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RAYMA HARCHAR OUTSTANDING RESEARCH PAPER AWARD**Teacher Perception on Implementing Inquiry-Based Instruction to Underrepresented STEM Populations**

Leslie Birdon

Ouachita Parish School Board

With the implementation of Next Generation Science Standards, educators shifted from lecturer to facilitator using inquiry-based learning approaches. Teachers may express anxiety about this role reversal in providing scientific instruction. This study addressed conflicting perspectives in the implementation of inquiry-based learning approaches as defined in the Next Generation Science Standards. Social cognitive theory and social development theory provided a theoretical framework through the concepts of self-efficacy and more knowledgeable other. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenology study was to gather research on 6-8th grade teachers' perceptions of implementing inquiry-based learning approaches. Therefore, the overall research goal focused on lesson planning. Using criterion sampling, 15 teachers were selected based on five specific characteristics. Data were transcribed using a three-part interview in which participants reviewed for accuracy through member-checking. Bracketing was utilized to reduce researcher hidden bias. Transcribed data were analyzed using interpretative phenomenological analysis. The study key findings resulted in six themes including student developed scientific voice, active questioning, and modified lesson planning. Recommendation for this study include providing more instructional flexibility for addressing student prior knowledge in creating more effective social-constructivist classrooms.

OUTSTANDING GRADUATE PAPER AWARD**Qualitative Examination of Women Student Affairs Professionals' Perceptions of Job Satisfaction in Louisiana Public Higher Education Institutions**

Erica Precht & Dianne Olivier

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

One of the most impacted areas in higher education is the field of student affairs (Lynch, 2017). While job satisfaction is problematic in higher education; only 1% of professionals are “extremely satisfied” with their job, giving the field a much lower overall satisfaction level than many other occupations (Kinman & Wray, 2014). Additionally, women are experiencing job dissatisfaction at the highest rates (Beeny et al., 2005) and student affairs is a field primarily occupied by women (MacAlpine, 2022). Research shows one of the more dramatic results of job satisfaction is when dissatisfaction leads to burnout (Kahill, 2007). Women in student affairs are rapidly leaving the field due to job dissatisfaction (Bender, 2009). The authors share findings from a phenomenological qualitative research study designed to assess job satisfaction of women student affairs professionals in entry, mid, and senior level higher education positions relating to job satisfaction and leadership, motivation, productivity, and burnout. The overarching research question is, *What are perceptions of women student affairs professionals in Louisiana public higher education institutions regarding job satisfaction in relation to leadership, motivation, productivity, and burnout?* Data analyses resulted in identification of six major findings relating to higher sense of value, high levels of trust, senior-level satisfaction, expectations not aligned with compensation, student impact as a high motivator, and impact of crises on burnout among women student affairs professionals in Louisiana higher education institutions. The finding implications are be shared from theory, practice, and future research perspectives, as well as implications for leadership and practice.

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS**Publishing and Reviewing for Research Issues in Contemporary Education**

Natalie Keefer

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Jerry Parker

Southeastern Louisiana University

The purpose of this session is to provide information and respond to questions about how to successfully publish in academic journals, specifically Research Issues in Contemporary Education (RICE). RICE is the double-blind, peer-reviewed online journal for the Louisiana Education Research Association. RICE publishes educational research studies, literature reviews, theoretical manuscripts, and practitioner-oriented articles regarding issues in education. In this session, the journal editor will discuss tips for preparing various types of manuscripts and important details and suggestions for all stages of the publication process. Additionally, the editor will provide information about how members of LERA can serve RICE as reviewers as well as the benefits of providing service to the profession through reviewing and providing constructive feedback to authors.

Increasing Retention Rates in Undergraduate World Language Programs Through Curriculum Leadership

Jerry Parker & Yazmyn Smith

Southeastern Louisiana University

In a post-COVID world, the new buzzwords heard throughout all aspects of higher education that are driving the decision-making process are recruitment, persistence, and retention. The way we bring students in and keep them around is an ever-changing conversation as more schooling options become available through various online and hybrid avenues. While higher education overall has taken a big hit, certain fields are feeling the effects even more. The arts and

humanities specifically have seen a large decrease in students and an equal increase in arguments against their utility and existence as degree programs.

Although World Languages is one of the oldest fields of study in the humanities, it has seen a steady decline in enrollment at all levels since the early 90s throughout the United States. Hence, students in these programs are not being retained, are not persisting, and are not earning the degree at the levels they once did. The purpose of this presentation is to respond to the question of why. Rather than taking a traditional route of critiquing the structure of departments, this study sought to gain a student perspective. Of specific interest to this study was the role of curriculum and instruction and its value to departmental retention efforts.

Guided by existing research on retention, this presentation will discuss the findings of three surveys of students taking world language courses and their experience and needs as learners. The findings of the study can be used for curriculum and program development in world language programs and as a tool for re-aligning programs to meet the needs of contemporary students. This presentation as provides useful tools for educators and researchers throughout the arts and humanities on how to revamp programs based on student needs rather than replicating traditional program structures.

Educational Attainment and Political Participation in the United States

Chun Lau & Robert Slater

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the levels of educational attainment of Americans and their political participation. Are citizens with a higher level of educational attainment more likely to vote in an election? There is still much that we do not understand about the nature of this relationship and the factors that contribute to it. In particular, it is not clear whether the relationship between education and political participation is due to direct causal effects, or whether it is mediated by other factors such as civic engagement or social connections. To better understand the relationship between education and political participation, this research examines the factors that contribute to this relationship and the mechanisms through which they operate. This research will help to identify the most effective

strategies for increasing political participation among people with different levels of education and will inform policy efforts to promote more inclusive and representative democracies.

Do Women Delay College Completion More Than Men and if so, Why?

Cynthia Bergeron & Robert Slater

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

This study examines data related to the question of whether women tend to complete college later than men and the factors correlated with delaying college completion of a four-year degree. Contemporary barriers realized by women encompass financial limitations, college institution experiences, and the ethic of caring. Data for this study are taken from the National Opinion Research Center's General Social Survey.

The Impact of Well-Being of First-Generation College Students in the Collegiate Environment

Shauna Landry

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

First-generation college students are a population of students who are often underserved in higher education institutions. Previous research indicates their well-being is impacted by their experiences within the collegiate environment, which contributes to their lower retention and graduation rates. The purpose of this qualitative research study is to explore the lived experiences of first-generation college students regarding their well-being, self-efficacy, sense of community, imposter phenomenon, and institutionalized classism. Through the examination of these constructs, the primary research question guiding this study was: *What helps/hinders first-generation college students' well-being?* The supporting research questions explored the actions first-generation students take to improve their well-being, strategies first-generation students use to overcome issues related to maintaining their well-being, intrinsic and extrinsic factors influencing the well-being of first-generation college students, and the impact well-being of first-

generation students has on their academic success and academic life satisfaction. This study resulted in five major findings: (1) First-generation college students' well-being is impacted by their families; (2) First-generation college students struggle with finding balance between school, work, and social life; (3) First-generation college students utilize self-care practices to improve their well-being; (4) New learnings surfaced regarding the well-being of first-generation college students as a result of this study; and (5) The study findings support modifications to the conceptual framework focusing on self-care, self-efficacy, sense of community, institutionalized classism, and imposter phenomenon to include family dynamics as a foundation for the well-being of first-generation college students.

Academic Success for First-Generation College Students Beyond the First Year

Ashley Roman-Gregory

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

In the United States, approximately 50% of students are identified as first-generation college students (FGCS) (Center for First-Generation Student Success, n.d.). Over the years, research have focus on the barriers and challenges of FGCS and have identified strategies and resources that this population utilizes to overcome their obstacles (Ives & Castillo-Montoya, 2020; Havlik et al., 2020). However, there is a lack of research that discuss what it will take to retain students beyond their first year of college.

First-generation college student is defined as “students who enrolled in postsecondary education and whose parents do not have any postsecondary education experience” (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). The Center for First -Generation Student Success (n.d.) reported that 33% college students are the first in their family to attend college. First-generation college students are often labeled as the most vulnerable population in higher education. There are misconceptions that most of these students are from a lower socioeconomic status, academically unprepared, and are minorities (Whitley, 2018). These students have also been identified as having difficulties with adjusting to their new academic environment. Baker and Siryk (1984) indicated there are four types of adjustments FGCS encounter: academic

adjustment, social adjustment, personal/emotional adjustment, and goal commitment/institutional attachment.

Academic adjustment involves students' perceived ability to achieve school work and acceptance of the academic environment; social adjustment refers to dealing with new social environment effectively by establishing and accepting positive friendships and being involved in social activities on campus; personal/emotional adjustment includes the well-being of students; and institutional attachment refers to students' feelings of commitment to the university and the satisfaction with attending a particular university (Baker & Siryk, 1986).

Theories such as cultural mismatch, cultural fit, survivor guilt and social identity theories can be utilized for an in depth understanding of first-generation college student and to implement strategies that will assist first-generation college students in academic success behind their first year of college. The Center for First -Generation Student Success (n.d.) indicated that 78% of senior administrators in higher education care about first-generation students. As more first-generation college students enroll in higher education institutions, it is important that institutions work to raise awareness around first-generation identity (Whitely, 2018) and shift their mindset and priorities to better serve first-generation students (Center for First-Generation Student Success, n.d.) to achieve academic success beyond their first year of college.

The ACT and Retention at Northwestern State University of Louisiana

Jessica Lemoine & Christy Hornsby

Northwestern State University

Northwestern State University of Louisiana (NSULA), along with other colleges and universities in the state of Louisiana, removed the American College Test (ACT) score submission requirement from their admissions policies in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic (Louisiana Board of Regents, 2020). This study sought to determine whether the lack of ACT requirements during the 2020-2021 academic year affected the cohort's first-time first-year freshman retention rates. Comparing the three previous academic year cohort retention rates offers the understanding that there was, in fact, a fall in retention rates for the 2020-2021 first-time first-year freshman cohort. Recommendations for further research include the suggestion to determine

if there is a difference in retention rates of NSULA first-time first-year students in the academic year of 2020-2021 versus 2021-2022 when the ACT admission requirement was reestablished, whether NSULA's strategies to improve retention rates have been successful in improving first-time first-year retention rates, tracking students' progress both academically and socially from year to year based on their ACT scores and submitted HSGPAs, and to determine the effects of COVID-19 on retention rates for the 2020-2021 cohort.

Exploring Perceived Barriers to Campus Involvement Leading to Student Leadership Opportunities for First-Year Freshman from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

Kim Liner & Christy Hornsby
Northwestern State University

The nurturance and development of the whole person should be fundamental to the institutional and educational goals of colleges and universities across the United States. However, for reasons that continue to elude many institutions, freshmen continue to struggle with successful transition to the world of academia otherwise known as the college experience. This is especially true for first-year freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds who have been shown to often face additional barriers and challenges to college life compared to their peers from non-disadvantaged backgrounds. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to identify the perceived barriers for first-year freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds to campus involvement leading to student leadership opportunities and to determine the support systems needed to increase their participation in those existing opportunities at a university within the University of Louisiana System (ULS). Purposive sampling was used to recruit participants to engage in focus groups and a total of 23 participants completed a Demographic Questionnaire and a Focus Group Questionnaire. Thematic analyses were conducted to examine the data. The sample consisted of 20 (87%) women and three (13%) men. Several themes emerged regarding barriers to campus involvement leading to student leadership opportunities including connection, emotion, and time management. In the examination of support systems needed to increase participation, communication, financial, connection, and events all emerged as themes. The findings may assist university administrators in making key changes to their freshman

programming or in the development of new initiatives aimed at removing the stigmas and challenges attached to first-year freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Addressing and Closing Equity Gaps: Increasing Black Females' Participation in Career and Technical Education Programs Leading to High-Wage, High-Demand Jobs

Geralyn Janice & Keicia Hawkins

Northwestern State University

Black females' earnings are important to the economic stability of their families (Milli et al., 2017). However, access to opportunity is not enough for individuals such as low-income Black females due to the residual impact of educational practices and structural inequalities. Through a parallel mixed method case study, this study examined how community college practitioners can increase the participation of Black females in Career Technical Education (CTE) programs that lead to high-wage, high-demand jobs. Thematic analysis using the social cognitive career theory as the conceptual framework explored factors affecting the career-related decision-making and lived experiences of Louisiana's Black female community college students. Study results indicate that self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations play a central role in the career development of Black females. The study also found that their environment directly influenced their self-efficacy. Additionally, the study found that Black females face barriers that adversely affect their ability to persist and complete their community college programs. The findings of this mixed-method inquiry elicit important considerations that are vital to improving employment opportunities for economically disadvantaged citizens and directly correlate with local, state, and federal efforts to close skills gaps while improving the economic well-being of Louisiana citizens. The study also expanded the literature on the postsecondary trajectory of Black females. The provisional changes in federal funding legislation that allow states to integrate policies and resources that can lead to more robust educational and skills development programs that support marginalized populations' school, career, and life success are discussed.

Noncredit and Credit Alignment: An Investigation of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System's Noncredit Divisions

Tiffany Howard & Keicia Hawkins

Northwestern State University

This study aimed to investigate the perceived challenges of the noncredit division staffs' ability to align with the credit division at three community colleges in Louisiana. Additionally, this study sought to discover which operational strategy for the noncredit division best integrates alignment within the current noncredit divisional structure. This study interviewed 20 noncredit staff members who handled daily operations of the noncredit activity. The three institutions selected vary in size and location yet have similar programmatic makeups and organizational structures. The five noncredit and credit alignment tenets served as the theoretical framework guiding this study (Education Strategy Group, 2020). The themes that emerged from the collected data aligned with the theoretical framework, which supports the findings as being challenges for many noncredit divisions. The results of this study revealed that the noncredit divisions, who participated in this study, perceived maintaining external relationships as the overall challenge to aligning with the credit division. In particular, the findings reflect perceived challenges in communication and acknowledgment of what noncredit education contributes, the quality of doing business, financial and operational procedures, and governance. The identified challenges derived from the research findings and the literature review suggest that the best operational strategy for noncredit divisions to integrate is dependent upon the current business model of the noncredit division. Thus, alignment should be a process of integration rather than conversion.

Supporting Graduate Students' Self-Efficacy with Andragogy and Social Cognitive Theory

Adam Elder

Southeastern Louisiana University

This literature review presents a framework for building graduate students' self-efficacy by exploring the overlap between Knowles' concept of andragogy and Bandura's social cognitive theory. Andragogy differentiates adult learning from child learning (Knowles, 1980, 1984). This concept has a set of underlying assumptions: (a) adult learners need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their learning (i.e., adult learners are self-directed), (b) adults have extensive experiences to draw on throughout their learning, (c) relevance of content to students' personal or professional lives increases their willingness to learn, (d) learning should have a problem-centered orientation rather than a subject-centered one, (e) internal motivation is stronger than external motivation for adult learners, and (f) adults need to know why they should learn something. These assumptions are undergirded by Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory which frames learning as situated within a social context in which behavior, cognition, and the environment all influence one another. It presupposes that people self-regulate their motivation and performance and that they become both products and producers of their environment (Wood & Bandura, 1989, p. 362). The foundation for this self-regulation is self-efficacy which focuses on one's belief that they can perform a specific action that will result in a certain outcome (Bandura, 1982). There are four sources of self-efficacy: (a) personal performance on tasks, (b) observing task performance in others, (c) verbal influence from others about task performance, and (d) physical and emotional reactions to the task (Bandura, 1977). The first source, called mastery experiences, is the most influential source of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Building on the assumptions of adult learners put forth by Knowles, this theoretical framework suggests that instruction tailored towards adult learners will increase their outcome expectancy, and when this is coupled with high self-efficacy fostered through mastery experiences, will result in active engagement with the content and related tasks (Bandura, 1997).

Chat GPT is on the Scene—Can You See It?

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ChatGPT is an AI Bot (Artificial Intelligence) that is recently come on scene in the education sector. This bot isn't sentient; it doesn't "think," but it does spit out answers to mostly any question seamlessly. Ask it anything from "Explain Shakespeare's tragedies in 5-10 words each" to "How do I fire someone for being lazy," and ChatGPT will give a clear and concise response. AI can be used for nefarious means (cheating, plagiarizing, etc.). Teachers need to be not only aware of the bot's capabilities, but also how to spot its use and incorporate it into teaching.

The authors intend to give a quick background into chatbots and AI before delving into possible effects on K-12 education, higher ed, and teacher preparation. Other sectors such as legal advice, mental health services, and customer service use AI. Such uses can have unintended consequences. Because the bot can't differentiate between "true" information and information just scrubbed from the internet, the authors will illustrate ways that teachers can mitigate the use of ChatGPT in their assignments. Additionally, the author will demonstrate ways that ChatGPT is already changing the way courses are being taught.

Pedagogy vs. Reality: An NGSS Storylining Case Study

Blake Touchet

National Center for Science Education

As science education leaders, providing teachers with professional learning opportunities grounded in the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) is an essential part of our job. The National Center for Science Education has been developing climate change, evolution, and nature of science curricula that utilize NGSS storylining in conjunction with a group of expert teachers for the past three years. During that time, the NCSE Supporting Teachers team has learned many hard lessons about successful curriculum implementation and the pitfalls that

hinder teachers' ability to embrace NGSS storylining even when the educational research supports it as a best practice.

Storylines are a series of lessons connecting a scientific concept to an engaging phenomenon or socio-scientific issue; one that cannot be solved in one classroom session. Driving each lesson are the students' questions, which they create after observing the phenomenon. Students use NGSS Science and Engineering Practices to answer their initial questions, generating more questions along the way. Because students are grappling with questions that are all tied to an anchoring phenomenon, students are regularly revisiting that phenomenon in the hopes of explaining or solving it. This is a student-driven, inquiry-based process, which can have major connections to students' lives and communities.

Many classrooms already use inquiry-based learning; however, there are instances in which these lessons are not connected to an overarching theme, which falls short of a storyline and misses an opportunity for enhances student engagement. For instance, students may know they are learning about evolution based on what the teacher or textbooks has told them in an inquiry-based classroom, but in a classroom that utilizes storylines, students know they are investigating how climate influences changes in populations over time. Although storylining is one of the most effective teaching strategies available to science teachers, successful NGSS storyline implementation can be challenging for a variety of reasons including lack of administrator understanding and support, teacher discomfort with new pedagogical shifts, student proficiency in taking a more active role in their learning, and perceived time constraints. This paper will explore teacher perceptions and feedback encountered during a two-year curriculum field study. Educational research and pedagogical evidence will guide discourse on overcoming teacher and administrative resistance that can impede the NGSS storylining process. Three areas of focus will be explored: (1) NGSS storylining in practice, (2) the breakdown in pedagogy, and (3) continued dialogue about strategies for successful teacher implementation.

Sustainability of Foreign Language Programs

Ghedy Matus

Southeastern Louisiana University

Foreign language teachers and administrative leaders in Louisiana K-12 schools are charged with the job of providing foreign language education in a variety of settings. The Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) requires college track high school students to fulfill two Carnegie Units. To achieve a fluent level of proficiency in two years (2 Carnegie Units) is unreachable. For students in Louisiana to reach high levels of proficiency, they have to obtain adequate foreign language instructions throughout the developmental years in classroom settings with certified and qualified and sufficient administrative support. This study seeks to investigate reasons that inhibit the development and sustainability of foreign language programs in Louisiana. The researcher attempts to grasp the human experience of foreign language teachers in the field to better understand the complexity of sustainability. In the field of foreign languages, this conversation of decline of foreign language education is common in the literature. However, the causes of such decline are not always clear. Using a basic conceptual framework to display the theoretical perspective of the literature, the researcher enhances the theory of the FL-CAS diagram with the findings of the concurrent mixed method research approach. The results of the survey were analyzed, and the data provided was triangulated to provide a clearer landscape of the experience of foreign language teachers in Louisiana on the conceptual framework diagram FL-CAS. This research was conducted with the assistance and permission of the Louisiana Foreign Language Teacher Association. The researcher concluded that the funding formulas need to be reevaluated in Louisiana to see if the need for foreign language education extends not to two years in the high school curriculum but three years. Most states in the northern United States are requiring at least three years. Prestigious universities are requiring at least three years as well. The researcher also discovered that more foreign language instruction must happen in the earlier years to expect higher levels of proficiency during the high school years. Teachers need to be aware of the level of instruction necessary to yield higher proficiency levels. Teachers may become more effective teachers by attending professional

development opportunities, like the Louisiana Foreign Language Teacher Association or American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

A Proposed Behavior Analytic Classroom Management Consulting Model

Rosie Cooper & Margaret Gifford

Louisiana State University, Shreveport

Classroom management is a pivotal component of success in K-12 education. Without successful classroom management in place, it is difficult for educators to provide an environment that promotes learning for their students. Often, the biggest disruption to the classroom environment involves students engaging in problem behavior. Behavior analytic classroom management strategies offer preventative measures as well as methods to remedy these issues as they present. However, educators are not always equipped with these strategies and solutions. To remedy this, our model equips teachers with the knowledge they need to apply behavior analytic methods within their classroom, and further provides support after implementation. Two doctoral level behavior analysts, one with extensive experience in K12 education and the other with extensive experience in treatment of severe problem behavior provided an eighteen-hour interactive workshop to teachers and paraprofessionals in a rural Louisiana school district. This training involved a few unique components including in-depth explanations of behavior analytic topics, interactive discussion, training paraprofessional and teacher teams, focusing on building teacher and paraprofessional skill repertoires, and fostering a warm and inviting environment to build rapport. Following this training, the behavior analysts provided extensive in-classroom consultative follow up every other week for approximately forty minutes per classroom during the entirety of the school year. This follow-up consultation involved data collection on skills taught during the workshop, specific feedback to teachers and paraprofessionals on their performance, and many opportunities for educators to ask follow up questions and request further training. This approach is unique to most “sit and get” professional development strategies and provides a model that truly aims to address effective behavior analytic classroom management. This strategy was piloted in several elementary classrooms, focusing on special education students to promote appropriate classroom behavior early. This paper or roundtable

will discuss results observed from the pilot classrooms, benefits of the program, social validity data, lessons learned from the pilot classrooms, and how we plan to move forward from here.

Examining the Hands-On Instructional Methods Used at a South Louisiana Community College in the Process Technology Program

Casey Merrell & Christy Hornsby

Northwestern State University

The regional community college offers an associate degree in Process Technology (PTECH) as part of its workforce development efforts to help fill open jobs in these growing areas of industry. Process technology is learning how to break down, “quantities of substances and transforming them into other substances” such as making gasoline or turning pulp into paper (NAPTA, 2017, p. 10). Those graduating with a degree in Process Technology then obtain a job to become a Process Technician. They are “responsible for planning, analyzing, and controlling the production of products” (NAPTA, 2017, p. 12). However, the concern remains whether the current workforce development programs, specifically PTECH, are sufficiently supplying the job market with qualified graduates to create long-term job growth. Currently, the program utilizes several hands-on teaching methods, including having a working chemical plant on campus, to train graduates (The all-new PET process equipment trainer facility, 2021). However, it is critical to discover if what students are learning aligns with the needs of future employers. The question being asked are these career-centered programs producing positive changes in the lives of PTECH students? Similar studies into workforce development programs focus on retention and graduation rates rather than combining a student’s level of career readiness and the ability to promote positive changes (Hardesty, 1991). Consequently, the problem to be addressed by this study is how effective are the hands-on instructional methods used in the PTECH program and how do those methods increase a student’s level of self-efficacy.

Barriers to Matriculation in Community and Technical Education for Students Who Earn a High School Equivalency Through a Community College Based HiSet Program

Traci Smothers & Christy Hornsby

Northwestern State University

This study identified the barriers encountered by adult education learners seeking a high school equivalency in a community college based HiSET program. The findings suggest that there are numerous situational barriers that effect adult learners' ability to matriculate to community and technical college after completing a high school equivalency. Knowles principles of andragogy, more specifically, his six assumptions are the theoretical framework for this mixed-methods study. These assumptions reveal a humanistic view of learners and their individual growth potential based on personal life circumstances. The expansion and leveraging of the programs outlined in this study are to meet the needs of adult education students and can assist in matriculation to community college. The identification of barriers faced by adult learners is likely to position community and technical colleges to increase the number of completers that matriculate.

The Perceived Barriers to Retaining Nontraditional Black Women Students During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Andraniki Champagnie & Laura Norman

Northwestern State University

The COVID-19 pandemic-induced recession influenced layoffs and employment-related inconsistencies in the hospitality, education, and health service industries, which have an overrepresentation of Black women as service workers. In light of economic changes, Black women faced several situational stressors, including food insecurity, employment instability, and mental health concerns. Similarly, nontraditional college students encountered some stressors Black women faced during the pandemic. Community colleges' awareness of the commonality in pandemic experiences and perceived barriers between these two populations are essential to

retaining nontraditional Black women students impacted by the pandemic. This study endeavored to understand what adjustments were needed to student support services at Palm Beach State College to ease perceived obstacles or circumstances for nontraditional Black women students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Further, this study explained if specific student support services such as the food pantry, career center, and counseling center contributed to the retention of nontraditional Black women. Based on the review of the related literature regarding the needs and experiences of nontraditional students, participants of the phenomenological qualitative study were provided with online one-on-one interviews. The respondents shared their COVID-19 experiences and explained how the student support services at Palm Beach State College addressed their pandemic barriers. Student support services were available during the COVID-19 pandemic as an intervention to address the obstacles and support student retention. However, nontraditional Black women in the study were unaware of the services' presence, did not deem them valuable, or were unclear of their varied applications. The results indicate that student support services should have been modified during the COVID-19 pandemic to address perceived barriers experienced by nontraditional Black women students. It is recommended that differentiated messaging, communication, and delivery be used as critical drivers to increase student support services' visibility and value. Further research is needed to explain additional factors that could strengthen the accessibility, perceived value, and delivery of student support services. There is one overarching research question that guides the study, with three additional guiding questions:

1. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, what modifications to student support services are needed to potentially alleviate the perceived barriers for nontraditional Black women students at Palm Beach State College?
 - 1a. Does the food pantry influence nontraditional Black women students' retention at Palm Beach State College?
 - 1b. Does the career center influence nontraditional Black women students' retention at Palm Beach State College?
 - 1c. Does the counseling center influence nontraditional Black women students' retention at Palm Beach State College?

While this study was conducted at a community college in Florida, this study calls for an evaluation of student support services after the major COVID-19 Pandemic at many institutions

and much of the discoveries for nontraditional Black Women may aid other institutions to value this overlooked population in a variety of ways and settings.

Identifying Perceived Barriers to Enrollment at a Rural Community College

Ava Nanney & Christy Hornsby

Northwestern State University

While perceived barriers to enrollment at a rural community college can be plentiful, financial difficulties, familial and community support systems, and lack of academic preparedness are all factors that can negatively impact a student's decision to enroll at a community college in rural South Louisiana. This research will review not only those perceived barriers, but also how the Enrollment Specialist position at the institution can aid in removing some or all those perceived barriers to enrollment. The Enrollment Specialist position was designed to act as a student's point of contact for admissions, financial aid, and academic advising. This holistic approach to enrollment management aims to address enrollment and retention difficulties at the institution so that enrollment goals can be met each year. This research will work to answer the question: What can the Enrollment Specialists do to minimize perceived barriers that cause applicants to not register or withdraw prior to the official census date at a rural community college in South Louisiana?

An Examination of Black Faculty Success in Post-Secondary Education

Jordan Melton & Christopher Giroir

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The purpose of this research is to discuss the known experiences among Black faculty at predominately white institutions (PWIs). This literature review discussion reveals current trends involving Black faculty teaching at PWIs. The inequities, challenges and barriers will be noted on how this impacts Black faculty. Using a critical race and cultural capital theoretical framework embedded with tokenism, the research will shed light on this problem affecting Black

faculty nationwide. Anecdotal evidence will be presented from the faculty. Thus, PWIs must address and enable Black faculty a sense of belonging at institutions through support. Research has shown that Black faculty experience challenges and barriers that impede their progress when compared to their White counterparts (Davis, 2019). PWIs must address the challenges that affect Black faculty through diversified efforts.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework includes the presence of Black faculty at post-secondary institutions in the United States. The framework examines the state of Black faculty at post-secondary institutions, one should explore methods to attract and retain, challenges and barriers, support systems, experiences, and benefits associated with having Black faculty. Three theoretical influences on this literature review are Critical Race Theory, Kanter's Tokenism Theory, and Cultural Capital Theory (CITE)

Results

Furthermore, it is vital to analyze faculty diversity and success in higher education. Critical Race theory has been used as a framework for educational researchers to improve policies and implementation (Honig, 2009). The recruitment and retention of Black academics is not being pursued vigorously by institutions. Certainly, when recruiting, hiring, retaining, and promoting professors, higher education institutions have more options when there are more candidates (Modica et al., 2010). More emphasis is needed in this area of research to explore the support necessary for Black faculty to be successful.

The Recruitment of Females into Career and Technical Education Courses Dominated by Males

Kelli McCain

University of Louisiana at Monroe

Female students are underrepresented in certain Career and Technical Education courses. These courses tend to be ones that are dominated by males such as carpentry, welding, and automotive technology. Female students could be dealing with not being informed of these courses as options when they are selecting courses for a class schedule or when planning for their future.

The recruitment efforts are potentially lacking when looking for reasons that female enrollment is limited in these courses.

Impact of Middle School Concept on the Social, Emotional, and Cognitive Development of Students

Bertha Myers & Paula Montgomery

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Since the awareness of the middle school concept in the 1960's, educators continue to research best practices to improve student achievement and social and emotional development. The middle school concept varies from state to state and even from district to district. Research findings suggest that the effectiveness of any middle school improvement lies not only in a strong, shared leadership, but also in an organizational structure that supports the needs of young adolescents. As theorists mention, the stages of early adolescence are characterized by significant events affecting their emotional, social, and cognitive development. Transitioning from an elementary setting to a middle level setting in itself proves to be dramatic for many. The middle school concept, while emphasizing a challenging and rigor curriculum, focuses on supporting these developmental changes in the students' social and emotional well-being. Collaborative learning and teaching, exploratory classes, as well as advisory classes, all contribute to supporting the students. Unique to middle schools are advisory programs. With the increased focus on mental health, a strong advisory program provides a structured setting for students to gain trusted relationships with adults. Findings show that while adolescents seek peer approval at this age, they also want their voice to be recognized and valued by adults. Successful middle schools are ones that are responsive to all the needs of the students and the staff. Results from studies prove that when students feel socially accepted and adjusted, there are academic gains.

Assessing Relational Skills Development in High School Students with Specific Learning Disabilities Utilizing Collaborative Consultation

Elizabeth Griswold & Myra Lovett

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High school is challenging for everyone, especially for students with specific learning disabilities. Students with social-emotional competencies (SEC) such as social awareness, relationship skills are more affectively and academically prepared for graduation and their future. Current research shows the influence of strong teacher-student relationships on academic achievement which are built on strong social awareness and relationship skills. The purpose of this presentation is to provide information to other educators and administrators on the efficacy of CC. According to this study, the collaborative consultation instructional model creates the conditions that enable high school students with specific learning disabilities to develop social awareness and relationship skills the most. Implementing collaborative consultation (CC) with high school students involves students with specific learning disabilities enrolled in inclusion classes, general education teachers, and special education teachers working together to achieve academic success. This study uses the Iowa Department of Education's 2009 definition of CC, a process that designates a special education teacher to serve as a consultant to core academic teachers who are primarily responsible for the instruction of special education students. This allows a special education teacher or CC provider to work with all the classroom teachers to which a student with SLD has been assigned without being physically present with each student in each classroom. CC increases the inclusivity for students with SLD and reallocates the teachers to Content Mastery rooms allowing students to practice SEC such as social awareness and relationship skills and access the additional support allocated in their Individual Education Plan that will help them acquire the knowledge and skills needed to complete their academic assignments. CC relieves the special education teacher from being physically present in the classroom to meet the needs of more students and in doing so facilitates cost-saving measures. CC also supports SEL opportunities in special education environments. In this study, CC facilitated the opportunities for students to observe and practice social awareness skills and further grow in their relationship skills. This study is a multi-case study of nested interviews of

four students with specific learning disabilities, a parent, math teacher, and CC provider that were triangulated with pretest and posttest SSIS SEL Student Form. Freshmen students made the most gains in SECs with the largest increase in their social awareness skills when compared to upperclassmen. Feedback from students, parents, teachers, and CC providers will be presented in support of CC. This presentation will assist policy makers, school administrators, and teachers in making decisions regarding the instructional model implemented to help students with specific learning disabilities improve their relationship skills and reach their potential.

Adverse Childhood Experiences and the Elementary Classroom

Kristin Wilson & Ronald Dore

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This research consists of an examination of the existing literature on adverse childhood experiences in the elementary classroom. Due to recent studies on schools nationwide, ACE has been a popular topic among leaders. First, ACE began by the Center for Disease Control by a study initiated by Kaiser Permanente. Results of this study found that childhood trauma negatively affected adult health. Adverse childhood experiences are the traumatic events that occur in a child's life from birth to 17 years of age. These experiences can impact children in many ways. Children who have multiple adverse experiences are at a high risk of developing mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, and mental abuse (Crouch et al., 2019). Oftentimes it has a negative effect on the child's ability to learn in school. Adverse childhood experiences can also affect a child's ability to develop healthy decision-making skills. Attendance issues, behavior problems, and academic failure are common barriers faced by students with identified ACE. Once the signs of ACE-related trauma are identified an adult intervene to help lead the child to academic and overall success. Research suggests that children who are exposed to trauma at an early age can experience toxic stress that can affect brain development and other organ systems. The result of this trauma also known as adverse childhood experiences is unhealthy stress management skills. Meaning the child's ability to respond and make decisions is altered. Not to mention, stress-related diseases and other health issues can develop in the child's adult years (Iachini et al., 2016). School absenteeism, repeated grades, and

non-engagement in school are related to adverse childhood experiences like economic hardship, divorce or separation, and abuse. In fact, one analysis found that children with 4 or more ACEs are more likely to experience these challenges in school than children with exposure to less than 4 ACEs. All of these challenges impacts student learning at the elementary level.

According to the research, there is a strong correlation between childhood trauma and the accumulation of risk in life over time. These risks do not occur as rapidly by those of the same age who have experienced no trauma (Jackson et al., 2022). Results from the Jackson study reveal that the most common causes of grade retention are economic hardship, parental incarceration, neighborhood violence, and witnessing domestic violence. Therefore, having multiple ACEs puts a child at risk of repeating or failing a grade. This current research looks at the impact of ACE in the elementary classroom. Providing both students and parents with resources at the elementary school level can aid students in overcoming school related challenges.

Charter School Relocation and Student Demographics

Brian Beabout & Leslie Dicharry

University of New Orleans

One persistent critique of charter schools has been their ability, as schools of choice, to potentially cream top-performing students away from district-run schools thereby exhibiting false higher performance due to student selection rather than improved instructional practices. Charter schools can mold their student population by their marketing practices (Beabout & Reneau, 20011; Lubienski, 2007) or by selecting specific curricular models to attract specific types of students (Buchanan & Fox, 2003). Existing literature suggests that charters may be trying to “game the system” by locating in higher income areas to avoid enrolling high numbers of low-income students who might put the school at risk for poor test scores and eventual closure (Lee, 2018; Lubienski et al., 2009). Or even more cynically, locating on the border between higher income and lower income areas- so as not to appear to be avoiding poor students-but keeping the likelihood of attracting middle class families a higher due to proximity.

Previous research by this team examining charter schools in the New Orleans Public Schools (NOLA-PS) and presented at LERA 2020 found that nearly 50% of charter schools had moved between 2007 and 2017 (Beabout et al., 2020). Additionally, this data suggested that twice as many schools moved to lower income neighborhoods (35) than to higher income neighborhoods (18). The data also included seven school moves in which the poverty rate in the both the old neighborhood and the new neighborhood were similar. In the case of New Orleans, the district was taking part in an unprecedented \$2 billion federally financed school reconstruction project intended to contribute to the school district's recovery from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. This building project provided for newly constructed or significantly remodeled school buildings for nearly every public-school student in the city. So clearly, there were construction-influenced school moves in this data set.

One question not answered previously, however, was if moves between socioeconomically distinct neighborhoods would impact student enrollment as schools settled into their new surroundings. This would have significant implications for school demographic enrollments and call into question the role of the district in school building assignment for the all-charter school system in New Orleans.

This on-going study answers the following research question: Do charter school relocations result in changes to student demographics? Using data from the annual New Orleans Parent's Guide to Public Schools (2007-2017) and the Neighborhood Statistical Profiles published by the non-profit Community Data Center, we are in the process of identifying student enrollment trends in schools that moved between socioeconomically distinct neighborhoods in New Orleans. This in progress study, which will be completed by February 2023 will provide initial data to illuminate the relationship between neighborhood and school demographics when school choice is maximized.

The Balanced School

Robert Slater

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

This paper addresses three questions: What values and skills must students have to promote and sustain a democratic society? What kind of schools and pedagogy is required for them to acquire and develop these values and skills? What kind of leadership is needed to design and maintain the schools and pedagogy? It is argued that a democracy requires its citizens to value rationality, creativity, caring, and justice. Four skills that can be used to teach these values are a skillful and responsible use of technology, inquiry-creativity research, entrepreneurial leadership, and moral leadership.

Teaching Through Trauma: How Faculty Responded During a Regional Traumatic Event

Aimee Hollander, Bridgett Scott, Jonathan Willis

Nicholls State University

Bronwyn Duos

Southeastern Louisiana University

Across the nation, students' lives have been disrupted by the global pandemic, national disruptions, regional and personal events. This is a follow up study to "In the Eye of the Storm: Students' Perceptions of Helpful Faculty Actions Following a Collective Tragedy" published in the journal of faculty development. In the spring of 2022 Nicholls State University (NSU) students were surveyed on how faculty responded to the prior semester's collective traumatic events, Hurricane Ida and the COVID-19 pandemic. Over 10% of NSU students responded to the survey and overall indicated that faculty supported their success. Interestingly we noticed a difference in responses between our self-identified white students and students who self-identified as a student of color. We are continuing to run statistical analysis to compare the responses of the NSU students to the recent traumatic events and the Tulane students in the previous study. Additionally, NSU faculty have been exposed to trauma informed pedagogical

principals through University of Louisiana System presentations, Nicholls State specific presentations as well as prior article publications in such journals and chronicles of higher education which may impact our data.

The Phenomenon of Sexual Infidelity: Highlighting Experiences of Adults who were Exposed to Sexual Infidelity by Their Spouses

Sonja Polley

Northwestern State University

Married couples go through many hurdles in their relationship on a regular basis. However, one of the many hurdles they may face is sexual infidelity. Sexual infidelity is the leading cause of divorce in our society. The study will help to answer the question, What are the experiences of adults who were exposed to sexual infidelity by their spouses? There have been numerous studies on this topic relating to the causes of sexual infidelity, the theoretical orientations used as interventions to help repair the relationship after the exposed infidelity, and a comparison of the distresses to post-traumatic stress disorder. However, little research focuses on the betrayed spouse's experiences and giving voice to those experiences. To find the voices of those experiences, eight participants will be interviewed, per Zoom and in-person. The information will be coded and themed while complying with the confidentiality of participants' rights. Each participant will have the opportunity to validate their contribution to the research. This study will yield significant implications for the counseling profession as it relates to providing premarital and marital counseling to couples. It will also yield significant implications for additional healthcare professionals as it relates to servicing adults who have been exposed to sexual infidelity by their spouses.

Novice Teacher Retention in K-12 Education: A Serious Challenge for the Field, Schools and Their Districts, Students, and Educators Alike

Rachel A. Hattaway

University of Louisiana at Monroe

The most serious challenge facing K-12 education today is the struggle to ensure teacher retention. For many districts, teacher retention has become more difficult due to many factors such as stress, lack of good administrative and/or district leadership, or the feeling of being undervalued, just to name a few. In what some might deem an unbalanced scale, teacher expectations and obligations, as well as stress levels, have increased, while incentives, personal or professional recognition, and respect for the profession have decreased.

Teacher attrition has a much higher rate among young teachers. A few reasons for this include lack of training or guidance, pedagogical or curriculum changes, high demand of the job, teaching out of one's certification area, negative encounters with parents and/or guardians, and inability to adapt to the environment, among many other issues. Granted, the younger and/or novice teachers are not the only educators at risk of vacating the profession. Several experienced educators have left the field for something more stable and secure, even after offering their best to their content and students. Regardless of the years of experience, the field is losing teachers at a very quick rate, and it has become a large enough concern that there have been many articles, research papers, and other publications written on the situation.

The goal of this paper is to explore the issue of teacher attrition in K-12 education and offer potential suggestions for retaining both novice and experienced educators, particularly regarding the alternative solution of educational mentorship for guidance and comfortability factors within the educational field and classroom.

The Overall Quality of Teacher Support Structures as Perceived by Educators in Two TAP School Settings

Brandi Rivers & Keicia Hawkins

Northwestern State University

This study addressed the following questions: First, what is the overall quality of teacher support structures implemented in a TAP school setting as perceived by teachers? Second, which type of support structure (post-conference meetings, walk-through observations, cluster, or reflection meetings) is the most effective as perceived by teachers and why? Third, as perceived by teachers, which type of support structure has had the greatest impact on their classroom and student achievement? Finally, are the support structures perceived in the same manner at a different school site within the same district?

The purpose of this study is to delineate the various types of support structures in place at two TAP schools, evaluate the quality of each type of support, and the effectiveness of each support structure as it pertains to the classroom and/or student achievement as viewed from a teacher's perspective. A secondary purpose of this study is to determine if the quality and effectiveness of each type of support remains the same at a different school site. The research design for this study was a mixed-method design utilizing quantitative research through surveys and qualitative research through interviews. Participants at the first school site included 24 core content teachers from English Language Arts, science, social studies, and mathematics. Participants at the second school site included 16 core content teachers from ELA, science, social studies, and mathematics. All teachers were given an online survey through Google Forms, and four focus groups were formed by content to complete interviews. At the conclusion of the survey, it was determined teachers found weekly cluster meetings was the most effective support structure. Interview responses further identified the weekly cluster meetings as being most beneficial to educators. Results from this study will be shared with the leadership team at each research setting school site. These findings can provide leadership teams with data to better improve and incorporate effective teacher support structures.

COVID-19 and Teacher Preparation: An HBCU Perspective

Erin Scott-Stewart, Emily Jackson-Osagie, Dynisha Miller, Sharona Brooks, & Teran James
Southern University and A&M College

This is a study in progress by graduate research assistants who are considering how COVID-19 has affected the educational experiences of HBCU students, namely students in teacher preparation. The presentation will include a comparison of the following pre-COVID aspects of teacher education: textbook and licensure exam affordability, STEM teacher preparation, and elementary education. In addition, the researchers will outline the existing research and clarify gaps in the research as they related to HBCU pre-service teachers. Finally, they will discuss implications for practice in teacher preparation and for future research.

Finding Opportunities to Remove Financial Barriers for Students: Teacher Residents' Experiences with the Federal Work Study Grant

Kathleen Williams & Angel Ogea
McNeese State University

In the state of Louisiana, education programs follow a state mandated year-long residency model. This immersive residency model demands a high level of time commitment from teacher residents, which may impact his/her financial stability and provide barriers to successfully complete the teacher preparation program. McNeese State University's Department of Education Professions sought options to provide further financial assistance to these students using the Federal Work Study Grant. As part of this grant, teacher residents could be eligible for hourly compensation while in their residency field placements. Survey data has been collected on the impact the Federal Work Study Grant has had on student success and removing financial barriers that exist in residency programs.

Barriers Black Males Face on Their Journey to an Education

Atia Garrett-Washington & Keicia Hawkins

Northwestern State University

Earning a college degree can increase anyone's chances of stable employment. Stable employment would lead to decreasing chances of committing unnecessary crimes. For Black males, earning a college degree and having the ability to take care of their family, earns them respect from their peers. On average, Black males earn fewer college degrees when compared to their Caucasian, Asian and Hispanic counterparts. The purpose of the ethnographic quantitative study was to explore barriers Black males face along their journey to education, be it secondary or post-secondary. The decision to research barriers at both the secondary and post-secondary levels was based on the increase in the number of high school dropouts in the state of Louisiana. The study was framed by the African American Male Theory which posits that African American boys and men are born with an innate desire for self-determination and with an unlimited capacity for morality and intelligence. As a theoretical framework, the African American Male Theory can focus on the spiritual, psychological, social, and educational development of the Black male, which is explored through the research in this study.

The 250 Black male participants ranged from age eighteen to sixty-five and were either high school dropouts, community college graduates, bachelor's degree recipients, working professionals, or recent retirees. The participants were recruited through a social aid and pleasure club in New Orleans, social media, and referrals. An invitation to participate in the study was posted via email and was selected based on multiple indicators. One indicator was the geographic location, participants needed to be born in the state of Louisiana. Another indicator was the highest level of education. Participants who currently hold a master's or doctorate degree were not included in the study because they are high achievers. The participants had an opportunity to either submit a survey, one-on-one interview, or ten-person focus groups. The participants revealed financial instability, lack of family support, and lack of resources as their main barriers. Religion served as a strong support system to assist in overcoming barriers. The findings from this study may provide educators, students, and parents with information on the barriers Black males encounter and various strategies used to overcome them.

Exploring the Perceptions and Experiences of Black Male Students with the ACT Exam

Alicia Rollins

University of Louisiana at Monroe

The American College Test (ACT) serves as the most utilized college admissions test in the United States. With disparities existing in the scores of Black males on the ACT exam compared to their peers, it is imperative to explore how these students are perceiving and experiencing the ACT. This study explored how Black male students experience the ACT and how their perceptions and beliefs may influence that experience. By identifying themes contributing to these perceptions and experiences, practitioners can learn how to better support students during their preparation process. In this study, Black male students who had recently taken the ACT shared their experiences through reflections and interviews. This thematic phenomenological study sought to answer the following research questions: What are the experiences of Black male students taking the ACT exam? What are the perceptions of Black male students of the ACT exam and its implications on their future? Findings suggest that Black male students desire greater preparation and support from their community in the preparation process. Other findings show that negative feelings about the exam and themselves impact their experience with the test and their beliefs on the exam's impact on their future.

The Relationship Between Participation in Peer Mentorship Programs and Attaining Semester Requirements of Academic Success Plans for Students Who Are Under a Financial Aid Appeal

Bob Jordan & Christy Hornsby

Northwestern State University

Northwestern State University (NSU) offers peer-assisted academic support services through its Academic Success Center (ASC), which includes constructing Academic Success Plans (APLANs) for students who did not attain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). These

students risk losing financial aid eligibility and are often NSU's most vulnerable. The ASC is expanding student support services by adding a peer mentorship program for students who successfully appeal their financial aid eligibility. In addition to comparing outcomes for students who participated in the peer mentorship program and those who did not, this research examines the relationship between the level of participation in a peer mentorship program and attaining the semester requirements of APLANs. "Level of participation" is defined as the number of mentee-initiated contacts made during the peer mentorship program. Because SAP categories play a vital role in constructing APLANs, the research will also examine SAP categories related to mentorship participation.

Guiding Surgical Technology Students to Understand Their Professional Identity with an Introductory Course

Lindsay Brown Henderson & Christy Hornsby

Northwestern State University

This study served to examine the effectiveness of the Introduction to Surgical Technology course offered at Fletcher Technical Community College. The purpose of the study was to determine if the course satisfies the needs of students in understanding the role of a surgical technologist in the operating room environment, and to better prepare them for the professional identity required prior to applying to the clinical component of the program. The study involved collecting and analyzing pre- and post-course data to determine knowledge gained after taking the course.

Eighteen students enrolled in the Spring 2022 HESC 1010/ Introduction to Surgical Technology course at Fletcher were asked to voluntarily participate in the study via Survey Monkey and were provided consent forms. Of the eighteen students enrolled in the course, fifteen students returned consent forms and elected to partake in the pre-course survey. Participants were asked to provide their top three major influences in choosing surgical technology as a major using an open-ended style question, as well as utilizing drop-down boxes to answer nine quantitative styled survey questions, to determine their pre-course knowledge of specific course learning objectives. Participants took part in the introductory course for approximately eleven weeks. Upon course completion, they were asked to complete a post-

course survey. Of the fifteen pre-course survey participants, twelve completed the post-course survey that consisted of the same nine-question quantitative survey used for the pre-course survey to determine their knowledge base after the course completion. They were also asked to provide feedback on whether the course provided adequate knowledge in addition to if they still planned to pursue the profession.

Data was collected, analyzed, and placed into charts to compare pre- and post-course answers based on frequency of response per question as well as per participant. Results indicated a significant understanding of the profession after having taken the introductory course and participants felt the course content was adequate in providing the necessary information. It was concluded that the course was effective in meeting its objective of providing a sense of professional identity and preparing students for what the career entails.

Symposia

Symposium: Strategic Initiatives and Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Chair: Angel Ogea, *McNeese State University*

Implementing Strategic Recruitment Measures in the Department of Education: Unlock Education

Kathleen Williams & Angel Ogea
McNeese State University

As universities compete for students, colleges must market themselves in order to vie for student interest and enrollment. Colleges must market their programs, athletic programs, opportunities, professors, academic achievements, and overall school culture (Han, 2014; Johnson et al., 2009). Due to college recruitment efforts, there is now more emphasis on introducing college options to students while they are still in high school. Moreover, more effective collegiate marketing strategies include providing college choice activities and open-campus invitations to prospective students. These strategies encourage high school students to commit and apply to these colleges prior to graduation (Neinhusser, 2013).

McNeese State University's Department of Education Professions sought to implement an innovative method to recruit high school students into the teaching profession. Unlock Education became the department's annual recruitment event for high school students interested in becoming future teachers. Modeled from the professional development conferences attended by educators, Unlock Education recruits youth from district, local, rural, and high-need schools, as well as high school educational pathways to attend on campus activities and sessions. While on campus, high school students participate in sessions related to technology/social media tools, differentiation, hands-on content-focused activities, field experiences, and campus tours. Data has been collected on the effectiveness of this recruitment effort since its implementation in 2018.

Evidence-Based Inquiry Cycle for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Leah Peterson

Nicholls State University

This presentation outlines the need for developing and maintaining a quality assurance system for education providers through the implementation of an evidence-based inquiry cycle. The information provided is derived from a secondary analysis methodology that examined past theories, models and research. Findings provide a strong case for education providers to utilize an evidence-based inquiry cycle for the foundation of their quality assurance system and positive change in general. Additionally, specific action steps are identified to aid in sustaining an evidence-based inquiry cycle for quality assurance including support for providers, collaboration with stakeholders, an emphasis on positive culture, and a focus on quality outcomes and data. The findings have implications specific to teacher education but also as a model for other programs within higher education to focus on quality assurance measures that are supported through inquiry, strong evidence, and continuous improvement efforts.

Factors Affecting Grant Writing at a Four-Year University: Tenured and Non-Tenured Faculty Perceptions

Sonya Hidalgo & Christy Hornsby

Northwestern State University

Obtaining external funding through successful grant writing is a fundamental task at some institutions of higher education. Multiple research studies have established that faculty's proficiency levels in grant writing vary greatly. This action research study utilized an analytical cross-sectional design and used a case study approach to focus on one four-year institution. One purpose of this study was to identify factors (including faculty's current strengths, current weaknesses, perceived barriers, and motivators) that affect participation in the grant writing process. Another purpose was to examine the defined factors and develop institutional strategies to mitigate the process. Notable findings included that more experienced faculty, including tenured and/or full professors possess high preexisting skill sets than their non-tenured colleagues. Purposeful mentoring or collaborations coordinated by the grants office could be beneficial to these parties. Strengths and weaknesses among faculty affiliated with various colleges were identified, and this information could be used to plan interdisciplinary collaborations. Motivators identified included inclusion of meaningful points in annual performance review documents and salary supplementation. The largest area of weakness to address was that of faculty needing help searching for funding sources.

Symposium: Action Research: The Gateway to Sustainable School Improvement**Chair:** Nancy Autin, *University of Louisiana at Lafayette*

Nancy Autin, Maurie Barras, Ellen Boudreaux, Tori Broussard, Shannon Campbell, Dejuana Chevalier, Frank Delfavero, Ashley Menard, Bailey Middleton, & Danika Richard
University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Proponents of school improvement rely heavily on research as the backbone for making meaningful decisions in the ongoing process of improving. Understanding the research process, applying research principles, and implementing applicable findings are even more critical as schools seek ways to improve practices to bolster student achievement. Developing and nurturing research skills in school leaders is critical in leading the process to bolster achievement for all students. Furthermore, as state and district leaders ponder ways to allocate fiscal and human resources to support improvement efforts, it is likely the greatest impact in achievement will be realized with ownership, direction, and intervention of stakeholders at the local school level.

With a focus on grooming school leaders as consumers and designers of research, practitioners in this presentation model 21st century leaders working collaboratively as problem-solvers in the learning environment. This research project emphasizes understanding the research process, developing one's skills in reading and understanding research reports, and increasing one's knowledge through a literature review related to a gap or concern that emerged through an analysis of multiple years of school performance data. Participants share elements of their action research papers focused on conducting and using Research for Leading Change. Representing different schools, aspiring school leaders formulate a problem statement, articulate research questions, and share findings from the literature review to support ways to overcome gaps revealed in an analysis of school data. This presentation culminates in articulating action steps for improving student performance and overall school effectiveness. It is anticipated that actions steps may be nuanced and tailored to benefit schools experiencing similar gaps.

Symposium: Rising School Leaders Connect Theory and Practice to Bolster Student Achievement and School Improvement

Chair: Nancy Autin, *University of Louisiana at Lafayette*

Nancy Autin, Abby Bergeron, Fedora Boudreaux, Frank Delfavero, Monique Estay, Herman Hartman Jr., Kerri Hill, Sedonia Lousteau, Lani McElroy, Yvette Pogue, Rekeisha Triggs, Kreig

Triggs, & Macey Wade

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

During a period of unprecedented challenges in teaching and learning, understanding the role of research and applying its principles is the gateway to making substantive decisions in the K-12 learning environment. With the ultimate goal of improving student achievement and overall school effectiveness, school administrators, teachers, and stakeholders are called to act boldly in improvement efforts. Experience has proven, even with the best intentions, well-articulated improvement plans often fall short of delivering desired results. The presentation will demonstrate how to avoid this disappointment. The objective is to invest in the research process as a concrete means of problem solving to bring about change in an area needing improvement in the K-12 learning environment.

Teams of aspiring K-12 school leaders representing three different schools demonstrate how to use the research process to improve teaching and learning at the grass roots, the local level. Participants will share major elements of their action research papers as a collaborative performance task completed as researchers for leading change. Each team will identify a gap revealed in the analysis of multiple years of school data with the anticipation of guiding the improvement process in minimizing or eradicating specific gaps.

Action Research teams give special attention to the literature review as a major step in expanding one's knowledge related to the research questions. The presentations showcase school leaders as consumers and designers of research, leaders actively engaged in using research to inform and guide practices to achieve improvement goals. Each paper culminates with well-formulated action steps addressing an achievement gap in a content area or a significant concern negatively impacting student achievement.

Symposium: Adult Learners, Motivation, and Critical Thinking Skills

Chair: Laura Norman, *Northwestern State University*

**Impactful Assumptions: Connecting Adult Learners and Malcolm Knowles at
Northwestern State University**

Laura Norman & Christy Hornsby
Northwestern State University

An adult learner has been characterized as a type of non-traditional post-secondary education student which generally are comprised of some of the following: over eighteen years of age, delayed entry into post-secondary enrollment, enrolled part-time, work full-time, and are considered financially independent (Merriam & Baumgartner, 2020). Additionally, Adult Learning Theory, or andragogy, is the study of how adults learn and develop (Knowles, 1968; 1975). Through Knowles' (1968; 1975) work regarding andragogy, he outlines six assumptions that a robust and effective adult learning experience should produce:

- Adults will develop a self-concept; An adult learner will become more independent and self-directed.
- Adults learn from experience; An adult learner will learn and gain insight from previous experience and create a repository for learning.
- Adults have a readiness to learn; An adult learner will take the initiative to learn about something that matters to them and is useful to their life experience or work experience.
- Adults value immediate applications; An adult learner takes immediate applications rather than for future uses.
- Adults are intrinsically motivated; An adult learner will be more motivated by internal factors rather than external factors and pressures.
- Adults have the need to know; An adult learner connects what they are learning to why they are learning a concept to how can it be utilized.

Through these six assumptions, this future study will evaluate and understand which of Malcolm Knowles' assumptions are most impactful for students enrolled in the Doctor of Education program at Northwestern State University. As the overarching research question poses: Which Malcolm Knowles' assumptions are most impactful for Adult Learning and Development students at Northwestern State University? Through this study, the Adult Learning and Development Faculty hope to gain insight from Knowles' assumptions and student perceptions of these assumptions.

**Training and Professional Development and Other Factors in Higher Education:
Understanding What Motivates Employees in a Large Corporate Organization**

Mwaka Obol & Laura Norman

Northwestern State University

Motivation, as a human resource tool, plays an important role in employee performance and organizational success. One of the problems faced by organizations, which employs a large workforce, is engaging their employees (Farrant, 2019). This quantitative, descriptive correlation research study examined the relationship between training and professional development and other factors such as efficacy, financial and nonfinancial rewards, Herzberg's Two Factor Theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs on the motivation levels of employees in a large corporate organization, particularly, a higher education institution in Louisiana.

This study expounds on literature regarding motivation levels of employees in large corporate organizations such as efficacy, financial and non-financial rewards, Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. This research study provides a nuanced understanding of the role that training and professional development plays in influencing the motivation levels of full-time faculty at a higher education institution in Louisiana. This research study will reflect how Northwestern State University of Louisiana (NSULA) can inspire their employees to achieve their desired results and discover whether

training and professional development, among other factors mentioned, may be leveraged to influence the motivation levels of employees.

In addressing each construct, these guiding research questions were explored, analyzed, and examined in relation to employee motivation:

- What is the relationship between training and professional development and the motivation levels of employees in a large, corporate organization in Northwest Louisiana?
- What is the relationship between efficacy and the motivation levels of employees in a large, corporate organization in Northwest Louisiana?
- What is the relationship between (a) financial rewards and (b) non-financial rewards and motivation of employees in a large, corporate organization in Northwest Louisiana?
- What is the relationship between Herzberg's Two Factor Theory and the motivation of employees in a large, corporate organization in Northwest Louisiana?
- What is the relationship between Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and the motivation of employees in a large, corporate organization in Northwest Louisiana?

A survey instrument was employed to collect data from full-time faculty at Northwestern State University, and the data was analyzed through a correlation design. The results of the research study determined training and professional development, efficacy, Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs *do not* have a significant relationship with the motivation levels of employees, while financial and nonfinancial rewards *have* a significant relationship with the motivation levels of employees in large corporate organizations, particularly, a higher education institution in Louisiana. Through this data, Northwestern State University will be able to navigate various factors to motivate and aid employees to be more motivated and increase employee performance.

Correlation of Learning-Centered Education and the Acquisition of Critical Thinking Skills of Adult Basic Education Students

Timothy Stamm & Laura Norman

Northwestern State University

Critical-thinking skills are important to possess for success in the post-secondary educational and subsequent workplace environments. In the workplace, these skills are often identified as soft skills (Fairmile, 2022; Richmond, 2021; Robles, 2012). The gap in college completion and success in the labor market was noted by Suleman (2017), who reported that employers often stated that recent graduates possessed discipline-based skills, but they lacked problem-solving, communication, and knowledge-transfer skills. Prior research conducted for a specific career path suggested that there was often a mismatch in recent graduates' job-specific tasks and critical-thinking skills (Eschenfelder, 2020).

Another solution to address the acquisition of critical-thinking skills is to use the learner-centered model. This model changes the focus from teaching to a focus on learning, and it places students in control of their own learning. Learning-centered education allows students to explore, to question, and to develop as learners and individuals as opposed to memorizing and reciting information, which may be forgotten shortly after first encountered (McPhail, 2005). Learning-centered design allows learners to master the competencies required for a specific subject, while simultaneously developing their critical-thinking, problem-solving, and independent learning skills. This approach may prove more valuable to adult learners who value time-on-task and making the connection between what they are learning and a real-world application of that knowledge (English & Mayo).

The purpose of this research study and literature review was to uncover evidence that demonstrated a causative link between a learning-centered curriculum model and the acquisition of critical-thinking skills, specifically by adult learners. The goal of the study will be to provide adult education practitioners with data that demonstrated an efficient and effective means of ensuring that adult learners and graduates of adult learning programs acquire, develop, and master the use of critical-thinking skills. Through this study, the literature review explores

constructs such as Adult Learning Theory, Transformative Learning Theory, Adult Basic Education, Adult Basic Education Programs, critical thinking, and workforce needs.

This study and the literature review will seek to build a theory that demonstrated a relationship between learner-centered instructional design and critical-thinking in response to the research question, *Do learning-centered instructional programs lead to higher scores on the California Critical Thinking Skills Test when compared to teacher-directed programs?* The benefits of this study will be of great information and impact in post-secondary institutions, workforce programs, and will aid to address critical thinking and other lacking job skills in workforce development today.

Poster Presentations

The Impact of Mentoring Relationships on the Development, Advancement, and Success of Undergraduate and Graduate Students

Dominic Thomas

Texas Southern University

The purpose of this study was to examine the predictability of types of mentoring relationships on the academic and overall success of students attending colleges and universities. Specifically, this study focused on the predictable relationship between types of mentoring relationships such as peer mentorship, faculty mentorship, e-mentorship, and group mentorship on the perceived academic success and overall success of undergraduate and graduate students. A correlational research design was employed in this investigation. This type of quantitative methodology allowed the researcher the opportunity to collect data to assess the degree a relationship exists between two or more variables. The data revealed that types of mentoring relationships did have some predictive validity with regard to the success of students.

How the United States Can Improve Based on the Methods of Other Countries

Madison Abadie & Bertha Myers

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The American public education system has many problems that do more harm than good to both teachers and students, such as the intense standardization of the curriculum that discourages creativity from both teachers and students, the unnecessary emphasis on the importance of standardized tests, minimal respect and pay for teachers, etc. Because of these problems, the American education system is not as effective as the systems of many other countries, such as Finland, Hong Kong, South Korea, and others. This project aims to explore why the education systems of these other countries are more successful than America's system and to determine if their successful methods can be implemented to make America's system more successful. One large difference between America and other countries, especially Finland, is the culture surrounding education. In Finland, education is regarded as more important than many other aspects of life, meaning more time, money, and resources go into building an excellent system that caters to the needs of the students. In Hong Kong, teachers continue to develop education for students' interests and needs in secondary education, where this does not occur in many other countries, with the goal of helping students explore career paths that interest them after secondary school. America can learn from South Korea when it comes to reform. Experts in the field of education lead the reforms, utilizing both top-down and bottom-up strategies. Although a perfect system may be unobtainable, the United States can implement the successful methods of other countries to keep improving our flawed system for the benefit of our students.

The Impact of Standardized Testing in Schools

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This research is a review of the literature on both the advantages and disadvantages of standardized testing that is ubiquitous in schools today. Testing has been an integral part in our

classrooms pretty much since the very beginning, but just how helpful are tests. The history of standardized testing dates to the Scholastic Aptitude Test (Gilman, 2020). This is directly caused by the fact that these state tests scores determine the amount of federal funding that a school will receive (Thompson, 2018). The push by schools for higher tests scores has a direct impact to both teachers and students' mental health (Suldo et al., 2013). For students testing causes stress because it makes students feel they need to do well. This can lead to students cramming for exams and beating themselves up for how they perform. Another concern is how test scores can affect a teacher's salary or continued employment. This overall causes increase stress for all parties involved. Testing has many both advantages and disadvantages for students. One of the benefits is that answering questions will reinforce information in a student's mind because they will have to pull out the information (Roedigner et al., 2013). Another benefit is that testing causes students to study more as it is highly beneficial to a student's retaining of knowledge. One final benefit is that testing can help to allow better organizational skills of knowledge. Testing is not fair to all students. Studies find that disadvantaged students struggle when it comes to tests. The schools that these disadvantaged students attend typically have less qualified effective teachers, with a number of classrooms being solely run by substitute teachers in some places. Testing has become a staple in the American classroom. Although testing may be stressful, but there are clear benefits to testing that are often overlooked. It is disappointing that disadvantaged students do not wish to attend higher education even though they perform well in school as well as on standardized tests. Further examination on how standardized testing impacts higher education is needed.

A Review of Two Studies: Inclusivity and Diversity in Sex Education

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Sex education is a necessary part of curriculum that should be addressed during adolescence; the primary purpose is to encourage healthy sex habits early into a youth's life. A noted problem is some students have claimed that the sex education they have received was not supplementary and either taught them the bare minimum or information not pertaining to themselves. Sex

education has changed throughout the years, adapting to newer, younger generations, so why are students still feeling uneducated about sex and sex habits? The unfortunate truth is that students from various identities, especially LGBTQ+ students, are not being addressed in sex education. Schools must adapt to these more prominent identities to prevent these issues and include LGBTQ+ principles in sex education. The LGBTQ includes (but is not limited to) lesbians, bisexuals, gays, transgender, and queer individuals; LGB individuals are often referred to as “homosexuals”. These groups are often split into various identities, but the LGBTQ+ acronym continues to encompass all such identities. Each group, including heterosexuals, must be considered regarding the nature of inclusivity; stylizing sex education to ensure this comprehensive education may be complex, but it can also be elementary with the proper resources and background. Two studies have been provided to determine the nature of LGB principles and transgender principles of inclusivity in sex education (Currin et al., 2020; Tordoff et al., 2020). By differentiating these two studies, the difference between the two identities (sexual orientation vs. gender association) can be seen and understood clearly, and a better plan of action can be formed. In both studies, the participants were volunteers from various races, ages, and identities to ensure comfort within the study and eliminate all bias. By identifying the issues present in sex education, we can also see what needs to be changed in sex education. The individuals who participated in the studies provided insight into how schools might begin to provide inclusive sex education for students, such as using anatomy-based language, while remaining fully comprehensive and without taking important information out of the curriculum. By considering our LGBTQ+ students, we can better understand how to involve these students in sex education programs and accommodate their needs to ensure that they are seen and heard. Research is scarce in sex education.

The School to Prison Pipeline

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The purpose of this literature review is to examine past research regarding how school policies and disciplinary actions affect the School to Prison Pipeline. The School to prison Pipeline is a

phenomenon that occurs when hundreds of school districts across the country employ discipline policies that push students out of the classroom and into the criminal system at alarming rates. Some of the main things that cause the continuation of the School to Prison Pipeline are the expansion of zero tolerance policies, a change in policy from rehabilitation to “tough on crime” in juvenile detention centers, and a blur in the disciplinary roles between our nation's secondary schools and our nation's juvenile detention centers. The negative effects of these changes are affecting students with a low socioeconomic status, students of color, and students with disabilities at an alarming rate. Some of the ever-lasting effects are detrimental impacts to a student’s mental health and social abilities. They are at a much higher risk for psychological issues such as Depression, Anxiety, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. They are also at a much higher risk for having developmental, cognitive, and social delays. Throughout this study the lasting effects of this nationwide phenomenon will be evaluated. Some possible solutions would be to implement restorative justice programs in secondary schools across the country. This would allow students to learn how to properly deal with their negative emotions in a positive manner. This will also provide them with skills that they can implement in their everyday life that will benefit both them and the community around them. To summarize, the inclusion of restorative justice within our nation's schools can lower the negative impact of the School to Prison Pipeline and in turn will help lower the number of youths who are becoming a part of the mental health epidemic.

Sexism in Schools

Meg Chauvin & Ronald Doré

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This research discusses the issue of sexism in schools and asks if it is apparent in schools. There are multiple questions that can be investigated when addressing sexism such as how it affects students in schools, and what is being done to prevent it if sexism is present. Sexism is defined as a problem in schools because it hinders a safe environment for both male and female students to focus. (The Centre for Education and Youth, 2019). Sexism can begin with various different people such as educators, students, or parents. All three categories can promote stereotypes or

bias that can ultimately lead to sexism. Educators can develop sexist ideas in school enforcing stereotypes like that boys are better in STEM subjects. Parents can perpetuate sexism inflicting their own prejudices on their kids. Studies in a Leaper and Brown article show that kids often take on their parents' same beliefs. Kids could believe that boys are better in STEM because their parents told them (Leaper & Brown, 2014). One of the main forms of sexism in schools is sexism in students. Discrimination between peers can occur in verbal or sexual harassment. Current studies show this claim in the research and students' perceptions on sexism. Sexism also does not discriminate as boys also experience sexism such as the pressure to fit masculine stereotypes. 22% of boys experienced harassment such as sexist jokes by peers at school (Leaper & Brown, 2014). Many school-aged boys experience sexism for not wearing masculine clothes or not enjoying sports like other boys. Schools can try fix sexism by making changes to staffing, policies, and students. Implementing teacher training days on sexism could teach educators how to avoid sexism and fix it if it becomes a problem in the classroom. Reforming of policies such as Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) can add rules to make sexism unacceptable. Making workshops for students and campaigns to spread awareness of sexism in schools could also lower sexism in students. Although these ideas would not eliminate sexism, they could lower its effects greatly by making the school aware of the problem and solutions for it. The research examines overall sexism in schools, how it is affecting students, and how to prevent it.

How Schools Can Better Prepare Students for Successful and Fulfilling Lives

Andrew Godke & Ronald Doré

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The purpose of this research is to examine previous research related to how schools can better prepare kids for successful and fulfilling lives. There are several questions that ponder on what schools can do to help students better prepare for the future. Schools are a place for many students to flourish and become successful members of society. It is our job as teachers to understand and help prepare students for the future that lies ahead. The problem shows through when you look at the copious amounts of students who graduate with several qualifications but continue to lack the basic knowledge that is crucial if they want to survive adulthood. Research

data indicates that the graduation rate in high school is 86% as of 2022 (College Dropout Rates, n.d.). In examining the average graduation rates, it makes many think that there is no problem for most students getting their diplomas. The problem is that 41% of students drop out of college. That is almost half the number of students that enroll in college. The four ways schools can better prepare kids is to foster a supportive environment that promotes strong relationships among staff, students, and families. Implement meaningful, engaging instructional practices that develop students' ability to manage their own learning. Develop habits, skills, and mindsets that build students' social, emotional, and academic competence. A recommendation is to create an integrated system of school support that includes extended learning opportunities and community partnerships. Schools need to ensure they use this properly so they can teach students the importance of respecting their peers and being better people as well as understanding that their actions do have consequences. This will also help boost the overall morale in the classroom and the drive that many of the students will want to learn in. Students will also have more resources at their disposal with tutoring. Schools need to be able to properly implement this in all their schools to help many of the students to be better people and have the drive to be successful members of society. Thus, more research is needed to explore how schools can impact students.

Supporting Students Facing Trauma

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Trauma is the lasting emotional response that often results from living through a distressing event. Experiencing a traumatic event can harm a person's sense of safety, sense of self, and ability to regulate emotions and navigate relationships. Long after the traumatic event occurs, people with trauma can often feel shame, helplessness, powerlessness, and intense fear. In other words, trauma is the emotional consequences of having lived through an event of extreme stress; trauma can originate from early childhood experiences, such as emotional or physical abuse. Trauma does not require a recurring event over a period of time, however, it can originate from a single event, such as witnessing the death of a loved one or a deadly car crash. Most trauma causes the victim to develop either simple or complex post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The

lack of focus due to trauma can make working in a classroom difficult. Research suggests that approximately 25% of American children will experience at least one traumatic event by the age of 16 (Peterson, 2018).

A student dealing with trauma is too preoccupied with their emotional turmoil to properly take on schoolwork. Any behavioral issues that the student may have will undoubtedly manifest in the classroom. This can be in the form of picking fights with other students, hitting oneself, or distancing away from peers. The nature of the student's trauma can also affect the way that they interact with adults or positions of authority; if the student has negative experiences with the adults in their life, they will not trust teachers and staff and may even act hostile towards them. Although PTSD has been studied among adults, few studies have addressed how trauma affects students in the classroom.

Educators can do several things to support their students who have experienced trauma. They can help a student struggling with trauma by providing a sense of security for them to deal with any guilt or shame; be flexible with deadlines; pay close attention to changes in their behavior; connect the student to any school resources; stock their classroom with essential items such as deodorant, toothpaste, and snacks; and extend basic kindness and understanding to the student.

Social Media in Education

Marisa Hooker & Ronald Doré

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The purpose of this research is to examine the correlation between social media and student academic performance. Social media usage has grown expeditiously since the rise of it in 2013 to now. Everything positive does have a negative effect and that's what this study focuses on. This study could help teachers and parents to understand what is going on with the child and how to help them improve in both school and home life. We are observing social media leads to cyberbullying, sleep deprivation and multimedia tasking which all negatively affect student grades.

Social media is a form of electric communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages and other content (Dollarhide, 2021). Social media now comes in many different forms including sharing photos or videos, gaming, and even virtual worlds. We see that large amounts of social media can lead to but are not limited to cyberbullying, sleep deprivation and multimedia tasking. Social media does not directly affect students' performance, but these effects do.

One of the negative effects of communicating through social media is the introduction of cyberbullying. Cyberbullying as defined by teachers consists of covert psychological bullying conveyed through electronic mediums like cellphones, web logs, websites, and online chat rooms (Horowitz & Bollinger, 2021). Since it's on the internet you can access it anywhere at any time and the lack of supervision allows for limitless victimization. Cyberbullying has a big impact on its victim because it creates declining grades, multiple school absences and increases depressive symptoms.

Many children that attend school tend to increasingly have FOMO. The fear of missing out (FOMO) is highly prevalent in students because of the high demand they must be like their peers. For students who experience FOMO, social media provides an endless stream of engagement. Many students will spend long nights scrolling on social media because of their FOMO. Not getting the required amount of sleep will cause daytime sleepiness, fatigue, irritability, etc. This majorly affects a student's cognitive function.

For a student social media can do serious harm compared to the good. It has created a new type of bullying that can be accessed anywhere. This leads to students having depressive tendencies and miss school because of the embarrassment. Social media has increased students FOMO and loss of sleep because of it is severely unhealthy. Even multimedia tasking allows for students to be constantly distracted from their work at home and in class. All these reasons lead to decline in school connectedness, which is when students find school as a place that bonds with other students are to be made. Too much social media and not social media makes the student feel as though they do not belong at school. Which in conclusion will lead to a decline in their grades.

The Art of Educating Children with Autism

Hiyam Jhane & Ronald Doré

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In education, there needs to be a system that allows for an inclusive environment and this presentation will focus on explaining how to effectively educate students on autism spectrum disorder (ASD). There is often nothing about how people with ASD look that sets them apart from others. The research used presents viewpoints from all areas, including students with ASD, non-disabled students, teachers, and parents. As advanced as the world has become, many do not know what autism is and the struggles that come along with it, as well as the lack of training teachers, do not have when accommodating a student that has ASD. Thus, because of these situations, any party involved whether it is a teacher, parent, and non-disabled student is not aware of how to understand someone with autism. Still, people with ASD may communicate, interact, behave, and learn in ways that are different from most other people (Centers for Disease Control Prevention, 2021).

When teaching a full classroom including students with ASD, teachers find it hard to administer behavior, have stable arrangements of students, and lack inexperience with ASD students. Teachers need more understanding and training when it comes to ASD. Students that do not suffer from this disorder are not aware and oblivious to the feelings and knowledge of the students that do have ASD. In some areas, like rural communities, the benefits that an ASD student would usually get in a city or more populated areas are scarce in those communities. Without the aid that these benefits offer, teachers, find it more difficult to help an ASD student with specific lessons. The research also notes that art has a positive impact on the student's well-being, it allows them to relate, understand, and express themselves (Schukei, 2021).

Autism is a unique disorder that comes in many shapes and sizes. A teacher must be prepared and ready to follow a student with Autism step by step to help them achieve an understanding of what they have difficulty with. A teacher must also provide awareness to all students, autistic students, and students without disorders, of differences some children might have. There needs to be more support and aid in helping teachers get the correct training to be of

service to autistic students. There is a gap in the literature on strategies and solutions to help students with ASD overcome classroom challenges.

Unconscious Bias and its Impact on Standardized Testing

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This developed research interactive is a review of the literature on bias in the classroom and more specifically about standardized testing. The developed research interactive begins with a number activity that is used to show how people can have an unconscious bias about ideas. Currently, the research looks at confirmation and subconscious bias. A slide is used to point out the bias of the researcher. All creations by a human contain some form of bias. Humans tend to favor ideas because of their background. In the classroom, bias is evident through testing. For instance, the idea of bias related to testing taking refers to an individual making a test. The American College Test (ACT) is viewed as an equal opportunity for all students. All schools have different classes, so the ACT is a way for instructors to measure all students' performance under that same playing field. In an attempt, then remove all bias, some instances will slip through the cracks. Test item writers who made the questions for every standardized test has an unconscious bias. However, they just fail to recognize it while making questions. Some tests might give hypothetical questions about a city and ask for critical thinking skills. For instance, if a student comes from a rural background, then they would not be able to answer the question. While students who have been exposed to travel can answer the questions with confidence and familiarity. In other words, students from marginalized populations can be most affected by some test items. When making a question, the test item writer needs to understand that people have different backgrounds. For example, when a class was asked to picture a firefighter, a lawyer, and the winner of the loader, they all came up with different ideas of what those people could look like. As a result of these differences, tests have a subconscious bias about questions where the test writers give questions about life experiences they have. One way this barrier can be fixed is by pointing out the bias of the test. This way students could understand the perspective the test writer had while designing the questions. Thus, this research will share

proposed solutions from a research context to help standardized test writers overcome bias. For instance, testing can be completed by an area. Testing in an area enables everyone in a state or province to experience similar ideas and therefore have a fairer chance to take the test. Findings from this literature review help to shed more light on the challenges of bias and standardized testing.

Educating Students with ADHD

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Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is one of the most common learning disorders diagnosed in school-aged children. As the name suggests, it can cause children to have trouble paying attention and experience periods of hyperactivity. Hyperactivity can include being restless or fidgety, often leading to students being distracting to others and themselves. More symptoms of ADHD include impulsivity and inattentiveness. These symptoms are usually noticed first in school settings, where they can be highlighted by the routine and structure present in classrooms.

Students with ADHD can often struggle in the classroom. These struggles can include inability to sit still, pay attention, and control impulsivity. It also can cause a student to be disorganized and forgetful, which can lead to poor and declining grades. Engaging students with ADHD first and foremost begins with communicating with parents. This can help a teacher not only understand the student better, but also move forward with a plan that will help the student. Traditional options for treating ADHD can include medication or therapy, sometimes a combination of the two. But, in the classroom, strategies can be employed to help the student with ADHD, and those around them, learn better and remain focused. Students with ADHD sometimes have an I.E.P. (Individualized Education Plan) or a 504 plan that requires accommodations for them. Some accommodations for ADHD include, breaks, extra time on tests, environmental changes to minimize distractions, and the use of technology to assist with tasks. Some approaches that do not require an I.E.P. or a 504 plan includes behavioral classroom management and organizational training, which both require trained staff to follow a specific

plan. However, certain strategies can be employed every day in the classroom, whether a student is known to have ADHD or not. One of these is giving clear instructions and checking for understanding, which can help all students in the classroom. Another is giving specific feedback on assignments, so students can identify what they are doing correctly or incorrectly to receive the grade they earned.

ADHD can affect any student, causing hyperactivity and difficulty paying attention. Though there is no one cause or treatment for it, teachers can help students struggling with the disorder in many ways. Traditional treatments, along with strategies employed in the classroom can assist students with the disorder in succeeding not only in school, but in life. More research is needed to better understand how teachers can improve instructional strategies to help students.

The Context of the School to Prison Pipeline

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In recent years, behavior in schools has become a major issue because it is difficult for teachers and administrators to control the behavior of students who misbehave. Instead of controlling the behavior of their students, law enforcement becomes involved, which results in students being funneled from the school into the prison pipeline. The majority of students who are affected through the prison pipeline are students from minorities and underrepresented backgrounds. This research seeks to answer, *What are ways that teachers and administrators can stop the school to prison pipeline?* This research examines the proposed solutions to eliminate the school to prison pipeline. Research studies point out that law enforcement handles many of the major discipline problems at schools. Since law enforcement officials are trained to work with criminals rather than K-12 students, the training of teachers and misbehavior is necessary. The context of what needs to be examined is stricter rules in schools and the certainty these rules are enforced by teachers, so they know how to behave properly in a classroom. These students are the future so we should make it our number one priority to make sure students understand that there are consequences to your actions and your actions can affect your future and the future of others around you.

The current research included using studies done on schools where there were large amounts of students being suspended and expelled. The research concluded that schools without resource officers had less arrests, disorderly conduct charges, and assault charges whereas schools with resource officers had many arrests and charges at schools. Findings from this literature review discovered two points of view on the school to prison pipeline. There is the side of researchers who believe the school to prison pipeline are purposely targeting minorities and the other side is researchers who believe that school systems are not as effective with their discipline as they were in the past which leads to these minorities and underrepresented groups acting out more than their white peers. This research can help teachers, administrators, and school systems realize that it is the school's responsibility to discipline students not the local law enforcement agencies. The school's goal is to keep students engaged and motivated to high school completion and post-graduation career options not a prison system.

Differentiated Instruction: Why is it Considered Effective

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The purpose of this research is to examine previous studies related to the benefits of differentiated instruction. Differentiated instruction consists of implementing various instructional methods and activities to correspond to the ways in which students learn best (Johnson et al., 2018). It is commonly deemed effective. Thus, knowing what makes differentiated instruction an effective approach leads to a greater understanding of why it should be implemented in the classroom.

Differentiated instruction is commonly based on the aspect of ability (Johnson et al., 2018). When looking at this aspect, instruction can be differentiated in a variety of ways to meet students' needs. For instance, some students may benefit from examples while others may succeed when given the definitions of terms (Johnson et al., 2018). Furthermore, research states that differentiated instruction has the potential to improve academic achievement when students' differing abilities are considered (ASCD, 2010).

Differentiated instruction also benefits students with various disabilities, especially those possessing learning disabilities (ASCD, 2010). This can be accomplished through differentiating instruction. When teachers choose to differentiate instruction, they have the opportunity to address Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals of students by adapting the curriculum to include tools such as visual aids, manipulatives, charts, and computers (ASCD, 2010).

If one were to look at the individual learning styles of students in a classroom, it is likely that a variety would be found. Many students are visual learners, while others are auditory learners or kinesthetic learners. Some students may even be a combination of more than one. Once teachers recognize each individual student's learning style, they are able to differentiate classroom instruction in a way that suits all styles (Johnson et al., 2018). For instance, throughout a particular lesson, a teacher may show students images, let students listen to videos, and have students complete their own experiments to ensure that each student is learning the concepts in such a way that sets them up for success (Johnson et al., 2018). Research shows that students do better academically when teaching strategies correspond to their specific learning preferences (Tulbure, 2011).

Students often have conceptual misconceptions, which are misunderstandings that are related to concepts they are taught (Johnson et al., 2018). Teachers can identify misconceptions through the usage of formative assessments (Johnson et al., 2018). Data from assessments can be utilized to correct and prevent conceptual misconceptions through differentiated instruction (Gooding & Metz, 2011; Johnson et al., 2018). For instance, if a teacher notices that students have the same misconception, instruction can be modified in a way that addresses it. A teacher can also use the knowledge of common conceptual misconceptions to ensure that students do not develop them. Differentiated instruction is beneficial because it enables teachers to accommodate students' various levels of ability, disabilities, and learning styles (ASCD, 2010; Johnson et al., 2018). Teachers can also make a point to prevent and correct the conceptual misunderstandings of students by differentiating their instruction (Gooding & Metz, 2011; Johnson et al., 2018).