and sorted. Qualtrics© (2015) (computer software program) aided the researcher in a) sorting: b) organizing, and c) coding qualitative responses. Participants were assigned an alphanumeric code to protect their identities and the sorting of the data yielded 13 qualifying participants (those who had observed teacher bullying). The primary purpose of the questionnaire was to identify teachers who were eligible for the study and secondarily, to provide descriptive data about the participants. A third function of the questionnaire was to begin to understand the teachers' perceptions of teacher bullying and the climate in their schools.

Numerical data were aligned with their equivalent text responses, i.e., 1=Yes, 2=No and quantitative responses were examined and analyzed in comparison to other participants' responses. Qualitative responses were: a) interpreted by the researcher and coded and b) copied and removed and placed into a Microsoft Word© document.

Interviews. Qualitative data gathered from the researcher's: a) personal interviews, b) observations and, c) reflections were analyzed using Dedoose© (2015) and text-highlighting features found in Microsoft Word© with a two-cycle coding process. Open, structural, in vivo, emotional, and versus coding processes were applied within and across the cases during the analysis. The cross-case analysis reflected the essential themes that emerged in the study. These themes (Table 2) expressed how the participants perceived and experienced the teacher bullying phenomenon in their schools.

Results/Findings

Results were obtained from the data analysis of the personal interviews and questionnaires. These were supplemented by the researcher's observations and inductive reflections.

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Qualitative

Within Case Results. In the first cycle of coding, the research question was answered with 23 primary themes emerging that expressed how teachers in the study perceived teacher bullying in their schools. In the second cycle of coding across the cases, the researcher examined the within case themes to identify the most frequently-expressed themes. This resulted in nine commonly expressed themes (Table 2). The across-the-cases themes retained the integrity of the interpretations from the within-case analysis and expressed the findings to answer the research question.

Cross-Case Results. Teacher bullying behaviors were evidenced in all 11 cases, but not all the participants perceived all of the teachers' behaviors as teacher-bullying behaviors. Some of the teachers in the study struggled with determining teacher bullying and they expressed the need to know the intentions behind the teacher's behavior to determine whether it was teacher bullying. Other teachers interpreted some teacher-bullying behaviors as the offending teacher being frustrated or having a difficult day. They perceived the teacher's behavior was atypical.

In some of the schools, authoritarian management and discipline strategies were part of the culture. Authoritarian (non-participative) school leadership tolerated harsh teacher-to-student interactions as a means of maintaining an orderly environment. In these schools, teacher bullying behaviors were normalized and part of the school's culture. Some teachers asserted that an authoritarian, highly structured-school culture, could legitimize a teacher's use of strict, harsh disciplining, and managing strategies with the students.

Difficult city cultures were found to influence the type of discipline and the quality of teacher-student interactions that existed in the schools. Some of the participants found it difficult to determine what should be perceived as teacher

bullying because of the limits in the definition of teacher bullying. In urban settings teacher bullying behaviors were not always perceived as teacher bullying by members of the school community. In authoritarian-led urban schools, teachers expressed a greater tolerance for teacher bullying like behaviors to assert their power over students to maintain order and to enforce students' compliance.

Consistent across the cases was the assertion that physical abuses by the teachers were clearly teacher bullying. The subtler forms of bullying were often not perceived as teacher bullying. The results indicated that when teacher bullying is not perceived as a problem, it may be due to cultural influences that are present in a school and the surrounding community. In some of the case studies, certain teacher bullying behaviors were deemed appropriate by the school culture which existed. External community cultures may be influencing school cultures and the perception of teacher bullying. The notion of tough city neighborhoods tolerating some degree of threatening teacher-to-student interactions was supported by the study's results.

A final theme to emerge was the presence of teacher bullying negatively influencing teachers and students in the school. Teachers and students in close physical proximity to the bullying teacher experienced a ripple effect generated by the bullying teacher's behaviors. Teachers shared that some students were fearful and expressed concern about being in the class with the bullying teacher. Teachers who had to work within close proximity to bullying teacher, felt awkward around that teacher. In their concern for the well-being of the students, they did not know how to address the problem of the teacher bully. When teachers who bullied were removed or coached about their behavior by a school administrator, the school and classroom climates were perceived more positively. Table 2 summarizes themes that emerged across the cases and their frequencies.

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Questionnaire

Specific questions from the questionnaire were utilized to identify the number of teachers that had observed teacher bullying behaviors in their schools. Teachers' perceptions of appropriate discipline versus the specific teachers' behaviors that were observed in practice were correlated. The results of the inquiries yielded contrasting results. Table 3 illustrates the ways in which the teachers responded to these inquiries.

Teachers in this study affirmed that many of the discipline strategies that they observed were unacceptable; however, participants' responses on the questionnaire indicated that unacceptable discipline strategies were being employed in the schools.

Participants were directed to qualify how much they perceived teacher bullying to be a problem (a big problem, small/minor problem, no problem, or not sure if it is a problem). A second inquiry asked participants to determine if teacher bullying was an accepted norm in their schools. The results were cross tabulated to reflect how teacher bullying was perceived in the school. Correlations between the severity of the teacher bullying problem and the perceived norms of acceptance were identified and are reflected in Table 4.

Discussion

Teacher bullying research is limited (Twemlow & Sacco, 2008). Pugh and Chitiyo (2012) acknowledged that school bullying is a global problem. Traditional anti-bullying school programs focus on peer bullying, and typically, strategies for preventing or addressing teacher bullying are absent from anti-bullying programs. Twemlow and Sacco (2008) asserted that schools must attend to undiscussables issues like teacher bullying. Discussing the phenomenon of teacher bullying may encourage

authors of anti-bullying programs to include preventive strategies and foster the development of protocols for addressing teacher bullying.

Participants in this study began a self-reflective process about their interactions with their students. Through their reflections, participants recognized that in some circumstances their behaviors could have been considered as bullying. Though the teachers did not intend their behaviors to be harmful to their students, they realized that their interactions could have been misinterpreted. Most participants had never heard of the phenomenon of teacher bullying before participating in the study. Raising awareness of the phenomenon of teacher bullying sensitized the teachers in the study to the possibilities of teacher bullying in their interactions and in the behaviors of other teachers.

Hinduja and Patchin (2012) investigated social norming processes that influenced the behaviors in a school's climate. They asserted that social norms evolved from what people perceived as typical behaviors. Perceptions of what is deemed acceptable or unacceptable behavior led to the normalization of these behaviors. In some of the schools, teachers asserted that some of the teacher-bullying behaviors were a result of what principals modeled or rewarded. Some teachers reflected that harsh, tough love interactions with the students were: a) permissible due to the expectations reflected in many urban cultures, and b) tough city talk was perceived as an acceptable norm in the urban schools as means to gain cooperation and respect from the students. One teacher in the study expressed that his/her colleagues were stern with the students for their own good. Yelling frequently, utilizing sarcasm, and belittling commentary were deemed acceptable forms of discipline in some inner-city schools to discipline and to motivate students.

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Some teachers in the inner-city schools shared that students often interacted with their peers in ways that mimic their teachers' interactions with them. Bandura (1977, 1986, 1990) would associate these student bullying behaviors with observational learning. A cycle of abuse is perpetuated by teachers and supported by community cultures and school climates that tolerate these behaviors.

Non-participative, authoritarian school leadership appeared to foster school climates that enhanced the power differential between teachers and students. Schools that were highly structured and focused on improving standardized scores appeared to have authoritarian, non-participative school cultures. Participants expressed that schools with authoritarian cultures fostered robotic, non-responsive, systematized student behaviors. In these schools, teachers utilized authoritarian discipline and classroom management methods that could be perceived as teacher bullying in another context. School leadership lauded the highly restrictive and structured management as necessary and effective for improving student achievement on standardized examinations.

Teacher bullying may foster fear, and create psychological, emotional, social, or physical harm for a student (McEvoy 2005; Twemlow et al., 2006). Teachers who bully students, utilize their authorized power to establish and maintain an imbalance of power. James et al. (2008) asserted that teacher bullying may be more devastating than peer bullying. Students are vulnerable to a teacher's power because the teacher controls their grades and privileges in the classroom. Students have limited recourse to combat teachers that utilize subtle means of bullying. If a school climate supports teacher bullying behaviors, students may feel powerless since reporting the abuse to a supervising adult may: a) be futile, b) bring the possibility of retaliation, and c) be ignored by the administration.

Teachers may validate their bullying behaviors by asserting that there are disciplining the student (James et al., 2008). Disciplining students is an accepted aspect of teaching; however, the manner in which discipline is employed is something that may require further definition. This study confirmed that teacher bullying behaviors are accepted if they are utilized for disciplinary purposes (Allen, 2010). Utilizing teacher-bullying behaviors was not perceived as bullying students, if the intention for the bullying behavior was unknown. In the absence of physical aggression, ambiguity existed in definitively determining teachers' behaviors as bullying.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this qualitative multi-case study. One unavoidable limitation is the researcher's ability to use the inductive process while collecting, sorting, organizing, and interpreting of data. Utilizing a convenience sample and a small number of participants may be viewed as a limitation. Investigating only teachers' perceptions presented a bias perspective of the phenomenon as students' perceptions of teacher bullying were not present in the study. Another limitation was the variance among teachers' perceptions of which behaviors qualified as teacher bullying. Focusing on the intention to harm in the definition of teacher bullying gave some participants pause because these participants did not feel qualified to determine the intentions of the behaviors they observed. Self-selection to participate in the study may also have influenced the outcomes.

Recommendations

Factors identified through this investigation warranted additional study. These factors included: a) exploring the attributes of school climates where teacher bullying exists, b) investigating school leadership practices, and c) examining the quality of teacher-to-student relationships. It is recommended that school communities and

cultures that tolerate teacher bullying practices conduct school climate surveys to investigate this phenomenon with the intention of affecting meaningful change. Teachers should be encouraged as a part of their professional growth to use reflective practices to examine their interactions with the students and positive teacher-student relationships should be fostered to ensure the positive outcomes for teachers and students.

School leaders should use more participative forms of leadership to encourage more student-centered practices while teachers should use their position to model respectful, positive behaviors with their students, colleagues, all school personnel, and parents. Ways to reduce the ambiguity in determining when teachers are bullying should be identified and discussed with school faculty to aid in the elimination of teacher-bullying behaviors. Teacher-bullying behaviors may be reduced by generating a greater awareness of bullying behaviors and by creating anti-bullying school programs which specifically address teacher bullying.

Conclusion

The data revealed that the perception of teacher bullying was influenced by the participants' understanding of the teacher bullying phenomenon. In schools with restrictive, non-participative, authoritarian leadership styles, teachers accepted teacher-bullying behaviors more readily as appropriate for discipline. These restrictive environments accentuated the power divide between the teachers and students. By enhancing the teacher's power in the classroom, administrators may create environments that are more vulnerable to teacher bullying.

The perception of teacher bullying in the schools appeared to be influenced by the school norms. Harsh urban neighborhoods impacted the acceptance of strict, structured, systematized school environments. Teachers in urban schools were perceived as: a) being tougher on their students, b) utilizing sarcasm, and c) belittling students as a form discipline. These teacher behaviors were accepted as normal or typical and were not perceived as teacher bullying. Teachers in the urban schools expressed that the students expected and respected the use of the tough city talk which teachers utilized to discipline.

Some participants were reluctant to label a teacher's behavior as bullying. They expressed concerns about the traditional notion of bully where there is an intention to harm and a repetition of the bullying behaviors (Olweus, 1993). A few teachers believed that a teacher could have a bad day and occasionally exhibit behaviors that could be perceived as bullying. One participant justified teacher-bullying behaviors because the whole team of teachers sometimes interacted with students in ways that were listed as teacher-bullying behaviors on the Teacher Bullying and School Climate questionnaire. The teachers' behaviors were justified as being necessary to discipline and motivate the students. Some participants felt uncomfortable about labeling a colleague's behavior as teacher bullying. They expressed fear of retaliation and of disrupting their relationship with the teacher who displayed and perpetuated the bullying behaviors. These concerns may limit the identification and remediation of teacher bullying.

This study confirms that K-12 teachers in southeastern Pennsylvania were able to recognize teacher bullying behaviors in their schools. The schools in the study represent a small, but diverse sampling of schools from urban, suburban, and rural schools. Educators in the study had varied years of experience and taught in regular

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and special education in elementary, middle, and secondary schools. All the participants were able to identify at least one teacher in their school that was observed utilizing teacher bullying behaviors. Participating in the study raised awareness of the phenomenon of teacher bullying.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1
Summary of the Participants' Demographic Information

Variable		N	%
Gender	M	3	27
	F	8	73
Grade Level	Elementary	7	64
	Middle	3	27
	Secondary	1	9
Years of Teaching	1 year or less	3	27
	2-3 years	3	27
	4-7 years	1	9
	8 or more years	4	36
Type of Teacher	Regular Educator	5	45
	Special Educator	5	45
	Other (Administrator)	1	9
Type of School	Public	10	91
	Private	0	0
	Parochial	1	9
School Location	Rural	2	18
	Suburban	4	36
	Urban	5	45

[*] Apparent discrepancies due to rounding errors

Table 2

Common Themes Across the Cases and Frequencies

Themes	Frequency in Data
Isolated incidents of teacher bullying exist	6
Teacher bullying is prevalent and may be an accepted norm	6
Administration tolerates teacher bullying	2
Authoritarian cultures support teacher bullying	2
Teacher bullying is part of discipline	3
Establishes a power differential	6
Perception of the presence of teacher bullying is influenced by the teacher's intention	2
Urban cultures support teachers' bullying behaviors (tough city vernacular tolerated)	3
Bullying teachers' behaviors influence other teachers and students (ripple effect)	3

Table 3

Perceptions of Acceptable School Discipline Strategies vs. Observed Teacher Behaviors

Behaviors	Acceptable	Observed
Yelling	0 (0%)	10 (91%)
Pushing	5 (45%)	0 (0%)
Restricting privileges	1 (9%)	10 (91%)
Embarrassing	1 (9%)	9 (82%)
Refusing bathroom	1 (9%)	2 (18%)
Excluding from activity	1 (9%)	9 (82%)

Intimidating		0 (0%)		5 (45%)	

Table 4

Perceived Teachers' Bullying as a Problem and Perceived Teacher Bullying as a School Norm

Bullying Problem in School	Bullying Totally Accepted	Bullying Usually Accepted	Bullying Occasionally Accepted	Bullying Not Accepted	Not Sure
Big	1 (9%)	1 (9%)			
Small/Minor		1 (9%)	3 (27%)		
No Problem				3 (27%)	1 (9%)
Not Sure					1 (9%)
Totals	1 (9%)	2 (18%)	3 (27%)	3 (27%)	2 (18%)

Teachers' "Stew": We are All in this Together!

Catherine Stierman

Clarke University

After having spent over twenty wonderful years as a high school science teacher, Cathy now enjoys working with pre-service teachers as the licensure officer and a faculty member of both education and science at Clarke University in Dubuque, Iowa.

Abstract

Stansbury and Zimmerman (2000) emphasize that providing new teachers with not just an individual mentor, but an entire support network, is what is truly critical when attempting to train and retain teachers. The purpose of this study was to determine if that is indeed the case, and if so, which individuals or systems play the most crucial role(s). Through a series of interviews, three middle school science teachers created a visual "bull's eye" map of their support networks. An array of the data, a technique created by Abramson & Dohan (2015), a method for displaying data that is based upon a microarray, was then created. The results showed a strikingly resemblance to that of the business world as documented by Kram and Isabella (1985): teachers rely heavily on "special peers" and "collegial peers" – not administrators or instructional coaches – for every day support.

Test Anxiety: Can listening to Classical Background Music a Reprieve for Middle School Students?

Susan R Massey
St. Thomas University

Evelyn Falcon
SLAM! North

Susan R. Massey is a professor at St. Thomas University in the Department of Education. Prior to attaining her Ph. D. from the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Fl., she was an educator in three countries. The majority of her experience involved teaching in the Bahamas. Her degree is in Teaching and Learning with Special Education and Reading. Dr. Massey's main research interest includes literacy across all grades and all ages. Her present research has comprised of second language learners and vocabulary development.

Evelyn Falcon was a doctorate student at St. Thomas University and has graduated with her Ed.D. She works for a public charter school for 6th and 7th grade students seeking careers in Sports Leadership and Management industries. Evelyn works with struggling readers in these grades.

Abstract

Many students from elementary to university levels experience test anxiety to the degree of diminishing academic performance. Using a theoretically-driven rationale, we

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compared two groups of randomly assigned at-risk 7th and 8th-grade students to different treatments which were compared to evaluate the treatment of test anxiety through a self-reported survey. The experimental group listened to classical background music during reading comprehension testing while the control completed the test with typical classroom sounds. Within groups t-test reported notably different results. The 8th -grade experimental group reported significant improvement in reducing text anxiety levels with music while the 7th-grade experimental group demonstrated no decrease in test anxiety levels without music. Between groups, independent t-test reported similar results. Test-anxiety scores decreased after listening to music. There was no significance reported in both grade-level control groups.

A Thirty Year Study of Identification Procedures and Program Options for Junior High/Middle School Gifted Students in Nebraska

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Hoehner received her doctorate from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln in 1997 in Administrations, Curriculum, and Instruction. Preceding her tenure at the University of Nebraska at Kearney in Education Administration (EDAD) in 1998, she was an administrator for McCook (NE) Public Schools.   As Chair of EDAD she was actively involved in the development and delivery of online classes. She continues to pursue her passion for gifted education.

Dr. Jude Matyo-Cepero, NBCT, is an associate professor of teacher education/special education/gifted education at the University of Nebraska Kearney (UNK). Dr. Matyo-Cepero was awarded a Professorship in Gifted Education, and serves as the Director of Gifted Education at UNK. Her research interests include advocacy, gifted education, autism and dual exceptionalism. ceperoja@unk.edu

Abstract

"The 2014-2015 State of the States in Gifted Education report provides a glimpse into a system where many high ability and high-achieving learners must fend for themselves, leaving success to chance." 2014-2015 State of the States in Gifted Education. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.nagc.org/resources.

Lack of funding and attitude are major deterrents to providing an appropriate curriculum. Respondents of the 1989 survey were the sample of the 2019 survey and questions from the original survey were not changed in order to determine the changes over the past thirty years in gifted identification and program options.

Transformative Education; Relationship Based Partnerships with Parents

Valerie Ritland

Minnesota State University Moorhead

Dr. Ritland has an undergrad and a master's degree in special education and a doctoral degree in Organizational Leadership. In her 42 years of experience Dr. Ritland has served as a special education teacher, a Head Start administrator and consultant, a principal of a PreK - 8 school and for the last 11 years is a professor at Minnesota State University Moorhead. Dr. Ritland has conducted research projects in the areas of multiage instruction, the impact of parent involvement, and strategies of effective practice with large class sizes. Dr. Ritland is currently writing a textbook on Parent/Teacher Partnerships and that is the focus of this presentation proposal.

Abstract

Over forty years of research on parent/teacher partnerships have affirmed that when teachers partner with parents, students do better academically and socially. If evidence substantiates the positive outcomes for not only students, but parents and teachers as well, what are we willing to do to develop the parent/teacher partnership? Joyce Epstein has identified six types of parent involvement. According to my research project, there is some evidence that most teachers only focus on three of the six areas of involvement. Armed with this insight, this presentation will focus on how to address all six areas of involvement.

Variance in Knowledge Retention Amongst Millennial's when using different Training Modalities

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Dr. (Norine) Renee Carroll is a Director of Training for Sales Engineering at Windstream Communications where she has been a leader since 2001.   Renee is also an instructor at the Colorado Technical University with the IT Faculty Team.

Dr. Rachelle Disbennett Lee is an international executive coach assisting leaders in reaching their full potential both personally and professionally. She has been a business owner and Professor since 1996.

Abstract

By the year 2025, 75% of the workforce will consist of Generation Y (Kim, 2017). With the major shift in the workforce, organizations must consider the different learning styles and expectations of the Y generation, as compared to the previous, dominant generations (Tulgan, 2009). In order to determine if there is a difference in short-term and long-term retention levels when deploying two different modalities of training within an organizational training program specific to the Y Generation, a quantitative quasi-experimental study was used. The study consisted of 40 subjects who were

administered pretest, immediate post and long-term posttests in conjunction with a training module.

The findings from this study demonstrate that although knowledge retention decreases over time, knowledge retention scores were higher on the short-term assessments compared to the scores on the long-term assessments. However, there was a sharper decline in knowledge retention among employees who participated in computer-based training compared to employees who participated in face-to-face training. Based on these findings, all null hypotheses can be rejected. In sum, these findings provide support for the use of face-to-face training modalities for employees who fall within Generation Y. The results support the need for training programs to use face-to-face training modalities for employees who fall within Generation Y. Despite exciting new technology, it can be stated that computers should not replace classrooms and teachers, for training purposes, in the immediate future.

Introduction

In today's organizations training has become a competitive advantage. With this in mind the Learning Organization of today must take into consideration that by the year 2025, 75% of the workforce will consist of Millennials (Kim, 2017). Training the influx of newer, younger employees will create new opportunities and challenges for organizations. The new generation of workers are not the same as in the past. With this major shift in the workforce, organizations must consider the different learning styles and expectations of the Millennials, as compared to the previous, dominant generations (Tulgan, 2009).

This generation is the first generation completely raised in a digital age. Based on their experience with technology, the Millennial generation prefers technology to play a greater role in the day-to-day work place and training programs (Smola & Sutton, 2002). Flowers, Jones, and Hogan (2010) addressed that a high-level emergence into technology has led to a need for instant gratification and a change in motivational factors regarding workplace expectations for Millennial generation. Organizations are faced with many changes brought on by the increase of Millennials into the workforce. One of these changes is that employee retention rates amongst Millennials is as low as 50% (Donohue, 2016). Woods (2015) documented that employee churn could cost an organization up to 150% of that employee's annual salary. To understand these costs to the bottom line, organizations need to find ways to reduce churn. To stay competitive in the marketplace, they must consider measures for reducing churn and improving employee engagement. Researchers found a direct correlation among effective training programs and an increased employee productivity, resulting in decreased employee churn (Dearden, Reed, & Van Reenen, 2006). The conclusion from the research indicates that ineffective training methods of employees could lead to low employee engagement, excessive churn of workforce, and high attrition.

The identified problem is traditional training programs are not meeting the needs of Millennial generation leading to lower employee engagement and higher employee churn. The consequence for organizations is the inability to be as competitive in the marketplace when they cannot retain staff. This study examined the short-term and long-term retention of knowledge of Millennial generation employees in traditional face-to-face instruction training and computer-based training.

The study is important to organizations faced with the growing number of Millennials in the workplace. It is important for the training departments of organizations to begin examining the effectiveness of different modalities of training to meet the needs of the blended workforce with a focus on Millennials because they will be the majority by 2025. The study addressed gaps in the current data sets. Though current research studies included data on successful training methods on different generational groups leading up to those of Generation X, these did not include the Millennial generation (Bailey, 2012; Carolin, 2006; Clayton-Pedersen & O'Neill, 2005). Current research also indicated that Millennials are motivated differently when compared to previous generations but did not tie this fact back into training modalities (Espinoza, 2012). The existing research lacked demonstrating different training modalities and the effectiveness on this generational group (Tulgan, 2009). Roa (2013) demonstrated that Millennials have higher knowledge retention rates with collaborative modality methods compared to traditional instructor-led training. These findings helped to develop the research question of variance in learning modalities needed for the different generations in today's workforce used in this study. The research in this study addressed these gaps.

The aim of this study was to gain an understanding how the training modality impacted retention of information and thus leading to greater job satisfaction and productivity. Before presenting the empirical study and its results, we will introduce the concept of online and trainer led training and discuss the different relevant learning conditions, learning outcomes and personal characteristics. The results and practical implications of the study will be discussed along with suggestions for further research in this area.

The gap in research

The gap in the current research that was reviewed primarily involved the unique characteristics that define Millennials (Glendon & Ulrich, 2005; Michael, 2014; Solnet et al., 2012). There was limited empirical evidence supporting the appropriate learning method for Millennial employees. This study addressed the gap in previous research by conducting a quantitative, quasi-experiential study that examined the short-term and long-term retention of knowledge of Millennial employees in traditional face-to-face instruction training and computer-based training.

Theoretical background

The theoretical frameworks used in this research were instructional design and the measurement of cognitive load theory. Sweller (1999) developed the cognitive load theory in the late 1980s. Sweller's viewed that learning was based on human cognitive architecture (Sweller, Van Merrienboer, & Paas, 1998). He explained working memory as a paradox because he saw it as a bottleneck yet described it as the engine of learning. Sweller (2005) indicated that learning occurred at the same time as conscious thought. The theory was that the human brain had a finite amount of processing capacity within the learner's cognitive architecture. To understand this, need to learn during conscious thought, there was a measurable difference in the conscious participating level in the different modalities of training offered in this study.

The second area of study used for this theoretical framework was instructional design. The original father of instructional design was Socrates (as cited in Luigi, Bishop, Pacette, Favaron, & Pumilia-Gnarini, 2012). Socrates posited there were two ways an individual learns (as cited in Luigi et al., 2012). The first is when individuals are given facts and the learner must process these facts. The approach is called didactic and occurs via lecture, reading, or other forms of knowledge transfer (Luigi et al., 2012).

This scenario of training must occur when the initial knowledge base does not exist within the learner. Ghorbani and Ghazvini (2016) found that when more than one mode of didactic methods was deployed in the same learning experience, there was significantly improved learning. The specific scenario that Ghorbani and Ghazvini (2016) used included lecture and paper presentations.

The second way of learning, as defined by Socrates, is a maieutic scenario (as cited in Luigi et al., 2012). This format is more about drawing the latent ideas out of the learner's consciousness to use this as a form of learning via critical thinking. The difference between the maieutic scenario and the didactic scenario is that the knowledge does exist within the individual but is suppressed. Maieutic learning is used to bring that knowledge to the forefront. The maieutic learning method was the idea that Socrates felt was the proper method of instruction (Biesta, 2013).

Panerai (2013) explained that due to the current learning styles and development expectations of Millennials, the maieutic method has started to become more popular in academia. Panerai (2013) stated, "Teachers need to acquire the skills and practical techniques to manage learning groups in a participatory environment" (p. 72), and the said teachers should become experts in coordinating a maieutic approach to teaching. This might impact the results of the immediate short-term knowledge retention because there were individuals who worked in the vertical market of telecommunications and were exposed to some of these data. This exposure could impact their maieutic learning.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

To investigate two different formats of training, including face-to-face and computer-based training and the effect on knowledge retention amongst Millennials,

the following three research questions were addressed in this quantitative quasi-experimental study.

Research Questions

      R1. What, if any, is the effect of instructor-led training verses technology driven training methods on immediate knowledge retention when comparing amongst Millennials?

      R2: What, if any, is the effect of instructor-led training verses technology driven training methods on long term knowledge retention when comparing amongst Millennials?

      R3: When considering the two training modalities, what, if any, is the difference in student knowledge retention when comparing short and long-term scores?

Hypotheses

The three null hypotheses were:

H_{01}: $_{Instructor}$ = $_{Technology}$ – There is no significant difference regarding immediate knowledge retention between the two groups participating in the different training modality (instructor-led training verses technology driven training methods amongst Millennials).

H_{02}: $_{Instructor}$ = $_{Technology}$ - There is no significant difference in long-term knowledge retention between the two groups participating in the different training modality (instructor-led training verses technology driven training methods amongst Millennials).

H_{03}: $_{Short-Term}$ = $_{Long-Term}$ - There is no significant difference in student knowledge retention when comparing short and long-term scores when considering the two different training modalities.

The three alternative hypotheses were the following:

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Ha1:   Instructor   Technology - There is a significant difference regarding immediate knowledge retention between the two groups participating in the different training modality (instructor-led training verses technology driven training methods amongst Millennials).

Ha2:   Instructor   Technology - There is a significant difference in long-term knowledge retention between the two groups participating in the different training modality (instructor-led training verses technology driven training methods amongst Millennials).

Ha3:   Short-Term = Long-Term - There is a significant difference in student knowledge retention when comparing short and long-term scores when considering the two different training modalities.

Face-to-Face Training

Face-to-face lecture tends to be better for initial presentation of information, while active-learning methods are generally better at reinforcing the learning materials (Boctor, 2013). Roehling, Vander Kooi, Dykema, Quisenberry, and Vandlen (2011) explained that because the Y Generation had technology at their fingertips, which drove instant gratification and less physical social interaction, the educational expectations and needs exceeded generations that proceeded them. Though there was a shift to computer-based training in many environments, Roehling et al. (2011) felt there remained effective ways that face-to-face, instructor-led training could be effective. Organizations must keep in mind that the Millennials are made up of individuals who multitask (Gesell, 2010). With the need for instant gratification and the propensity to multitask, traditional face-to-face training must incorporate engaging activities. To look at this training, Rainie (2006) completed a qualitative study by conducting six separate focus groups with students that fell within the Y Generation population. The desired

outcome was to develop a guide on ways in which to engage this generation more effectively in discussion and education in this environment. Studies showed that Millennials have characteristics that inhibited the natural ability to participate in traditional classroom discussions (Rainie, 2006). These traits include becoming quickly bored, needing collaboration, and demanding variety, self-direction, and what has been described as the *unicorn effect* or high levels of self-esteem. Roehling et al. (2011) explained that these qualities inhibited success in traditional instructor-led training because many individuals stayed quiet in this type of environment and left the discussions and participation to a small few.

Roehling et al. (2011) found that high stimulation was required to keep the individual engaged but when this occurred, and the environment became an active learning environment then there was a more perceived participation. Additionally, the same common traits in the Y Generation drive a successful and productive environment when the stimulation is high, and there are exercises to engage the individual to be an active learner. The instructor or trainer must also avoid an authoritarian environment, as this will be counter to the traits mentioned above.

Minifie, Middlebrook, and Otto (2011) stated that Millennials preferred teamwork actives as a form of learning and explained that for effective learning environments, facilitators needed to modify the learning environments to meet these learning style needs. They explained that real world scenarios were preferred, as well as self-directed learning verses the traditional lecture environments.

Computer-based training

The use of computers in the classroom and in corporate training programs has become the norm over the last few decades. Students today are more likely to be given a laptop or tablet rather than traditional textbooks. Clayton-Pedersen and O'Neill

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(2005) explained that technology became a large budgeted item for learning environments. Over the course of the last decade, computer-based training has started to incorporate engagement demands into the learning. Rather than *death by PowerPoint*, the concepts of gamification have begun to be brought into this learning environment. Minifie et al. (2011) articulated that the Internet and computers played a pivotal role in the learning environments of individuals today.

In addition to the increase in technology, it was important to understand that the shift in the workforce from the silent generation and the baby boomers completely flipped; by 2015, the majority of the workforce was not Millennial generation, and the demand for technology as the learning platform was undeniable (Fry, 2014). Liu et al. (2014) conducted a qualitative review on preferred and perceived effective interactive style in both the work place and at home. Liu et al. (2014) looked to determine if the rise in the rapid growth and awareness of information technology impacted Millennials and ways in which it interacted in different settings.

A few defined applications of information technology that Liu et al. (2014) determined were impacting effective and preferred interactive methods, such as instant messaging, podcasting, blogging, and social networking. The tools that enabled these interaction types included mobile phones, laptops, and multi-touch tablets (Liu et al., 2014). Liu et al. (2014) went on to identify six interactive qualities that made up and defined Millennials over all. These qualities included instant, expressive, playful, collaborative, responsive, and flexible. Liu et al. found that applications and tools in the work environment could drive more measurable success if said application and or tool incorporated these six qualities. Though Liu et al. concluded organizations could benefit from integrating more targeted interaction methods to engage Millennials, their

research showed that organizations have been slow to adopt new applications and tools to drive more effective and accepted interaction styles.

For organizations to ensure maintenance of a competitive edge with training programs, the leaders must understand the needed learning styles and modalities of presentation required by this new generation entering the work force. Research indicated Millennials were motivated and their expectations, as well as outcomes, was based on environments, but there was little research existing that showed the different training models and their effectiveness of this generational group (Tulgan, 2009). Roa (2013) showed that millennial generation had higher retention rates with collaborative methods than traditional instructor-led training. These findings lent to the research question of variance in learning styles needed for the different generations in today's workforce.

Rarely today is a training program purely one modality or another. There were numerous studies that showed blended learning environments. Lancaster, Wong, and Roberts (2012) conducted a quantitative study comparing a traditional lecture style and a blended format amongst a nursing class. Lancaster et al. showed that there was a statistically significance in the scores of the two groups of students. The students from the blended course scored significantly higher compared to those from the traditional lecture environment. Lancaster et al. used four different measurements, one of which was the overall course score from the blended study group and of the four test measurements; the blended students scored significantly higher in three of these, including the overall course.

Learning Design and Participants

Campbell and Stanley's (1963) introduced the concept of experimental design in 1963. These men recognized and respected what Fisher had introduced in previous decades

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as experimental design but determined that there had to be alternatives when experiments could not be completely randomized (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). Lucasey (2002) explained that when random assignment could not be used, and the research study had multiple groups, then said experiment could not be called true but rather became quasi-experimental. This research study was considered quasi-experimental verses straight experimental because the population used within the study was not completely randomized, and there were two groups used for comparison. Geographical and travel constraints, as well as needing 21 individuals who fell into the Millennial generation age per group, dictated that one of the test populations would not be randomized but rather selected. This first group sampled included existing employees of the telecommunications in Salt Lake City, Utah as well as Little Rock, Arkansas and was used for the instructor led, face-to-face training. There was no randomization of this group, so a quasi-experimental design was used rather than a true experimental approach. Rather than completely randomizing, the other 19 participants for the computer-based training were comprised of employees within the same vertical team of the organization but were geographically diverse. Again, this meant that the research was quasi-experimental versus true experimental.

A computer-based test was administered to all the participants, regardless of training modality. A baseline was set for everyone with a test prior to any training. A second test was administered immediately following the training, and a third and final test was given 14 days following the training program.

The study incorporated both independent samples t-test and a two-way repeated measured ANOVA. The independent samples t-test was used for the between-group comparisons examining one dependent variable at a time for both H_{01} and $H_{02.}$ The two-

way repeated measure ANOVA was used for H_{03} in the comparison between and within one group at a time.

Data Analysis and Results

Preliminary analyses examined the item discrimination indices for the assessment core variables and descriptive statistics for all study variables to assess for normality and outliers. Then, the main study research questions were addressed via paired samples t-tests and a two-way repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine which group (i.e., face-to-face trained employees versus computer trained employees) demonstrated better short- and long-term knowledge retention and to consider differences in knowledge retention between the two post-training assessments.

Preliminary Analyses

Item discrimination indices. Item discrimination analyses examine the extent to which performance on one specific item on a measure corresponds with overall performance on the entire assessment. Calculation of a discrimination index (D), therefore, is a measure of test validity and helps to determine whether the assessment measures what it is meant to measure and whether all individual items should be included in future analyses with the assessment tool. In other words, this index can be used to evaluate the degree to which each individual item in an assessment discriminates between high scorers and low scorers.

To compute this index, participant scores are divided into two groups that reflect high and low scoring groups on the assessment. Then, the number of "successes" (that is, correct responses on an item) by the low group are subtracted by the number of "successes" by the high group. Finally, this difference value is divided by the size of the group. This will provide a measure of D, which will range between -1 and 1. Values of 0.2 and above are considered to be indicators that the items are valid (with low validity)

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and values of 0.4 and above are considered to be highly valid. Negative values indicate that an item is not functioning similarly to the other items and should not be included in analyses utilizing the measure (Ebel, 1954; Kelley, Ebel, & Linacre, 2002). In this study, discrimination indices were calculated for all items on the pre-test assessment, as well as on the short- and long-term post-test assessments. Results are shown in Table 1 and suggest that all items are valid for inclusion in the assessment for use in the main study analyses. Only one item, Q11, demonstrated a negative D value and that was only on one assessment period – the short-term post-test. This item, "Which locations does the organization connect to Azure?" is one that the majority of participants in both the high performing and low performing groups got correct on this short-term post-test. Given that the D values were not negative on the pre-test or long-term post-test assessment, along with the hypothesis that, in general, scores on the short-term post-test assessment would be the highest among all three assessment periods, it was determined that this item should be retained for all main study analyses.

Table 1. *Discrimination Indices*

	Pre-test	Short-Term Post-Test	Long-term Post-Test
	D	D	D
Q1	0.10	0.30	0.20
Q2	0.35	0.20	0.20
Q3	0.15	0.00	0.05
Q3	0.15	0.20	0.15
Q4	0.35	0.10	0.25

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Q5	0.10	0.15	0.45
Q6	0.10	0.40	0.60
Q7	0.35	0.20	0.30
Q8	0.10	0.15	0.30
Q9	0.40	0.30	0.15
Q10	0.15	0.40	0.55
Q11	0.00	-0.05	0.15
Q12	0.25	0.45	0.25
Q13	0.15	0.10	0.45
Q14	0.55	0.20	0.25
Q15	0.4	0.15	0.25
Q16	0.45	0.10	0.10
Q17	0.1	0.20	0.30
Q18	0.0	0.20	0.15
Q19	0.15	0.25	0.15
Q20	0.10	0.30	0.20

Main Study Analyses

To address the main study research questions, independent samples t-tests were conducted to assess the first two research questions examining differences by training modality (face-to-face trained versus computer-trained) in short- and long-term knowledge retention, and a two-way repeated measures ANOVA was conducted to address the third research question that examines differences in student knowledge

retention when comparing short and long-term scores when considering the two different training modalities.

Differences in short- and long-term knowledge retention. To conduct the independent samples t-test analyses, delta values were computed to determine the differences in pre-training assessment scores and post-training assessment scores for each participant. Descriptive statistics for these delta values are presented in Table 2. These descriptive data indicate that the delta values were normally distributed based on the skewness and kurtosis values falling between -1 and 1. Visual comparison of the means indicated that, in general, participants performed better on the assessment of short-term knowledge retention than on the assessment of long-term knowledge retention. Based on the range of scores of this sample, these data show that all but 2 participants (95%) scored higher on the assessment of short-term knowledge retention than they did on the pre-training assessment. On the assessment of long-term knowledge retention, 5 participants scored lower than they did on the pre-training assessment and 1 participant scored the same as they did on the pre-training assessment. Therefore, 85% of participants demonstrated improved scores on the assessment of long-term knowledge retention.

Table 2. *Descriptive statistics for the delta variables*

Assessment	*M* (*SD*)	Median	Range	Skewness	Kurtosis
Δ Short-term assessment	7.05 (3.50)	7.00	0.00 – 14.00	-0.27	-0.53
Δ Long-term assessment	5.13 (5.00)	5.00	-2.00 – 19.00	0.75	0.85

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Note. M = mean. SD = standard deviation.

Group differences in these delta values were examined via independent samples t-tests. Results indicated that short-term delta values were significantly different between groups (t = 2.85, p < .01), with participants who completed the face-to-face training demonstrating more improvement in short-term post-training assessment scores (M = 8.43) compared to participants who completed the computer-based training (M = 5.53). Similarly, there was a significant difference in long-term delta values (t = 4.56, p < .001), with those in the face-to-face training showing higher rates of long-term knowledge retention (M = 7.67) compared to those in the computer-based training (M = 2.32).

Comparing short-term and long-term knowledge retention. Two-way repeated measures ANOVA allows for a comparison of the mean differences between groups that have been split on two factors – in this case, training modality and timing of the assessment of knowledge retention (short-term versus long-term). One variable is regarded as the within-subjects factor (i.e., timing of the assessment of knowledge retention) and the other is regarded as the between-subjects factor (i.e., training modality). The primary purpose of this analytic technique is to determine whether there is an interaction between the within- and between-subjects factors on the dependent variable (i.e., knowledge retention). Therefore, this analysis is appropriate for addressing the final research question within this study, in which it was hypothesized that timing of the post-training assessment would interact with training modality.

In the two-way repeated measures ANOVA that examined differences in short- and long-term knowledge retention between the two groups, both within- and between-subjects effects were considered. Results from this analysis indicated that there is a significant main effect for both training modality and retention time, with higher retention scores among employees who participated in the face-to-face training

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compared to the computer-based training ($F = 17.26$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p{}^2 = .31$), and higher short-term retention time compared to long-term retention time ($F = 17.75$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p{}^2 = .32$). In addition, there was a significant interaction effect between training modality and retention time, so that there was a larger drop in knowledge retention between the short-term assessment and long-term assessment for the computer-trained employees compared to the employees who participated in face-to-face training ($F = 6.75$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p{}^2 = .15$). A visual representation of this interaction effect is shown in Figure 1.
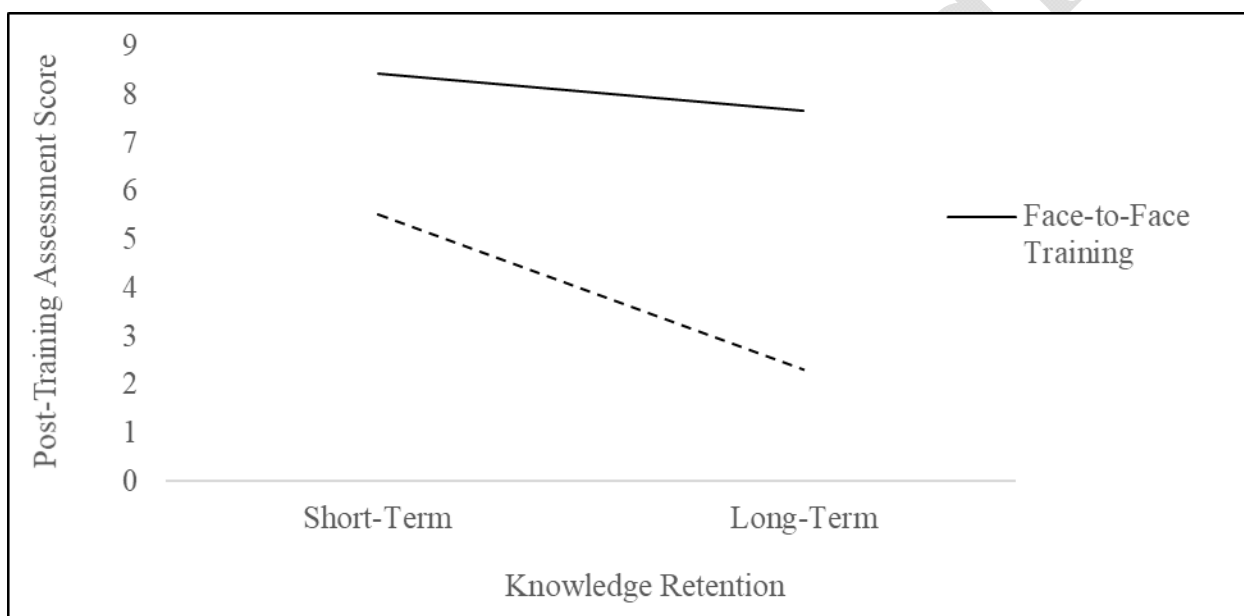
Figure 1. Interaction between training modality and timing of the post-training assessment.

Additional analyses. After conducting the study analyses, additional analyses were conducted to examine whether birth cohort had an effect on short- and long-term knowledge retention. To examine potential age differences, the sample was divided into three separate birth cohorts – those born between 1980 – 1985, those born between 1986 – 1990, and those born between 1991 – 1995. The rationale for considering differences by age cohort is based on prior literature that indicates that declines memory in typically become noticeable after age 30. During the time of this study,

participants ranged in age from 23 years through 37 years. Therefore, it is plausible that age may play a role in both short- and long-term knowledge retention. In this sample, 21 participants (52.5%) were born between 1980-1985, 11 participants (27.5%) were born between 1986-1990, and 8 participants (20.0%) were born between 1991-1995.

First, differences by age cohort were examined for all study variables via one-way ANOVA. Age cohort was entered as the three-group independent variable and the three assessment score variables were entered as the dependent variables. Results from these analyses are presented in Table 3. Results from these analyses indicated that there were no significant differences in assessment scores between the three age cohorts. Interestingly, the middle cohort,

Table 3. *Differences in the dependent variables by age cohort*

Age Cohort	Pre-Training Assessment M (SD)	Short-Term Assessment M (SD)	Long-Term Assessment M (SD)	F
1980-1985	7.81 (3.19)	14.95 (2.50)	12.76 (3.81)	0.61
1986-1990	6.64 (1.96)	14.09 (2.43)	11.45 (2.81)	0.97
1991-1995	7.13 (2.91)	13.63 (2.62)	12.38 (2.83)	0.54

Note. F = F statistic. M = mean. SD = standard deviation.

those born between 1986 and 1990, scored the lowest on both the pre-training assessment and on the post-training assessment of long-term knowledge retention, although they did not score significantly lower than the other age cohorts on these assessments. Similarly, when one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine differences in short- and long-term delta values by age cohort, results indicated that the difference between groups was not significant (F's = .11 and 0.38, respectively). Because of the lack

of significant differences by age cohort in these dependent variables, plans to include age cohort as a covariate in an additional set of analyses were discontinued at this point.

The analyses undertaken provided important information that can be used to determine whether evidence exists to confirm or refute the study hypotheses. Findings from these analyses provided evidence to support all three study hypotheses. First, the findings demonstrate that employees who participate in face-to-face training retain more knowledge in the short-term compared to employees who participate in computer-based training. Second, the findings demonstrate that employees who participate in face-to-face training also retain more knowledge in the long-term (i.e., two weeks later) compared to employees who participate in computer-based training. Finally, the findings from this study demonstrate that although knowledge retention decreases over time – that is, knowledge retention scores were higher on the short-term assessments compared to the scores on the long-term assessments. However, there was a sharper decline in knowledge retention among employees who participated in computer-based training, compared to employees who participated in face-to-face training. Based on these findings, all null hypotheses can be rejected. In sum, these findings provide support for the use of face-to-face training modalities for employees who fall within Millennial generation.

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Why Are Our Students Avoiding Statistics, Math, and Finance-Related Classes?

Spence Tower
Ferris State University

Spence Tower is a Professor of Management at Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Michigan. Dr. Tower has been teaching undergraduate and graduate classes in strategy and leadership for the last 25+ years. Aside from private and non-profit consulting on these issues, he is also co-chairing his University's 2019-2014 strategic planning efforts. He has his Ph.D. in Organizational Behavior from Michigan State University.

Abstract

If you are an academic-type that likes to see theories that truly help solve real problems, this session is for you. We will initially use several motivation theories to clarify why so many of our students are resistant to crucial statistics, math, and finance-related topics. Second, we will brainstorm numerous tactics to overcome the many barriers identified; finally, from these various tactics, we will develop a set of activities and an action plan tailored to your situation.

The ability to anticipate resistance allows the establishment of a coherent approach to the introduction of something 'different'. This session's topics and discussions will generate tactics that can be transformative at both the individual and cultural levels.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

MULTIDISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

Be Fruitful and Multiply: How Procreation Influences the Discourse Concerning LGBT Issues

Brian J. Cowley
Park University

Laurie DiPadova-Stocks
Park University

Brian J. Cowley completed a B.S. in Psychology at Utah State University, an M.S. in Behavior Analysis and Therapy at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, and a Ph.D. in Developmental and Child Psychology at the University of Kansas. Professor of Psychology at Park University and has taught there for 16 years. Also has taught at Northeastern State University at Tahlequah, Oklahoma and the University of Florida. Currently engaged in research in issues concerning people who identify as LGBT and also in Genocide and the Holocaust.

Abstract

This is an analysis about how the directive to "Be Fruitful and Multiply, and Fill the Earth" that has been accepted in the account of the Jewish and Christian religion has had a major influence on the cultural dialogue about those who identify as LGBT. This investigation will include how such notions influence public policy. Finally an alternative narrative will be posited.

Charter School Leadership – Charting a New Course

Dennis Lamb

Southwest Minnesota State University

Tanya Yerigan

Southwest Minnesota State University

Abstract

As research indicates, the demand for charter school leaders is rising. Estimates in Minnesota put the number of charter leaders needed over the next five years at over 800. There are currently 164 Charter Schools in Minnesota, serving approximately 57,000 students K-12. Currently, Minnesota does not require Charter School leaders to be licensed by the state as administrators. Come and learn about how a new program is being developed to serve this need.

Exploring Grit:
Relationships among Grit, Self-Efficacy, and Goal Orientation

Andrew Pueschel
Ohio University

Mary Tucker
Ohio University

Katherine B. Hartman
Ohio University

Abstract

Students, especially those preparing to enter the workforce, should be primed for long-term success in order to decrease the gap between their self-perception of employee readiness and the reality of their future employers' expectations. One possible addition to the undergraduate curriculum to help bridge this gap could be the concept of Grit. Introduced by Angela Duckwork as a possible driver of success, Grit is defined as a combination of passion and long-term perseverance to achieve established goals. While recent writings have challenged Grit and the impact it can have on education, this study explores the relationships among grit, self-efficiency, and goal orientation in undergraduate students. Should Grit be included in the undergraduate curriculum to help influence academic achievement? Results suggest that the constructs and their sub-components are related yet independent. The paper concludes by

providing suggested areas of impact where educators and employers alike can engage through the developmental learning process.

A High School Level Introduction to Neuroscience Class on a Shoe String Budget

Kenneth J. Kohutek

St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School

Abstract

College majors, as well as career options, in the neurosciences provide vast opportunities in today's work place as well as the future. Unfortunately, high school students have little opportunity to be exposed to this area. Reasons might include having to fit a required curriculum into the number of hours of a school day, limited staff as well as the fact there are no available textbooks for high school. The purpose of this presentation is to present a pilot program on the high school level. The availability of material and a strategy for keeping current will be included in the presentation.

Mental health and educational experience for decades. Experience in schools, treatment centers, prisons, independent practice and hospitals; intelligence, educational, personality and neuropsychological assessments; clinical director of treatment centers & psychiatric hospitals; administrator of psychiatric facility; teacher in Title I and Catholic middle school (English); university professor; senior author of two-volume manuals "The Children's Cognitive Enhancement Program" (2013) and senior author of "What I Can Do to be Safe: A Guide for Teens in the 21st Century" (2018); Guidance counselor in schools K-12; Director of Guidance at St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School and instructor of "Independent Study: Introduction to Neuroscience".

Mindfulness goes to Work, School…and Prison

Sally A. Creasap
Capital University

Dr. Sally Creasap is a professor of early childhood education at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio. Her educational background includes degrees in business administration, early childhood education, educational administration and educational policy and leadership. Prior to teaching at Capital, she worked as a teacher and manager in a school based early childhood program as well as a consultant at the Ohio Department of Education. Her research interests include reflective practice, dispositions, and mindfulness.

Abstract

On a daily basis, people find themselves in a multitasking turbulence of activity. We are always doing something, but rarely just being in the moment. While most see this ability to multitask as a strength; the truth is that it makes people less productive, less effective and more likely to experience burnout (Michie).

The need for mindfulness training and education is ever growing in the 21st century technology-driven world. Brain research reveals many important benefits of mindfulness practices such as meditation. These include physiological benefits like lowering high blood pressure, helping treat heart disease, boosting immunity, slowing aging and promoting good sleep. While each of these are so important to our physical wellness, other benefits to our mental and emotional wellbeing include improving working memory and academic performance, enhancing mental clarity, managing and

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preventing anxiety, and reducing stress.

With the positive results of brain research, it is no wonder that mindfulness practices are being implemented at an ever-increasing rate in schools, organizations and even correctional facilities. For many individuals, there is a high correlation between going to work/school and stressful experiences.

The goal of this research is to thoroughly review the literature on mindfulness practices in conjunction with an undergraduate student as part of a summer scholars' program. After the literature review phase, next steps include conference presentations, article submission and the development of a professional development portfolio of mindfulness information and techniques that can be used with pre-service and practicing teachers.

Neutralizing Gender Effects on Student Performance on A Hybrid Online Course: A Canadian Study

Anamitra Shome
Brock University

Dr. Anamitra Shome, CPA, CGA obtained his Ph.D. in Business Administration with a major in Accounting from Concordia University in 1998. He is currently an Associate Professor of Accounting and Information Systems at Brock University's Goodman School of Business. His teaching interests include cost and managerial accounting and information systems. His teaching has been recognized with awards of excellence at both Faculty and University-wide levels. His research interests include auditor judgment and decision-making, business ethics, and factors affecting student performance on online courses.

Abstract

This study was conducted at a mid-sized Canadian university to investigate whether the ex-ante attitudes displayed by students enrolled in a blended course on advanced cost accounting could be influenced through the way the course was structured. Specifically, students' gender was investigated as a predictor of academic success, as well as of different academic goals and estimates of study time for reaching those goals. I hypothesized that gender would not have an effect on actual academic performance, but it would influence students' ex-ante perceptions of their academic goals as well as the time needed to reach those goals. Students were split into two groups based on their gender. As expected, I found no significant differences in academic performance

between the two groups, but there were significant differences between the groups in students' ex-ante course grade goals as well as assessments of study time. This result is possibly the effect of the way the course was structured, which may have mitigated the effect of students' gender. This has implications for the structuring of online courses in Business.

Personas of Visitors and Residential Users of Multiuse Trails: An Application of Rural Economic Development

Peter H. Hackbert
Berea College

Peter H. Hackbert is the William and Kay Moore Chair in Entrepreneurship and Management (tenured professor) and Director of the Entrepreneurship for the Public Good Program.

He is known as a social entrepreneurship educator known to contribute to the infusion of an entrepreneurial mindset and skillset in students and entrepreneurs who may have little or no business or management education background. Known as an innovative teacher, he has been a pioneer in encouraging students and institutional involvement in new venture plan competitions, creating a faculty culture supportive of experiential learning outcomes through service learning and civic engagement and strengthening community partnerships to foster community-based entrepreneurial leadership development in the Appalachian Region.

Abstract

This paper first, summarizes the research literature on the factors that contribute to the success of multiuse trails as rural tourism attractions and highlight factors that support what a successful trail might be. The City of Berea Trail Town in Kentucky and its certified trail system is offered as a model destination. Second, applying ethnographic face-to-face observation and engagement in the form of Design Thinking (user-centered

empathy design principles) personas are proposed to better understand and represent key customer user segments.

Photovoice across the Curriculum

Keya Mukherjee
Saint Leo University

Rhondda Waddell
Saint Leo University

Robert Lucio
Saint Leo University

Courtney Weist
Saint Leo University

Holly Atkins
Saint Leo University

Kate Wittrock
Saint Leo University

Dr. Mukherjee is the Program Administrator and faculty in the Instructional Design programs at Saint Leo University, where she teaches courses in Instructional Design and teacher education. She has extensive experience in developing and teaching online and on-ground courses in both US and in international contexts. Currently she is involved with use of MOOCs for e-learning. Her research interests are in online teaching innovations, student engagement in the online classroom, cultural factors that affect online learning, and academic language development for English Learners. Dr. Mukherjee is current in her professional involvement in K-12 schools, at professional conferences in her publications.

Dr. Waddell is an Associate Dean and Professor in the Social Work Department at Saint Leo University. She has been a faculty member since August 2010. She received the bachelor's degree from the University of Florida in Sociology, the Master's and Doctorate degrees in Social Work from Florida State University. She previously worked as a medical social worker and taught an interdisciplinary family health course with the University of Florida for a combined 19 years of service. Her research interests include interdisciplinary collaborations on social justice topics to include social entrepreneurship, humane education, and studies of the human-animal bond.

Abstract

This presentation will discuss the premise and use of Photovoice, a community-based participatory research methodology, by faculty at a four-year university with undergraduate and graduate students to engage them with action research with an intention of establishing meaningful connections between course curriculum and experiential learning. The presenters will describe the use of Photovoice methodology being used in several projects where students are using photography to capture and understand the lived experiences of members in schools and other community places. The premise is for students to learn about social injustice and a method of empowerment to address needs in the community.

Research-based Mindfulness Meditation as a Catalyst to Decrease Stress and Improve Productivity

Michelle Beach
Southwest Minnesota State University

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 Education Institutional Assessment: Distance Learning Technologies 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.

Abstract

Mindfulness meditation has become a popular alternative therapy in recent years. Mindfulness has been increasingly adopted by the public to ease a variety of stresses such as anxiety and depression. Despite its increasing popularity, there appeared to be a dearth of well-designed studies to support its use and effectiveness to treat learning, mental, or physical health issues.

A recent literature review by Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD, however, found 47 trial studies out of the 19,000 researchers reviewed that did address study

limitations of bias and met the criteria for well-designed studies. The result of the findings affirm that mindful meditation may be effective to help ease psychological stresses like anxiety, depression, and poor attention and performance.

This presentation will discuss the research findings and offer examples of how the research can be applied to treat stress and performance in classrooms and workplaces.

Retaining Online Millennial Learners in Higher Education

Robin R. Davis
Claflin University

Dr. Robin Davis is an Associate Professor of Management at Claflin University and has a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Organizational Management and a Masters in Business Administration. Dr. Davis has worked in Corporate America for over 15 years in the area of Retailing, Banking and Economic Development. She has worked in the field of Higher Education since 1991. Her research area(s) of interest include: Entrepreneurship, Economic Development and Leadership.

Abstract

According to Ludwig-Hardman and Dunlap (2003), a learner support services program is a critical component to retaining online learners at universities. The purpose of the study was to understand how institutions of Higher Education could be more effective in retaining "Millennial Learners" in the online platform environment. The researchers wanted to explore what is relevant today to help retain Online Millennial Learners. The Millennial generational group in this study is defined as those individuals between the ages of 18-34 years of age. In the United States, 75.4 million individuals fall in this category. In addition, the millennial generational group currently has a half-million more people, than the 74.9 million living baby boomers (Pew Research Center, 2018). The goal of the study is to possibly uncover the most effective or innovative processes that universities need to implement; in order, to proactively work to retain "Millennial

Learners" in the online educational environment.

The researchers used qualitative methodology for this study that included a survey instrument, social media platform tool and interview sessions (face to face and via telephone). The targeted population for this study were millennial learners currently enrolled at Universities in South Carolina with online programs.

The significance of this study will allow faculty, staff and administrators to understand the student's unique learning circumstances beyond merely acquiring social or administrative information. Therefore, faculty advisors and other university officials will be able to help influence learner's "readiness" for the rapid pace of the online learning platform.

Key terms: Advising, learning community, learner support, online learning, millennials, retention

Self-Praxis, Perspective Taking, and Intercultural Communication: How About This as a Process?

Sharon E. Sellers-Clark

College of Coastal Georgia

Sharon Sellers-Clark earned her Ph.D. in Communication at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. She has worked in higher education for 20 years, and is currently an Assistant Professor of Communication at the College of Coastal Georgia in Brunswick, Georgia. Her passions lie in social justice, education, culture and enculturation, and messaging.

Abstract

This presentation will illustrate how the use of self-praxis in an intercultural communication course aids students in being able to view and understand the perspectives of others. Communication is a common denominator between the behavioral sciences and education and presents an opportunity to develop multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to learning.

Snapping to Engage Students

Cara Peters
Winthrop University

Jane Thomas
Winthrop University

Dr. Cara Peters holds a BA in Management from Luther College, and an MBA and PhD in Business Administration from the University of Nebraska. She has taught Principles of Marketing, Advertising, E-commerce, Marketing Management and Personal Selling. Dr. Peters has published in numerous conference proceedings and peer-reviewed journals, including the Journal of Consumer Psychology, Consumption, Markets, and Culture, and the Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science. She was recently the Associate Editor for the Journal of Case Studies.

Dr. Jane Boyd Thomas earned a BS in Clothing and Textiles from Meredith College, a MS in Clothing and Textiles, with a concentration in marketing from The University of Georgia, and a Ph.D. in apparel marketing from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She has published in numerous conference proceedings and peer-reviewed journals, including the International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management and the Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management. She is the recipient of numerous teaching awards and in 2011 participated in the Advertising Education Foundation Visiting Professors program. Her unique work on Black Friday shoppers and other aspects of consumer behavior have made her a frequent guest on regional and national news outlets.

Abstract

Estimates suggest that 83% of 12-17 year olds use Snapchat for social purposes (eMarketer, 2017). Additionally, some professors have reported that 98 percent of their students use Snapchat on a regular basis (Cardenas, 2017). While some professors may not see value in using Snapchat in the classroom, others advocate meeting their students "where they are at" and utilizing Snapchat as a teaching and learning tool. This presentation will provide an overview of how Snapchat works, the potential issues or pitfalls with using the medium, and some ideas for how Snapchat can be used in the classroom. Examples will also be provided.

Student Perspectives on Effective Facilitators

John Engstrom

Southwest Minnesota State University

Dr. John Engstrom has worked with educators across the Upper Midwest as a professor in Southwest Minnesota State University's Graduate Learning Community Program since 1998.

Abstract

The Master of Science in Education Learning Community Program at a Midwestern university has been designed to meet the professional development needs of educators. The program is delivered in a non-traditional format in off-campus cohorts (learning communities) over the course of two academic years. At, or near, the end of the program, a questionnaire was administered to gather students' perspectives on various traits, knowledge, and skills related to the professor's facilitation of the cohort. This session will focus on student-reported importance of these characteristics to effective leading of a graduate cohort.

Through A Looking Glass: A Challenging Future for Global Higher Education

Robert E. Waller
Columbus State University

Christopher J. Garretson

Pamela A. Lemoine

Michael D. Richardson

Abstract

There are major debates concerning the environment of global higher education. The trends are obvious: those countries with the most vibrant higher education systems are those that are most productive. Both the social and economic future of countries depends heavily on the educational attainment of their population and the quality of their higher education institutions. Economic and cultural internationalism have ushered in a new era in global higher education.

Higher education institutions are being asked to focus on objective measures of performance without consideration for the social values of a degree. Financing for global institutions is shrinking and demands for productivity are increasing. In this paper the authors focus on seven major shifts in global higher education:

1. Supply; financing; move from state supported to state-assisted
2. Demand; students; by 2020 minority students will be the majority

3. Marketing; how? Where? Social media, etc.

4. Delivery; of services to all students; online, competition; faculty, f2f, etc.

5. Structure; new structures in different locations, internationalization, no longer brick and mortar

6. Productivity; management by objectives and results.

7. Globalization

The old adage is true: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." The times are challenging, but the reward in dealing with these challenges can indeed be great.

Using Arabic Proverbs for Teaching Finance to Arabic-Speaking Students

Ernest Biktimirov
Brock University

Abstract

This paper proposes the use of Arabic proverbs for teaching finance to Arabic-speaking students. Arabic proverbs facilitate teaching by appealing to Arabic students' cultural background, by introducing ideas in a succinct and unique way, and by creating a friendlier classroom atmosphere. Arabic proverbs also help English-speaking instructors overcome language barriers and establish a trusting relationship with students. In addition, Arabic proverbs benefit English-speaking students by promoting cross-cultural literacy and foreign language fluency. The article provides a brief description of each financial concept, a phonetic and literal translation of the Arabic proverb, and an equivalent English proverb. Strategies for the effective use of Arabic proverbs in the classroom are suggested as well.

Using Photo Voice Research to Engage Social Work Students in Critical Thinking

Courtney Wiest
Saint Leo University

Robert Lucio
Saint Leo University

Rhondda Waddell
Saint Leo University

Courtney Wiest has a Doctorate in Education from Argosy University, a Master's in Social Work from University of Central Florida, and a Bachelor's in Social Work from Saint Leo University. She is currently a full-time Assistant Professor in the Graduate Social Work program at Saint Leo University in Dade City, Florida. Along with her teaching duties, she is the Associate Director for the Graduate Social Work program. She has been at Saint Leo University for the last eleven years. Before she was a full-time instructor at Saint Leo University, she was a Behavior Specialist the local high school in Dade City, Florida. In her earlier career, she was in the field of social work working with children and families in the dependency system. Courtney Wiest's current research interest are: goals are higher education and online learning, particularly related to "sense of community" in the online environment. Along with online program development and student engagement.

Dr. Robert Lucio received a B.A from the University of Florida, M.S.W. from Florida State University, and a PH.D. in Social Work from the University of South Florida. Dr. Lucio is a licensed clinical social worker, with over 18 years of experience

working directly with youth "at-risk" of adverse behavioral, academic, and mental health outcomes. He has taught at the Undergraduate, Masters, and Doctoral level, including courses on research, practice, cultural competence, child development, and family/community violence. Dr. Lucio has also consulted with local school districts to enhance social workers use of evidence informed interventions and has been actively involved school mental health.

Abstract

Student engagement refers to the quality time students devote to educationally purposeful activities that contribute to a desired educational outcome. Finding unique ways to engage students in their own education through a deeper level of critical thinking is a continual challenge. The use of photo voice is one method for engaging students in critical consciousness, or the discussion and reflection on choice of subject and the economic, social, psychological, and political forces that shape decisions.

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of photo voice on social work student's engagement in their volunteer experience, their connection to the social work program, and their perceptions of veterans.

Participants were asked to take photographs of four specific questions during an annual event connecting veterans to needed resources and services. The social work student participants took photographs which answered: (1) What motivated you to volunteer for the veteran's stand down event? (2) How has volunteering at the veteran's stand

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down event enhanced your social work skills? (3) How has volunteering at the veteran's stand down event developed your connection to the social work student community? (4) How has this event influenced your perceptions of veterans? Participants were then interviewed and asked to describe each picture and how it related to each of the questions. This presentation will explore emerging trends from the data around the key constructs of student engagement, the impact of volunteering impact on social work skills and connection to the community, and perception of veterans.

The VUCA World of Global Higher Education

Robert E. Waller
Columbus State University

Evan G. Mense
Columbus State University

Pamela A. Lemoine
Columbus State University

Michael D. Richardson
Columbus State University

Abstract

Change is here, and more is coming for higher education. Leading in a VUCA world is difficult, challenging and uncertain. The changes demanded by a global environment only exacerbates the change demanded. Higher education leaders are needed who can survive and thrive in this new knowledge economy. VUCA, volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity, terms coined for the military world also describes today's higher education world. VUCA pronounces today's chaotic, turbulent, and rapidly changing education environment, which Shields (2013) suggests is the new educational normal.

Globalization with changes in the world's economy, increasing diversity, and the ubiquitous use of technology is directly affecting higher education. In this push to be globally competitive, every country, large or small, is tackling innovation and change.

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The path to major success in higher education now relies more than ever on creativity and innovation, particularly from higher education. Among today's most pressing issues are the ongoing demographic shifts in population diversity and growing generational differences, higher education affordability, resource scarcity and lack of funding, regulatory compliance, globalization, and continued technological innovation, all of which have direct implications for higher education leaders.

Higher education leaders in the VUCA world must be activists and adaptive. Work factors such as adaptability and flexibility are necessary. VUCA leaders confront societal problems as well as educational and societal problems. Higher education leaders face demands for student achievement to increase while the uncertainty of funding affects everything on campus. Rapid changes in technology are constant and leaders are often not prepared for the complexity of demands for technology use. And, ambiguity reigns as program mandates increase, adding to demands, not decreasing requirements.