



SEVENTH ANNUAL
EDUCATIONAL
PSYCHOLOGY AND
METHODOLOGY
STUDENT RESEARCH
POSTER SESSION
MAY 7, 2008

**University at Albany
School of Education
Department of Educational and Counseling
Psychology**

**Sponsored by the Educational Psychology and Methodology RGSO and
the Graduate Student Organization**

POSTER SESSION

Wednesday May 7, 2008
10:30 AM- 2:30 PM
Education 335

Agenda

10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Poster Setup

Participants will set up for their poster presentations as this time.

11:30 AM – 12:45 PM

Guest Speaker- Aviva Bower

Aviva is an Assistant Professor of Educational Psychology from the college of St. Rose. Her focus is on qualitative research; gender identity; interpretive approaches to children's social identity development.

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Poster Session

Walk around enjoying posters as students showcase the projects they have worked on. Food & beverages will be provided.

2:15 PM - 2:30 PM

Clean Up

Posters will be taken down by their presenters.

Guest Speaker

Aviva Bower

“Youth radio ethnography: Rethinking researcher power and empowering emic investigation”

This presentation will explore shifts in thinking about research which frame a pilot project involving youth radio ethnography. First, traditional ethnography is discussed in terms of power relations of the researcher and the researched. Power here is considered epistemological power (who decides what counts as knowledge and what counts as questions worthy of study which contribute to knowledge) and ontological power (who decides what pieces of the world / being will be studied and changed). Several liberatory approaches to research will then be discussed, including community research. Finally, youth audio or radio ethnography will be proposed as a method by which researchers begin to learn about the lived concerns of youth and youth investigate their communities, identify emic problems, and create texts that function to leverage change. Examples of community research, youth ethnography, and youth audio/radio ethnography will be shared throughout the presentation.

Poster Abstracts

Akawi, R. Preliminary review of the relationship between family demographic profiles and academic achievement of Head Start children

Many researchers investigating academic achievement, specifically literacy, in Head Start children have primarily focused on familial factors such as family income, general health issues, mother's education level, and parenting styles. Mild to moderate effects of these factors have been reported. However, no studies presented detailed family profiles of children with varying levels of academic achievement. The present study, using a pre-existing data set collected over the past six years at one Head Start facility in New York, is intended to look more closely at high achieving and low achieving children's literacy assessment scores and their coinciding family variables in order to establish such profiles, as well as to investigate their impact on students' academic achievement.

Major Professors: Frank Vellutino, Kevin Quinn, & Melinda Tanzman

Akawi, R., Bryer, J., Emerson Hoss, K., LaFave, M., Gleason, C., Musungu, M., Ochal, B., Sweeney, L., Tan, X. Literacy and Social-Emotional Interventions for Head Start Children

Co-occurrence of social-emotional and literacy problems in children portends numerous deleterious life-long outcomes and such problems are particularly impervious to intervention once they are well established. Children living in poverty are especially at risk for this debilitating combination of developmental outcomes. Early intervention for young children that simultaneously addresses their nascent social-emotional adjustment and literacy problems is increasingly being recommended in the literature. However, very little research has examined the effectiveness of interventions designed to address both conditions simultaneously for low-income, young children. In this four-year study, we propose to provide intensive professional development for Head Start teachers in theoretically-sound, fully-developed practices for promoting children's healthy social-emotional adjustment and for teaching literacy skills. Working with three Head Start sites in upstate New York as comparison groups and using child outcomes measures as dependent variables, we intend to study both the respective and interactive efficacy of literacy and social emotional interventions on the development of approximately 900 three and four year olds. A delayed start design will allow us to document respective within site and between site main effects, as well as model growth over time for children in each of the respective conditions: literacy-only, positive behavioral supports (PBS)-only, both literacy and PBS, and control. Of special interest will be comparisons involving one Head Start site that has a well established supplemental literacy program (SLP) and sites that have not had such a program on measures taken before and after

training to provide children with positive behavioral supports (PBS) or both PBS and enhanced literacy enrichment (SLP). We are proposing a multi-site factorial design that will maximize our ability to empirically assess key research hypotheses.

Major Professors: Kevin Quinn, Melinda Tanzman, Frank Vellutino

Behforooz, B. PCBs and measures of attention and impulsivity on a continuous performance task of young Mohawk adults

A great deal of research has been done to determine the toxicity and potential adverse health effects of PCBs. Despite the large body of research looking at the cognitive effects of PCB exposure, few studies have looked at the relationship between PCBs and behavioral measures in humans. The present study follows up a sample of 138 young adult participants (ages 17-21), all of whom are members of the Mohawk Nation of Akwesasne, which is located adjacent to the St. Lawrence River. A National Priority Superfund site and two New York State Superfund sites are upstream of Akwesasne. PCBs from industrial effluent have contaminated the local ecology and entered the Mohawks' food chain. The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between current body burden of specific PCB congeners and attention and impulsivity as measured by the continuous performance test (CPT) omission and commission scores. Grant: NIEHS ES10904-05

Major Professor: Joan Newman

Cheng, H., Leonardi, A., & Mycek, K. Putting Rubrics to the Test II: The Effect of Models, Criteria Generation, and Rubric-Referenced Self-Assessment on Elementary School Students' Writing

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of co-creating criteria and rubric-referenced self-assessment on the essay scores of middle school students controlling for previous achievement, gender, race, prior rubric use, and time spent writing. Participants are fifth and sixth graders in the Albany, NY area. The experimental treatment involves 1) the researcher working with students to generate a list of qualities of an effective essay by using a model; 2) students receiving a written rubric; and 3) using the rubric to self-assess their first drafts. The comparison condition involves teachers working with students to generate a list of qualities of an effective essay and reviewing first drafts without a rubric. Results from this study are forthcoming.

Major Professor: Heidi Andrade

Fan, W.

Web Survey: Response Process and Factors that affect Response Rate

Web Survey, as a new survey data collection method, becomes more popular in the past decade. With the adoptions of technological innovations, web surveys differs itself from more traditional surveys in response process and survey design details. This article addressed a model of response process in web survey where information is exchanged via Internet. In addition, a multitude of issues that may affect response rate in web survey are reviewed and discussed. This articles aims to help readers better understand, design, and conduct web survey.

Major Professor: Zheng Yan

Gozza-Cohen, M. Online versus Face-to-Face: A Graduate Level Special Education Course Comparison

The shortage of special education teachers in K-12 settings has forced institutes of higher education to search for innovative ways to attract and retain students in teacher education programs. Online courses and programs are gaining popularity with students due to the flexibility in the system of content delivery and learning activities. Institutes of higher education are beginning to realize the value of this alternative format; however, concerns regarding the quality of instruction, student satisfaction, and student performance in this online, asynchronous learning environment are mounting. The research to date is primarily focused on social presence and student satisfaction with limited attention directed toward student performance (Mullenburg & Berge, 2005; Picciano, 2002; Steinweg, Davis & Thomson, 2005). Some researchers and professors in higher education are concerned that the quality of teaching and student performance in this environment is not comparable to that of the traditional face-to-face method of teaching and learning (Steinweg, et al., 2005). This study was conducted in an attempt to add to existing research by comparing and analyzing content teaching, student satisfaction, and student performance in two sections of a graduate-level special education course.

Gozza-Cohen, M. & Valtcheva, A. Reframing through Perspective Taking: Case Studies in Educational Psychology

Foundational courses pertaining to teacher education programs have been routinely criticized for presenting theoretical concepts without providing opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding of the material (Smith, Malkani, & Dai, 2005). One approach to addressing this concern involves the use of authentic and ill-defined cases as an instructional strategy (Harrington, 1995). The purpose of this study is to examine the process of reframing. In the present study, students were asked to analyze problem-based cases, and then revisit their analyses after reflecting on a variety of

interpretations of the cases presented during class discussions. We believe that through the repeated exposure of cases and opportunities to discuss them, students will demonstrate positive changes in their understandings of the principles related to teaching and decision making.

Publication Reference: Paper presented at the 2008 AERA conference

Gozza-Cohen, M. & Valtcheva, A. Special Education Teachers: A Look at Years of Experience, Technology Training and Use

Over the last ten years, \$66 billion was invested in technology in our nation's schools (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 2005). The National Center for Education Statistics (2005) reported that during the 2003-2004 school year, approximately 6,000,000 children ages 6 to 21 were served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). IDEA has identified the importance of considering assistive technology (AT) as one method to help meet the needs of students with diverse learning needs (Mandlawitz, 2007). A review of the research suggests mixed results regarding the impact of technology on student performance. These inconsistencies may be related to the type of technology training teachers receive and/or their attitudes, beliefs, and use of technology in the classroom (Becker, 2000; Bielefeldt, 2005; Kimble, 1999; Swan, van't Hooft, Kartcoski, & Unger, 2005; Wenglinsky, 1998).

The current study investigates the relationship between technology training on special education teachers reported level of technology adoption and actual use in the classroom. The teachers' stage of adoption is defined by Christensen's Six Stages of Adoption of Technology (1997) while the training received and technology utilized was ascertained through self-report measures. For a more in-depth view of the training and use of technology, teacher interviews were also conducted as part of the second phase of this study.

Publication Reference: Poster presented at the 2008 AERA conference

Musungu, M. Demographic Correlates of Low SES Students. What Aids Academic Achievement?

Developmental psychologists assign great importance to the role of nurture in enhancing social, cognitive, and emotional development in children. The present study investigated demographic correlates of high achieving students in the Head Start program. An exploratory investigation of the demographic correlates of 77 participants (ranging between 35 months to 57 months) using one-way analysis of variance. The results are inconsistent with previous findings that low SES, small family size, single parent household characteristics are negatively correlated with high academic achievement. The findings and implications are discussed.

Major Professors: Frank Vellutino, Kevin Quinn, & Melinda Tanzman

Mycek, K., Mehta, S., Frimpong, E., & Radigan, M. Predictors of Youth and Family Satisfaction with Outcomes of Mental Health Services

During the past two decades, the roles of family and youth consumers in shaping the mental health service system have expanded. Consumer satisfaction surveys have been used nationally to gain feedback on the quality of public mental health services, especially regarding child outcomes. In NYS, families' perceptions of their child's mental health services are assessed using the Family Assessment of Care (FACS). The purpose of this study was to determine what factors were predictive of higher reports of satisfaction in the outcome domain. The primary study question is: How are demographic factors (i.e., race, age, gender), service related factors (i.e., length of time in services, mental health services program type), juvenile delinquency, school attendance, and diagnosis (i.e., type, aware of treatments) related to adult perception of their child's satisfaction with mental health services outcomes? Separate multivariable logistic regression models were constructed for youth and family to predict the probability of being satisfied or not with 5 outcome indicators (behaving better in school; being happier with life; being better able to cope with challenges; being able to make friends; getting along better with family) while controlling for demographic and service related covariates. Diagnosis given, supports, and being a conscientious consumer all had effects on outcome satisfaction. Publication Reference: Poster presented at 21st Annual Research USF Conference

Affiliated with: New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH)

Mycek, K. & Radigan, M. Using GIS as an Evaluation Tool of Mental Health Services

Geographical Information System (GIS) has been used in many different fields, including urban planning, criminology, sociology, and more recently, mental health. In New York State (NYS) there is a movement toward using GIS for spatial understanding of program evaluation, which has the potential to promote reform (Renger, Cimetta, Pettygrove, & Rogan, 2002). This paper explores how GIS can be used as an evaluation tool, using a study that used GIS to compare consumer satisfaction of family perceptions of their child's mental health services across NYS. The Family Assessment of Care Survey (FACS) was used to assess the level of parent satisfaction with their child's mental health services. The evaluators used these results in GIS software to aid with visual understanding. Preliminary results of the data are discussed, along with future uses to detect areas of concern and to encourage policy makers to focus on them as well. This paper addresses the heretofore lack of research done using GIS in the mental health field.

Publication Reference: Paper presented at the 22nd Annual Edward F. Kelly Conference

Major Professor: Dianna Newman

Nagelsmith, L. & Bryer, J. Exploring Motivation and Volition for Adult Learners in Non-Traditional Learning Environments

The purpose of this study was to identify the best fitting model to represent interrelationships between motivation, volition, and academic success for adult nursing students learning in non-traditional environments. Participants (N=297) completed a survey that incorporated two measures, the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSL-Q) and the Academic Volitional Strategies Inventory (AVSI) as well as demographic information. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modeling (SEM) were used for data analysis. In phase-one, EFA resulted in factors that generally aligned with previous theoretical factors as defined by the psychometrics used. In phase-two of the analysis, CFA validated the use of pre-defined factor structures. The third phase using SEM analysis revealed that motivation accounts for 28% of variance in GPA

($\hat{\beta} = .28; p < .001$) and volition accounts for 15% of variance in GPA

($\hat{\beta} = .15; p < .05$). There was also covariance between motivation and volition ($r = .42, p < .001$). These results suggest that there is a significant relationship among motivation, volition, and academic success for adult learners studying in non-traditional learning environments. These findings are consistent with and elaborate the relationship between motivation and volition with a population and setting underrepresented in the research.

Major Professor: Zheng Yan

Özdoğan, A. The case of “Hurried Child” in different cultures: A dissertation proposal

Fast pace of modern times requires effective time management skills. In terms of parenting, it translates into efficient use of children's time in wide array of activities that are enriching and preparing children for a competitive economic system. Some scholars argue that this form of parenting is harmful for normal child development and label these children as hurried or overscheduled children who are rushed through one activity to another. Some others defend organized activities for their skill-building and protective features. This study proposes to look at fourth grade students' adult-structured weekend activities in relation to enjoyment and anxiety associated with these activities in Bulgaria, Taiwan, Turkey, and United States. Preliminary findings show that children from these four cultures spend different amount of time in activities like watching television, studying academics, and playing sports. Gender differences also offer valuable insight for parenting and socialization in cultures with different value orientations.

Major Professor: Joan Newman

Potter, B. Suicide Among Gifted Adolescents: A Review of Literature

The literature regarding suicide among gifted adolescents is examined in this article. The prevalence of suicide among gifted adolescents has increased since the 1950's, although exact figures are difficult to find due in part to the large variation in definitions of giftedness. However, some researchers have found that individuals who complete suicide tend to be above average in intelligence. It is proposed that gifted adolescents may be at a higher risk of suicide due their unusual sensitivities, overexcitabilities, asynchronous development, high levels of stress, and feelings of hopelessness and meaninglessness. Although various theories regarding characteristics of gifted adolescents indicate that this population may be at a higher risk for suicide attempts than the general population, there is a great need for empirical research in order to gain accurate information regarding prevalence rates, as well as insight into factors which may influence the occurrence of suicidal behaviors in such individuals. A limited amount of research in the form of psychological autopsies has been conducted, but further research in the form of in-depth case studies of gifted individuals who have engaged in suicidal behaviors and have survived is needed.

Major Professor: David Dai

Rodd, J. Testing Adolescents for Evidence of Formal Operation in a Familiar v. Unfamiliar Content Area

Literature published on Piaget's early work implied that the subject matter used to test for formal-operations was not relevant to the outcome. Later research has concluded that there is evidence that subjects are more likely to demonstrate formal-operations in familiar content areas. This research seeks to test this hypothesis. Two twelve year old girls, one with horse experience and one with no horse experience, were tested in three phases: a written question paper, Piaget's Oscillation of a Pendulum experiment, and a Jumping Horse experiment modeled on Piaget. The test results and the thinking behind the subject's methodology were analyzed qualitatively, finally using a rubric to categorize each girl as formal-, concrete- or pre-operational. The data produced show clearly that one girl was formal-operational while the other was not, consistent in all three phases. The conclusion therefore is that familiar content areas do not increase the likelihood of formal-operations being demonstrated.

Major Professor: Joan Newman

Rogers, S. Interviews with Stakeholders: Incorporating interview data into program evaluation

Evaluators of education-enhancing programs are often asked to provide formative as well as summative evaluations across the span of multi-year grants. Although quantitative data are essential, formative evaluations are

sometimes better served by the collection of qualitative data. The current study explores the use of qualitative data collected from a group of stakeholders over the course of a three-year educational leadership grant. The primary grant goal of developing strong leadership candidates in urban, high-needs districts is explored through the point of view of participants at various levels (e.g., aspiring leaders, acting mentors, program staff, and district superintendents.) The use of interview is the primary method of collection, and interviews were conducted across the lifespan of the program. These data were used to supplement formative, and ultimately summative evaluation reports, and revealed information that would not have been evident through the collection of quantitative data alone. Data collection, analysis, findings, and lessons learned are discussed.

Publication Reference: Paper presented at the 22nd Annual Edward F. Kelly Conference

Major Professor: Dianna Newman

Rogers, S. Grading Participation in College Courses: Instructor attitudes and practices; A proposed dissertation study

A common challenge that college instructors face is the problem of how to get their students to participate more in class. Student participation is viewed as an important factor in learning by both male and female instructors (Sadker & Sadker, 1994), and for good reason! Simply put, “students who actively participate in the learning process learn more than those who do not” (Weaver & Qi, 2005, 570). Some instructors address this concern by including a “Participation” component on course syllabi, allotting five or ten percent of students’ grades to alleged measures of engagement and interaction. However grading participation can be fraught with questions and challenges. The current study seeks to address some of these questions by identifying current instructor attitudes and practices towards grading student participation in undergraduate classrooms. To this end, a survey will be created for the purpose of assessing instructors’ attitudes and practices towards grading student participation in their courses. The survey will be piloted amongst a small group of instructors at a northeastern state university, before being administered to a larger sample at the same university. Data will be examined for relationships between instructor characteristics and attitudes and instructor practices in grading participation.

Major Professor: Joan Newman

Schoenfeld, D. An Exploration of Internet Addiction in College Students

This study will explore the relationship between internet addiction, internet use variables, and demographic characteristics in college students. Approximately 150 students from a variety of majors will be surveyed in class regarding the extent to which they can be characterized as dependent on the internet, and how that relates to reasons for internet use, types of internet

sites or applications used, and demographic/personal variables such as gender, age, major, GPA, and college standing. A multiple regression analysis will be conducted to examine this relationship.

Major Professor: Zheng Yan

Shine, L. A Case Study of Student Motivation in ESL Writing

This research project was a case study of Jake, a second grade ESL student at a local elementary school. This was a short-term research project in which I tutored and observed Jake in his ESL class setting for six weeks. Jake is originally from South Korea, and has only been in the United States for eight months. Considering this short amount of time, Jake has made tremendous progress in his speaking, reading, and comprehension of English, although Jake does struggle with writing. Jake is very much on-task when working with a teacher, and very much off-task when working independently. ELLs often experience frustration in writing due to the demand for a multiple focus upon vocabulary, grammar, word choice, and organization (Foulger & Jimenez-Silva, 2007). Student motivation is not fixed, but can be enhanced through alternative pedagogical approaches (Lo & Hyland, 2007). My research question developed into: How can Jake's motivation towards writing be enhanced through alternative pedagogical approaches? Through a grounded theory analysis, I concluded that Jake was very motivated and focused when working with peer groups on informal language-related games. I had never observed Jake working with peers on writing assignments. This study led me to conclude that allowing Jake to work with a partner might enhance his on-task performance during writing assignments.

Major Professor: Kristen Wilcox

Swanson, J. A survey and analysis of empirical studies in gifted research

A search was conducted in the database PsycInfo resulting in an initial 2,719 records relating to Giftedness. We are currently in the process of narrowing those records down to only records which are empirical studies. Those records are then being inputted into an Access Database and will later have an SPSS analysis performed upon them. The project goals are to survey what has been studied and published concerning giftedness, examine the types of research that have been used, as well as noting any distinct research questions from the past decade. We plan to discuss challenges and weaknesses that are observed which could lead to future research. Representative samples of categories will also be presented.

Major Professor: David Dai

Tan, X. Assessing the Inter-Rater Reliabilities of the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking: Reliability Generalization Across Studies

Reliability generalization (RG) is a meta-analytic method for examining variability in reliability coefficients by determining which sample and study characteristics are most highly related to differences in score reliability. A total of 211 inter-rater reliability coefficients for the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT) scores were accumulated and summarized across 19 samples in the current RG study. Inter-rater reliabilities of TTCT scores were found to be quite variable across samples, but the average reliabilities were acceptable. For the verbal test, weighted mean inter-rater reliability coefficients, based on a random-effects method were, .95 (SD=.05, N=27) for verbal-fluency, .90 (SD=.07, N=21) for verbal-flexibility, .90 (SD=.07, N=27) for verbal originality, .86 (SD=.07, N=10) for verbal elaboration; and for the figural test, the weighted mean reliabilities were, .94 (SD=.06, N=39) for figural-fluency, .96(SD=.07, N=24) for figural flexibility, .91(SD=.06, N=39) for figural originality, and .90 (SD=.08, N=24) for figural elaboration. For comparison, average reliability coefficients were also computed using a fixed-effects method. The edition of the TTCT, the form of the subtests, and the age of participants were not strongly predictive of differences in inter-rater reliabilities of the TTCT. Implications for creativity assessment are discussed.

Major Professor: Robert Pruzek

Valtcheva, A., Clure, G., Mycek, K. Teacher Professional Development and Student Math Achievement: Results from Two Large-Scale Grants

In this age of accountability, educators are urged to meet the educational requirements to improve students' achievement while closing the gaps between students from different ethnicities, abilities, and socioeconomic status. In attempts to attain these goals, school districts across the country have initiated numerous programs to provide teachers with additional training. The purpose of this paper is to present the results of a study investigating the relationship between teachers' level of involvement in professional development offerings and students' mathematics achievement. Using hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) data was analyzed and collected as part of a multi-phase mixed method evaluation process of a Math Science Partnership (MSP) Initiative. This program focuses on the enhancement of student outcomes in higher-level mathematics and science achievement in large urban settings as well as at-risk rural and small city schools. Results pertaining to students with special needs and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) in US will be discussed.

Publication Reference: Paper presented at the 22nd Annual Edward F. Kelly Conference

Major Professor: Dianna Newman

The RGSO would like to give a special thanks to Professor Joan Newman. She has devoted herself to making all of the activities offered this year possible. Without her help we would not have been able to make these activities as successful as they were.

