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## **International Academic Research Conference**

**April 23, 2021**

### **Conference Proceedings**

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April 23, 2021

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# Qualitative Case Study on HBCU Students' Perception of the Sources of Academic Self-Efficacy in Online Learning

**Jennifer Miller**

*Mississippi College*

**Jillian Skelton**

*Mississippi College*

Jennifer Miller Ph.D. is a teacher and a problem-solver. With over a decade of experience in higher education, she is currently Assistant Professor of Psychology at Mississippi College. She is also a Licensed Professional Counselor with nearly eighteen years of clinical experience. She regularly helps others tackle obstacles to their growth and development, which directly informs her research interests. The focus of her research has been addressing the challenges encountered by college students in the online learning environment, specifically investigating how that environment affects the experiences that inform students' sense of efficacy and their academic behaviors.

Jillian Skelton lives in the Southeast with her family. She has been researching and writing for over 15 years. Her research focus has been on higher education, elementary education, self-efficacy, diversity, and organizational leadership, technology, and academic advancement. Jillian continues to develop her skills as an academic by reading and supporting other learners daily. She also loves to walk and train her German Shepards.

## **Abstract**

The purpose of the qualitative case study was to better understand students', at a Historically Black College or University (HBCU), perception of the four sources of academic self-efficacy in academic achievement for online education. Data was collected from 13 undergraduate students enrolled in an online program at a major university in a southeast region interviews. The thematic analysis results indicated that the different elements of the online environment negatively impacted their self-efficacy

# Millennial Generation Attitudes towards Disability Across Three Social Contexts: Employment, Education, and Relationships

**Patricia R. Huskin**

*Texas A & M University-Kingsville*

Patti Huskin is an Associate Professor of Special Education in the Department of Teacher and Bilingual Education at Texas A & M University, Kingsville. She teaches both graduate and undergraduate special education classes. Dr. Huskin has been a special educator for nearly forty years. She has published in special education, disabilities studies, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. Her areas of specialization, research, and interest are the scholarship of teaching and learning, disabilities studies, inclusion strategies, and teacher preparation. She also serves as an instructional coach in higher education.

## **Abstract**

Thirty years after the passage of the ADA an entire generation of children in the U.S. has been wholly raised in an era of legally-mandated inclusion for persons with disability. They have enrolled in inclusive classrooms in public schools, have traveled through ADA-compliant infrastructure, and held their first employment in ADA-protected spaces. This study examines the attitudes held by young millennial adults, who represent the first generation of persons to have come of age fully in the era following the major successes of the Disability Rights Movement. Respondents were 745 undergraduate students ranging in age from 18 to 34 years, with a mean age of 22 years. We examined perceptions and attitudes toward persons with disability in three realms: workplace/employment, education, and social contexts of neighborhood of residence, dating/marriage, and childbearing. Some gender and race differences were noted, reporting more skeptical views on persons with disabilities' work and job performance. Attendance in a public school, contact experiences with chronic illness, intellectual disability, and learning disability were significant. Questions about the benefits of education persons with disability could obtain was analyzed through the lens of contact experience and specific disability type, it was found that respondents who had occasional contact experience with persons with mental illness, intellectual disability, ADD/ADHD, and visceral disability reported more pessimistic attitudes toward the benefits of education for persons with said disability types. Results indicate the current generation of college students have experienced direct or indirect interaction exposure to persons with disability. It is notable



that the majority of respondents exhibit positive and inclusive attitudes toward persons with disability in various settings, including employment, education, and the social contexts of marriage, neighborhoods, childbearing. Furthermore, exposure to persons with disability is generally correlated with positive attitudes toward persons with disability, indicating that the inclusionary practices mandated by ADA law are having some of their desired effects in promoting more comprehensive societal acceptance of persons with disability.

Online Proceedings

# Math Instruction: Teacher Training Multiplies Success

**Diana M. Yesbeck**

*Randolph-Macon College*

**Savanna M. Love**

*Randolph-Macon College*

Diana Yesbeck has served as an educator for 30+ years. As a K-12 teacher, she taught in the areas of mathematics and science. Throughout Yesbeck's years of teaching, she focused on active student engagement and relating content to real life applications. Yesbeck joined the Randolph-Macon College faculty in 2012 and currently prepares pre-service teachers for the classroom through coursework, supervision, and field assignments. As the Education Department Chair, Yesbeck directed the teacher preparation program and currently serves as the Elementary Education Program Coordinator. She maintains an active research agenda and regularly presents at conferences on topics related to student learning, instructional best practices, mathematics instruction, assessment, and student diversity.

Savanna Love is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Education Department at Randolph-Macon College. She also serves as the Evaluation and Continuing Improvement Coordinator for the Education Department. Dr. Love teaches Educational Psychology, Comparative Education, Diversity in Education and Secondary Teaching Methods. Prior to teaching in higher education, Dr. Love was a secondary English teacher and high school and college volleyball coach. Her research interests include student-athlete motivation and identity, online teaching and learning and teacher preparation program effectiveness.

## **Abstract**

This qualitative study examines why math performance differs among schools and what factors contribute to success. Conducting interviews with mathematics curriculum specialists and classroom teachers provided qualitative data about factors which contribute to mathematics performance – factors such as funding, resources, teacher training, professional development, outside resources, and student demographics. This comparative analysis assists in identifying the factors which lead to student success.

# The First Year Teacher Experience

**Morghan Bosch**

*Barton College*

Morghan E. Bosch, Ed.D. is an assistant professor of special education at Barton College, North Carolina. She earned her doctorate in special education with emphasis in autism from Regent University, Virginia. She published her dissertation entitled, *Examining General Education Teachers and Special Education Teachers' Attitudes toward Teaching Students with Autism*, July 2015. Dr. M. Bosch has co-authored the book, *The First-Year Teacher* (2015) which focuses on the teacher's role in inclusion classrooms. She has written a chapter entitled *Literacy in K-12 Content Courses* in the book, *Beach Ball Banter* (2012), and coauthored *The Autism Guide for Norfolk Public Schools* (2009). Dr. Bosch has recently written a book for children with autism. The children's book, *Being Charley: Embracing Differences*, was published in December of 2019.

## **Abstract**

Educating today's children requires a teacher to be pedagogically prepared as well as emotionally prepared for teaching. The first year is pivotal in moving the novice and unsure teacher in becoming an effective and confident veteran teacher. I co-authored a book, *The First Year Teacher*, published by Corwin Press (2015), which has made me aware of the lack of teacher input that is imbued in teacher education programs. Having done extensive research for the book, *The First Year Teacher*, I interviewed many beginning teachers and most expressed their lack of preparedness for and fear of the first year. Based on those first-year teacher interviews, classroom observations, and journal entries, I have come to believe that teacher preparation programs can excel, be unique, competitive, and stand apart from other teacher preparation programs by concentrating on preparing preservice teachers for the first year of teaching. Success in the first year experience is critical for new teachers and for their students. These programs should focus individually on teaching and mentoring students for a more successful first year. School administrators, parents, and students can easily identify the new teachers that seem prepared, competent, and confident in the classroom. Investing in preparing preservice teachers for the first-year serves to empower teachers from, "How do I start?" to "I'm ready, willing, and able." The workshop is organized around a prepared PowerPoint presentation. The PowerPoint presentation highlights several aspects of preparing teachers for the first year teaching experience. The slides are developed to lead the conference participants through the transition of campus instruction to classroom performance. The presentation also addresses the first year teacher preparedness of

special education teachers. Participants will be actively engaged in a learning experience devoted to preparing a 30-day plan to begin the first year of teaching. The presentation's value to the conference and for the conference participants is a new look at first year preparation both professionally and emotionally which advances the field and encourages thought and conversation.

Online Proceedings

# The ACT Framework in Action: Introducing Innovation in Education

**Anamitra Shome**

*Goodman School of Business*

In this paper, I provide details of how I actually deployed my ACT (Analytical mindset, Communication skills, and Technological agility) framework (Shome, 2020) in an innovative graduate-level course on data analytics in accounting. Higher education institutions (HEI's) are under pressure to train accounting graduates to conduct effective analyses of Big Data. Feedback I received from my students suggests that they found the course to be useful in carrying out data analytics-related tasks at work.

## **Abstract**

In this paper, I provide details of how I actually deployed my ACT (Analytical mindset, Communication skills, and Technological agility) framework (Shome, 2020) in an innovative graduate-level course on data analytics in accounting. Higher education institutions (HEI's) are under pressure to train accounting graduates to conduct effective analyses of Big Data. Feedback I received from my students suggests that they found the course to be useful in carrying out data analytics-related tasks at work.

# Engaging Teacher Candidates In Hybrid Learning: Taking Learning Beyond the Lecture

**Kim Penland**

*Anderson University*

**Patricia Massengale**

*Anderson University*

Dr. Kim Penland spent over a decade teaching a diverse range of students in the early childhood classroom. After receiving a doctorate in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, Dr. Penland began teaching in higher education training teacher candidates. Her students learn effective instructional methods through research and hands on experiences. Dr Penland's work in higher education focuses on constructivist methods, collaboration, professional development, best practices in the classroom, and innovative teaching methods.

Dr. Massengale is an Assistant Professor of Education at Anderson University in South Carolina. She has her doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction. Her thirty plus years in the public-school classroom spans grades K-5 and she has spent several years as a special education teacher as well. Her role at Anderson University includes training teacher candidates, instructing best practices for teaching, and providing the background knowledge needed for teacher candidates to be successful in the classroom. Her research interests involve making connections between the general education teacher and the special education teacher as they co-teach to enable successful learning.

## **Abstract**

Educators are delivering their lessons in multiple formats, therefore, new innovative techniques are in demand to engage learners in seated, various hybrid models, and virtual formats. No matter the content area, educators must involve their learners beyond the typical lecture. This presentation focuses on how to promote collaboration in zoom culture. The world of teaching has dramatically changed, and attendees will learn from the experiences of two faculty members in higher education.

# Teachers as Counselors: Preparing Teachers as Counselors for In-Risk Youth

**Dina Salinitri**

*University of Windsor*

Dina Salinitri, B.Sc., B.Ed., M.Ed, PhD candidate. Dina has been an educational leader for over 12 years as an administrator and interim Superintendent for a District School Board. As a Restorative Justice Leadership trainer, Dina has provided schools and staff the tools needed to create a restorative school culture that improves staff and students' self-efficacy. Dina believes in a holistic leadership approach where trusting and healthy relationships are at the root of the school's collective well-being and extended community. Her research interests include student success, and educational leadership.

## **Abstract**

The changing demographics and necessary pedagogy of the 21st-century schools require teacher education programs to examine their connection to practice in the K to 12 education system. This chapter focuses on the need for teachers to understand the place of guidance and career education in their curriculum and in the lives of all their students. There are nine Guidance and Curriculum courses offered in all Ontario secondary schools, yet, little is done to provide professional development for teachers to build efficacy for these courses. Faculties of Education spend little time looking at the curriculum expectations in these courses as they are not considered methodology or foundation courses. A comprehensive course developed at the Faculty of Education, University of Windsor, provides teacher candidates with the knowledge and skills to explore these courses and engage in an integrated guidance and career program.

# Simple Lessons Learned During COVID-19 Virtual Classes

**Debra D Murphy**

*Arkansas Tech University*

**Shellie Hanna**

*Arkansas Tech University*

**V. Carole Smith**

*Arkansas Tech University*

Dr. Debra D Murphy is a graduate of Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi where she earned her PhD. In Curriculum & Instruction with a focus in Literacy. She spent 23 years teaching elementary children in the Texas public school system prior to Arkansas Tech University. Dr. Murphy has spent the six years she has been at ATU teaching elementary education students. Her teaching and research focus is on elementary literacy. Dr. Murphy is also the Director of the Elementary Education program.

Dr. Hanna has taught in the field of education for 25 years at the Middle, Secondary, and University levels. She spends most of her teaching working with pre-service teachers studying human development, learning theory, teaching methods, and classroom management. She has co-authored numerous articles, co-authored two books, and presented as both an individual and co-author at conferences from state to international level. She has been awarded Professor of the Year at Arkansas Tech University as well as other awards and nominations over the year for her work with students.

Dr. V. Carole Smith is a graduate of the University of Arizona and has teaching and administrative experience in Tucson. Her higher education experience has been at the University of Arkansas - Monticello, and currently at Arkansas Tech University in Russellville Arkansas. Dr. Smith's teaching and research focus is Middle Grades Education.

## **Abstract**

This presentation examines how to incorporate student centered, constructivist learning into on-line teaching without having to introduce too much new technology. It will examine how this is similar and different for pre-service teachers at the Elementary, Middle, and Secondary levels. As we continue through the century, statistics tell us that



universities will continue to move more into a virtual world. This presentation helps incorporate what is loved best about face-to-face teaching into on-line class formats.

Online Proceedings

# The Future of Auditing Going Remote

**Jesse D. Beeler**

*Millsaps College*

**James Johnston**

*Millsaps College*

Over the past 25 years Professor Beeler has published over 35 referred journal articles in the fields of business, accounting, and education. He typically teaches upper division and graduate level accounting course at Millsaps College.

James is currently finishing his Master of Accountancy at Millsaps College

## **Abstract**

Utilizing technological improvements being made daily business and industry is improving many of their processes to maximize effectiveness and efficiency. For those of us in the practice of public accounting this raise the question “why are auditors still spending large amounts of time, money, and resources on lengthy, cumbersome, and inconvenient on-site audits?” The goal of the auditor is to provide reasonable assurance of the reliability of the information contained in financial statements and to provide value to the audit client. Through the advent of a predominantly remote audit, auditors can increase both effectiveness and efficiency of their audits while offering a higher degree of assurance to clients by using technologies already available to them.

BEST PAPER WINNER

*Selected by Peer Review*

# Mediating Isolation in Rural Parents of Children with Disabilities

**Michael Leonard**

*St. Mary's University of Minnesota*

Michael Leonard has over 15 years of experience working in the field of Special Education in numerous alternative educational settings with a wide array of student needs. Outside the classroom, his completed dissertation research focuses on the effect of disability on parents and their support needs. Currently, his research interests lie in post-structuralist interpretation of the modern educational system disability and society, family psychodynamics, as well as qualitative and mixed methods research methodologies.

## **Abstract**

Communities in rural areas mythologize close social bonds among an analogous populace. While rural communities do have close social bonds, many interceding factors break down the comparable similarity of communities, one being disability. Parents of children with disabilities face a lived experience significantly different from parents of neurotypical children in their communities. For rural parents of children with disabilities, there is a noticeable lack in the capability to develop and access structural and social support networks. These networks have potential to actualize emotional and instrumental support which mediate social separation, stress accrual, and isolation for parents. This article provides an examination of the experience of rural parents of children with disabilities. Using semi-structured interviews of parents (n = 15) in the Upper Midwest, a Grounded Theory was developed to explain their lived experience, support needs, and contextual factors which hinder access to support.

## **Background**

This article provides an examination of the experience of rural parents of children with disabilities and generate a Grounded Theory as to their support needs. For parents, raising a child with a disability face many challenges such as balancing the needs of neurotypical children, advocating and seeking professional services, and working with treatment staff (Cuskelly et al., 1998; Hodgetts et al., 2014). Further impediments are seen

in career stability, strains on interpersonal relationships, marital functionality, and isolation from others (Brown & Clark, 2017; Morris, 2012). Parents have a need for mediating structures that provide both emotional and instrumental support. However, parents in rural areas may live in an environment that could possess inadequate contextual and strategic conditions that compounds how disability influences parent systems.

Dominant discourses of disability base identity solely on a condition that is different from a norm (Procknow et al., 2017). For parents, this discourse leads to a “closeted identity” that families must maintain which is separate from the public sphere (Procknow et al., 2017, p. 369). Current discourse places the responsibility of studying disability primarily within the educational sphere of influence, which while relevant, ignores the perspective of the parent. This raises the challenge of gaining further insight into how the phenomenon of disability affects others, including parents. Second, the geographic discourses rarely subject rurality and rural communities to its own area of study (Finke & Bosworth, 2016). Rather, rural areas are used as a contrast or foil for urban and suburban studies. The combined effect of these discourses highlights the need to research an underserved and marginalized population.

### **Literature Review**

Disability may disrupt the seemingly predictable nature of the parent organization and relationships which can manifest in behavioral patterns that over time can become innate in the parent system (Papero et al., 2018). Many parents experience disability and have few encounters with those who have the same experience (Simplician et al., 2015). Hindering this social separation, disability impacts the ability to participate with others in general social settings (Simplician et al., 2015). The literature reinforces the absence of cognitive and emotional engagement opportunities for parents (Amaro et al., 2019; Foster et al., 2017; Hollingshead et al., 2018). The potential of these engagement opportunities could allow parents to network, form connections, access resources, and exchange ideas (Jones & Gallus, 2016). Without these opportunities is a perception stigma highlighted by Davidson (2016) and Latalova et al. (2014) of being socially undesirable. This stigmatization is faced by parents alone with little contact with others who are experiencing a similar lived experience.

Parents who do not have any form of structure for emotional support and information exchange are at greater risk for social isolation. This isolation for parents is primarily derived from “experiences that are developmentally incongruent to their peers” (Marsack & Perry, 2018, p. 536). This kind of incongruence is socially constructed via not participating in the same behaviors or social routines as other parents such as “leaving home, going out with friends, or engaging in spontaneous, last minute plans” (Marsack & Perry, 2018, p. 537). This change leaves parents separate from social arenas, disconnected

from support systems, and lacking the ability to fulfill social obligations. This incongruence of connection lies in what Hemming and Akhurst (2009) euphemistically call the “black hole” as parents are lost in the nebulous system of social support and limited guidance options (p. 2).

Disability can carry a social stigma for parents of failure or as an insurmountable challenge (Ngan et al., 2020). For some parents this can lead to a voluntary termination of pregnancy for some conditions if they are known pre-birth (Ngan et al., 2020). Using an ABC-X model, Wilder and Granlund (2015) highlight how parents can remove themselves from social circles to balance resources. Disability impacts the vocation of parents by placing a greater strain on psychological resources such as time and energy as well as physical resources such as finances (Brown & Clark, 2017). With a diminished capacity for work demands, parents may face wage loss or blunting of advancement opportunities (Bates, 2020). For those parents who have a child with a severe disability, voluntary removal from the workforce to be a caretaker is more likely (Kish et al., 2017). Marsack and Perry (2018) gave examples of this stigma as staring and feelings of judgement and being on display. In the mixed methods study of Bray et al. (2017), one participant described this feeling as if one needs to put on a front to interact with others. Based on stigmatization and the role complexity faced by parents, there is an increase in isolation in daily routines that occurs when parents have to navigate multiple life arenas (Walker et al., 2016).

As parents participate in fewer routine activities, they are afforded fewer opportunities for new engagement (McKechnie et al., 2018). Description of how disability can specifically impact peer relationships receives little scholarship other than disruptions of activities such as dining out, participating in hobbies, social gatherings, and spontaneous outings (Gotto et al., 2010). Shilling et al. (2015) describes that parents may show a “fear of comparison between their child and others” (p. 538). For parents who have withdrawn from social circles, there remains a desire for normative reality (Taylor & Wright, 2017). This places parents in the role of either having friends who may not understand and lend the role of emotional support, or not having options available to socialize at all.

Throughout the literature, the use of social capital in disability studies is widespread (Dovgan & Mazurek, 2018; Gotto et al., 2010; Papero et al., 2018). For parents, social capital is a currency that is used to generate meaning, foster emotional communication, and act as a link to other social avenues. For parents, social capital acts as a means to enter social networks, access resources and leverage relationships (Dauner et al., 2015). The presence of social capital in networks for parents is important as networks can provide both emotional and instrumental support for parents of children with disabilities for mutual benefit or leveraged for collective efficacy (Wilder & Granlund, 2015).

A significant proportion of Americans reside in rural areas and collective needs are rarely addressed (Ward & Merlo, 2016). Geographic discrepancies in service allocation leaves many “less likely to have access to private or public services, health care services, government programs, and other assistance programs that are more readily available in urban areas” (Ward & Merlo, 2016, p. 32). This leaves a paradox for rural parents as social capital producing networks are needed for yet little access is available. Despite the positive effects that networks can have for parents (Edelstein et al., 2017; Niela-Vilen et al., 2014) parents are not able to participate in the mechanisms that allow for social capital generation. Further research is needed to understand the experiences of rural parents and determine their needs.

### **Statement of Need**

Presently, the literature demonstrates how the lives of parents are affected by disability (Bray et al., 2016; Jones & Gallus, 2016; Marsack & Perry, 2018; Walker et al., 2016). What is missing from the literature is a greater understanding of how disability influences rural parents specifically in regards to how disability alters their daily existence. Gaining this knowledge can help to determine the types of support that parents need (Edelstein et al., 2017; Niela-Vilen et al., 2014). Further, understanding what strengths or barriers rural communities present can aid in program development (Ward & Merlo, 2016). A study addressing rural parents helps to contextualize their lived experience, define their support needs, and address gaps in the literature for how parental isolation is alleviated.

### **Problem Statement**

Rural parents of children with disabilities are rarely the focus of research. The purpose of the study was to determine the lived experience of rural parents in regards to their access to social capital generating structures and to develop a theory as to how these structures could be used to mediate isolation. Qualitative interviews were used to gain an understanding of the relationship between social capital, isolation, rurality, and disability. Subsequently, this data was used to determine what parents reported as their greatest support needs. This research advances the knowledge base by giving a broader outline of the lived experience of parents as well as pinpointing their support needs

In this study, participating parents reported they engage and interact with their local communities and peers on a basic instrumental level through routine activities. Due to the impacts of disability they have a separate lived experience in which they feel isolated from others. Compounding this experience is a lack of networking structures that allow for emotional support and instrumental support [i.e. information exchange].

## **Recruitment**

Theoretical sampling is a process that allows for accessing more participants as data collection progresses based on theoretical construction of concepts and situations of where the research will take place and who the participants are (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Theoretical sampling begins with a frame of where the research will take place along with the agents and processes associated with the location and research topic (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Using theoretical sampling provided a sample that is geographically close, allowing for ease of access and data collection, and greater contextualization of data and theory. Also, due to lurking variables, such as COVID-19, having a theoretical sample allowed for flexibility in data collection and sampling.

This qualitative study was part of a larger mixed methods research study of 30 parents in the rural Upper Midwest. Recruitment started with an initial email to colleagues of the principal researcher asking if they were aware of potential participants. Initial emails outlined the research purpose, procedures, and contact information of the researcher. Once a pool of candidates was created, the primary researcher contacted participants to ask for consent to participate. Interviews were initially completed face to face at which time due process and informed consent was reviewed and given. Due to COVID-19, some interviews were conducted via phone call. In total, out of 17 possible participants, 15 interviews were conducted, for a recruitment rate of 88%. Two participants did not participate due to mortality.

## **Sample**

Participants resided in five rural communities in West-Central Minnesota, Southwest Minnesota, Southeastern Minnesota, and Southern Wisconsin with populations under 20,000. This figure was based on criteria established by the United States Department of Agriculture ((7 U.S.C. §1991). A total of 15 parents participated in interviews. A total of 14 participants were mothers and one was a father; one married couple participated jointly. Disability categories of the parent's children varied between Developmental Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Mental health conditions, Visual impairment, and Medical conditions. Ages of children ranged from three years to seventeen years old.

## **Method**

Interviews were conducted with participants at an agreed upon time and location. Due to COVID-19 and at the direction of St. Mary's University Institutional Review Board, interviews done after March 16th, 2020 were conducted over the phone to ease encumbrment in regards to video conferring platforms. One on one interviews provided a neutral forum for participants to encourage conversational openness and also attempt to

mitigate location threats and data collector threats. Interviews were planned to take 45-60 minutes and were open ended in nature to gain greater narrative inquiry.

Interviews were recorded and transcribed by the primary researcher. Transcriptions were uploaded and coded using cloud based qualitative coding software. The primary researcher and a second coder memoed and coded interviews to develop categories from which the Grounded Theory was developed. For validity, coded categories were sent to outside interraters who had a interrater reliability of 92.9%.

## Findings

Coding and analysis of interviews yielded four themes: interpersonal stress, intrapersonal stress, isolation, and social capital support. In the discussion we focus on gaining a greater insight into these themes and how their interconnected nature leads to a greater sense of isolation. Second, we examine what supports parents report needing. Lastly, we theorize as to how these supports could help rural parents of children with disabilities.

### **Interpersonal stress: I Just Want to Get My Milk and Leave**

With an increase of responsibilities that are associated with special needs parenting, participants reported an increase or heightened level of tension or stress present in relationships. Participants described this as a fluctuation between internal and external demands that exceeded participants' emotional resource capacity which culminates with lacking understanding from others which impedes the ability to have healthy relationships. A parent of a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder responded, *"Sometimes you need to vent, when I talk to some of my coworkers who have no idea what this is like, and they don't understand when, like he's having a meltdown at school."* Ultimately one parent of a child with a mental health condition stated that *"I had to give up my career to stay home and manage the kids and the household."*

Stress demands cause conflict at home as well. A mother of a child with a chronic medical condition cited difficulties in *"managing a home/work balance."* One possible outcome of leaving the workforce was experienced by a parent of a child with a mental health condition, *"I left my job for the needs of my kids."* A mother of a child with a medical condition responded how her own self-determination needs were diminished, feeling that *"My needs and emotions are put on the back burner, everyone else comes first, it is all so overwhelming."*

Further difficulties which hinder the daily routines and activities that parents experience were reported. A parent of two children, one with Autism Spectrum Disorder and a medical condition reflected, *"people without special needs children don't understand we can't drop everything and find a babysitter and go out."* Similarly, two other parents of children with Autism report that *"social events mean less to me"* and *"it's harder to maintain*



*certain friendships due to family obligations.” Overall, this led to one parent reconsider her relationships with others, “my relationship with people changed because I was very focused on him and I think just knowing that things can change that quickly makes me feel like, ‘do they need to be my friend?’”*

Other participants reflected on how their self-determination needs were a casualty of managing interpersonal stress. For a mother whose adolescent child has Autism, her free time is limited, *“it’s not unusual for me to get a text or a call ‘where are you?’ ‘when are you going to be here?’ because I said 3:30 and it’s 3:32.”* Another parent of a child with Autism described how family outings were restrained,

*Knowing there are certain places we can’t go – it’s not going to work or be fun for anybody, and knowing that we can’t go to five different places in one day, that’s not going to go over well. We don’t go on vacations very often, those are just kind of out of the question because he can’t handle it.*

The interplay between children was also faced by a mother of a child with a Developmental Disability who struggles to celebrate the athletic accomplishments of the neurotypical child, *“I want to cheer [A] on, and celebrate, but then I feel like ‘oh I don’t want to make [K] feel bad.”* Meeting the needs of neurotypical children and a child with a disability is one that continues through the lifespan. A married couple reflected on their daughter with a Developmental Disability, *“we tried to raise our first son so that he didn’t feel that we we’re depending on him for caring for our daughter, we tried to let him lead his own life.”*

Within the context of rurality, families experience a magnification effect. One parent of a child with a mental health condition described the *“constant stress about doing what is ‘right’”* and *“feeling like there is more competition, you feel more pressure that your children need to succeed.”* Magnification which parents receive increases the difficulty of daily events such as grocery shopping. A mother whose son was diagnosed with a medical condition described how *“there were days I didn’t even want to talk about it, I wanted to go to the grocery store without being asked about [C], I wanted to say ‘I just want to get my milk and leave’. I felt like we were under this microscope for a while and I felt like everybody was watching us to see how we were doing.”* Rurality also magnifies the perceived disparity of service provision. One participant described the contrast between Greater Minnesota and the Twin Cities, *“the amount of services that are available to people, for children with Autism specifically in the metro area is just kind of unbelievable because being here in rural Southwest Minnesota is kind of unheard of – to have those services.”* Another parent of a visually impaired child echoed this sentiment, *“prior to living here, we lived in several metro areas and several of our friends still do. I find it difficult to see and hear all the things that their children are involved in, which I feel like my boys are missing out on because our town offers very few opportunities.”*

Interviews indicate parents face increased interpersonal stress due to perceived conflict with others due to misunderstanding. Further, interpersonal stress permeated

the family structure and caused disruptions and alterations to family relationships and activities. With fewer reported resources, parents altered or withdrew from routines such as work and friendships. Local environments aggravated interpersonal stress due to little resource accessibility and parents were left to internalize their experience as means to regulate emotions.

### **Theme Two – Conflict Within Yourself: Recovering from Juggling the Plates**

Internalizing stress is a means to regulate thoughts, feelings, and emotions when no other mechanisms are available. Over time, this process presents the problem of decreasing resilience while increasing the perception of stress or marginalization. Participants described this conflict as a struggle between doing what they thought they should do and what their reality presented as. One parent described this intrapersonal stress using the idiom of juggling, *“Big picture, it’s more so juggling everything – my personal life, my marriage, my work, and being a mom in a way that feels balanced.”*

Participants internalized the constant balance of the many roles that parents and adults face on a daily basis. A mother of a child with Autism responded that other children *“need in their lives as much as [L] but it’s hard, balancing time and getting everything ‘needed’ done.”* Over time this led to an internalized projection of inadequacy, as a parent of a child with a visual impairment described how *“kids constantly cause an emotional strain on me as an individual and to my marriage; I stress about not giving enough to them and to my job and just about whether or not I’m a good mom to them.”* For other parents, disruptions to routines and the associated stress influenced parents emotional state, as a parent of a child with Autism shared,

*There’s certain times it’s better to tell him like, what’s coming; other times you want to wait until the last minute. Otherwise, he’s going to keep thinking it’s going to happen instantaneously, like you can’t tell him a week ahead of time that we’re going to grandmas, ‘cause he’ll think it’s right now – a lot of planning goes into this.*

In sum, intrapersonal balance led participants to perceive they had decreased inertia and increased life stagnation.

Stagnation also left participants feeling stuck with the status quo, a mother of a child with a developmental disability compared this to taking *“one step forward and one step back.”* Life stagnation also carries over into the psycho-emotional realm. A single parent of a child with Autism described wanting an intimate relationship, however disability prevents relationships from forming, *“I would like to carry on a relationship, but I wish he wouldn’t shut down about being more involved emotionally with people I feel comfortable with or who are important to me.”* This led the same parent to reflect on her relation to other parents, *“you know how people will say ‘I wouldn’t change my child for the world’ I envy that, I kind of envy that whole . . . however that just reminds me of what his life could be like and I’ve*

*thought about that, or tried to think about it.”* Ultimately, parents were left with a lived experience that felt separate or dissonant from peers.

The process of rationalizing intrapersonal stress developed over time until an event or milestone acts as an inflection point, as one mother whose child has Autism explained,

*A turning point for me would have been realizing that he is not going to do what normal families can do like go out in public without any sort of stress involved. We would go to the store and he would throw a fit and it would be embarrassing and I would avoid situations so he wouldn't do that, and that held me back from going places and seeing others and I would drop off from going places.*

In total, accumulation of both inter and intrapersonal stress led parents to have an absence of meaningful interactions and relationships, leading to feelings of separation, yet still having to engage and interact with others and their surroundings.

### **Theme Three – Isolation: I Want to Get Out, but I Can't**

Disparate mimicry of parents precludes development of relationships that foster connection to others. Due to rural areas having scarce capital to form support networks the aggregate experience of parents is one of feeling lost with no direction or endpoint. Ongoing social discrepancy was succinctly described by one parent of a child with a mental health condition, *“it can be lonely when you don't feel like other people understand what you're going through.”* A different shared experience was echoed by another mother with a child with Autism, *“some of my other friends, especially my friends who don't have kids, they don't get that.”* A parent of two children with disabilities told how being a special needs parent altered her social life, *“I used to be very social – hosting parties and being able to travel a lot. This has all decreased or ended, I have become more isolated and introverted.”*

Outside of social discrepancy, parents reflected on how resource paucity created the experience of not having the information needed to find a direction. The concept of instruction manual was stated by one parent of a child with Autism who described special needs parenting as raising a child *“as if there wasn't a manual.”* Before diagnosis of a developmental disorder, a parent reflected that *“not knowing was the hardest since I didn't know what was wrong.”* A mother reflected on the fright of being alone and not knowing about her child's developmental disability, *“I was scared because I had no experience with this, I had no idea what we were getting into.”*

Intersecting informational isolation was the restricting influence of rurality. Parents consistently reflected on a deficiency of resources around them. One barrier to resources was travel. A parent of a child with Autism remarked that *“we're very limited in our resources - we're in a village of 700 people, so if you want to go we have to go somewhere that is at least a half hour away.”* Rurality was also perceived to negatively influence the quality of services. A mother of a daughter with Autism responded that

*"We're lucky that we have a growing medical community that can meet some needs, but I feel that we, I hate to say this but they aren't always the best . . . but it's a body. At least we have some access."* Parent interviews revealed how isolation impedes access to supports that could create social connections for emotional support as well as information exchange.

#### **Theme Four – Supports: Readily Available Resources are Next to Zero.**

Based on the first three themes, parents reported a need for greater support. The presence of, or access to these supports have the potential to mitigate parents psychosocial affect. Desired supports can simultaneously act as an emotional support mechanism as well as a medium for information exchange. One parent reported that having some form of support network would help her feel *"connected more to those families more so because we understand how each other feel even through our experiences are different, we would still have the initial 'oh, I get it'."* A parent of a preschool aged child described how talking to others could help by *"just having someone who's been through some of those things, it can walk you through some of the things you are going to encounter."* Information exchange was reported to aid parents through sharing thoughts and ideas based on a mutual understanding of the phenomenon of disability. Without the shared space to exchange information, one parent of a child with a developmental disability reflected that this created a *"kind of learn as you go mentality."*

Despite the reported need and benefits of support networks, participants reflected that living in a rural area posed unique challenges. Barriers were described as being in two distinct areas; a simple lack of support resources, and poor quality resources. Regarding resource scarcity, one mother very clearly stated, *"we live in a rural area, barriers would be resources."* Also given as a clear response was from a mother of a child with visual impairment, *"living in a rural area the resources that are readily available is next to zero. I'd say that's the biggest challenge."* This feeling was also experienced by others,

*Being in a rural area is extremely difficult, services are not readily available and sometimes the services are not quality services, so seeking out quality services and professionals has been extremely difficult. There aren't parent groups in the area, parent support groups, they just don't have that in our area; the closest ones are 45 minutes from where I live.*

Deficiencies continue through the lifespan, for one parent of a preschool aged child with Autism, *"more daycare options with reliable and good staff would be a huge asset."* A married couple of an adolescent child with a developmental disability each reflected on their own aging and services for their child, *"It worries me, what about when we're gone. I worry more about what's going to happen when she is on her own and we're not around more than anything."* A mother whose child is turning 18 and has a mental health condition, reflects on her situation, *"we are at the stage of being 17 years and 10 months and we have a lot of decisions to make with guardianship, with housing, with wills or trusts or whatever you do for a*

*kiddo like that, with medical stuff because once he turns 18 he is his own person if we don't get these things in place."*

In total, a lived experience of raising a child with a disability causes a perception of increased interpersonal and intrapersonal stress. This difference leads to a sense of isolation that has no remediation. To further explain this phenomenon, a Grounded Theory was developed.

### **Theory**

Parents have a lived experience of disability that places them under a social microscope and creates lived experience separate from others in the same locality. While support is present from others, such as partners or spouses, who are engaged in the same lived experience, little support is available for parents outside of these relationships. The presence of mesolevel structures fulfills the need of emotional support which fosters the development of social capital needed to avert isolation. The presence of, and access to these network structures allows for the creation and use of networking channels that permit open communication and collaboration that foster the development of cultural capital to foster emotional support and information exchanges that aid in negating an isolated and lived experience.

### **Discussion**

The study found that despite the stated need of emotional and instrumental support, results indicate that rural parents of children with disabilities experience decreased avenues of support and increased levels of stress and isolation. A key difference that participants lent to the body of research is not the need for support services, but how these networks could help parents. Parents shared a need for some form of structured support which would serve the roles of emotional support, i.e. social capital; as well as information exchange, i.e. cultural capital. The primary problem facing rural parents is that these kinds of groups do not exist in rural areas which do not provide an arena for capital generation and allows a milieu of isolation to set in. However, rural communities do have a conditional matrix or framework that could allow support networks to be developed.

### **Rural Carrying Capacity**

Rural areas, including those in the Upper Midwest are not simply a downsized or smaller version of larger metropolitan areas. Each has its own unique social, cultural, and economic characteristics. This places the onus of planning and managing scarce financial and cultural resources at the municipal and county level. With an influx of market factors, priorities are given to critical care areas and service provision based on fixed fiscal resources (National Academy of Sciences, 2018). Despite these challenges, rural

communities do have a built in carrying capacity for network structures. Many rural areas have the physical infrastructure and capacity to house groups in facilities such as schools, churches, and health-care facilities, and civic venues. Each of which have the potential to act as an overarching sponsoring agency and serve as a platform to deliver variants of social capital.

### **Service Delivery**

With an understanding that sponsoring agencies are present with a physical ability to house some form of network for parents, there remains the question of what the composition of these groups would look like. The nature of these support structures can vary from formalized and structured membership with formal goals to open ended or community of practice oriented networks (Foreman et al., 2005, p. 4). Each has its own merits, and local solutions need to tailor networks to meet the needs of individual members.

A primary advantage to group mesolevel supports is that they are not isolated via dyadic relationships, but develop their own inherent language system and norms “whose semantic content is determined by relations to the designated objects or states of affairs” (Habermas, 1981/1984, p. 276). This can allow individuals to begin to understand not only their own internalized lifeworld, but also that of others (Habermas, 1981/1984). With mutual understanding gained through rational dialogue, parents can contemplate coordinated action and opt to internalize this process. Knowing the ability and flexibility of rural communities to have networking groups present, what remains is leadership to see a need and take action.

### **Leadership**

Due to the intersecting nature of various individual, local, county, and state institutions rural leadership must “position a community for a viable future by solving complex problems and plan for successful social change” (Ricketts, 2009, p. 231). In order for communities to successfully plan, leaders must involve “increasing individual well-being, motivating community members towards developing social capital, and sustaining a community’s unique culture” (Ricketts, 2009, p. 232). This transformational place-based rural leadership must include “strategies that are tailored to the complex geographies, capabilities, knowledge sets, assets and resources of particular places, through supportive institutional frameworks and collaborative means of governance” (Horlings et al., 2018, p. 246). In sum, leaders must have the ability to examine their community and detect felt needs and understand that “human relationships are intimate and based on a clear understanding of where a person stands in society” (Avant et al., 2013, p. 54). Social standing is grounded in relational exchanges which are inherent to human

interaction. The sum of these exchanges bind people together and create connection to local communities and should not exclude those with the challenges faced in this study

### **Limitations**

The study used a small sample size ( $n = 15$ ) which led to generalizing disability due to using disability as a proxy label for a number of various conditions. A smaller sample size led to some generalizations being made about the lived experience of raising a child with a disability which may or may not be applicable to all disabilities, geographic areas, or parents. Homogeneity of the research sample was also a limitation. The primary geographic area in which the research was conducted is diverse with several populations including Somali, Hispanic, and Hmong families. The researcher did attempt to reach out to these populations through contacting various religious and community organizations, however both of these attempts were unsuccessful. This was attributed to data collector characteristics. Future research should focus on these populations specifically, which would add greater depth to the current research and literature by examining how characteristics of race, being new to country, and language, can act as intersecting barriers to parenting a child with a disability.

### **Implications**

This research provides a practical and theoretical grounding for many avenues of future research. Qualitative data demonstrated a direct need of parents for some form of support structure. The primary limitation is while an expressed need from participants given, developing public policy initiative based on  $n = 15$  participants is unreasonable. Broadening the reach of the study can aid in precisely addressing parents needs and may suggest other implications. As the conditional matrix points out there is a need for some form of sponsoring agency, the first potential research implication is to determine who would be the most advantageous sponsoring agency. This can allow local leadership to advocate and develop programming that utilizes local resources that would be most advantageous for parents. With advocacy and sponsorship in place, a second avenue of research would be to determine what would be the most appropriate and effective type of support for parents.

Running parallel with areas one and two is further research about the lived experience of parents as it pertains to disability. This research could take place with participants at varying temporal interviews such as prenatal discovery or neonatal diagnosis and the influence of disability throughout the lifespan. This will allow for greater insight into parents thoughts, feelings, emotions, successes, struggles, wants, and needs. As the current research only examined parents, there are still questions surrounding the experience of neurotypical siblings not only in regards to their relationships with their family, but how disability affects their life view.

Due to the geographic location of the researcher, the current research focused on parents of children with disabilities who live in rural areas. However, it is naive to conclude that barriers of a certain type are only faced by rural parents; many families in metropolitan areas face barriers to support also. Further research is needed to determine in what ways the needs of rural and urban parents are alike and dissimilar and what supports need overlap or are different.

A fourth area of future research is to develop instrumentation that assesses the psychosocial state of parents of children with disabilities. Many instruments, such as the UCLA Loneliness Scale and the Lubben Social Network Scale are instruments targeted for specific populations such as the elderly. Developing an instrument that is specifically designed for parents of children with disabilities can aid in assessing parent needs, program development, and could also be used in a pre/post manner to measure organizational effectiveness. Organizational assessment is the fifth point of future research. With the current literature and participant results, developing a pilot program for parents would provide ample opportunities for research in the areas of organizational diagnosis, program development, and effectiveness assessment.

The concept of time and emotion is the final point of future research. Currently, the literature is based on the interpretation of experience at one point in time. To determine if a pattern or sequence of emotions exist that parents go through over the lifespan, a longitudinal cohort study should be developed. This study could gather data at set milestones such as birth, and at yearly intervals could help to better understand how experiences change for parents and look for changes in psychosocial and behavioral patterns. This study could provide a true insight into the experience of parenting a child with a disability over a lifespan.

### **Conclusion**

Lived space is described by van Manen (1997) as “the space in which we find ourselves affects the way we feel” (p. 102). For rural parents the lived space is a void where little support is present, and is one of higher degrees of stress, isolation, as well having little access to any form of structural support. These forms of support could allow for parents to meet, engage, communicate, and exchange ideas that help them have the emotional support and knowledge to mediate isolation. The current research shows there is an expressed need for some form of support. While some structures are present they are not addressing these needs. In order for supports to occur, there must be leadership to show concern and advocate to ensure that all families have the capability to have an emotionally enriching existence and recognize that a community should be engaging all of its members..



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# Hierarchical Course Timetable Planning: A General Framework for Automated Timetabling

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## **Abstract**

Most course timetabling models in the literature are based on predetermined decisions, which limit their utility in practice. This paper introduces a generalized hierarchical framework that helps university administrators to generate automated course schedules. In the framework, course schedule planning, which determines the number of sections for each course, and instructor assignment are optimized simultaneously to satisfy forecasted students' course demands that minimizes operating costs. Timeslot(s) and classroom(s) are then assigned to each course section.

# Teachers Education Programs to Determine if Programs Include courses dealing with Child Abuse and Neglect Detection

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Dr. Darolyn Seay is an Associate Professor for the School of Education at Peru State College in Peru, Nebraska. Her primary responsibilities include: teaching undergraduate and graduate level courses, advising undergraduate students; and representing the college at both the state and regional level. A native of Edmond, Oklahoma, Dr. Seay received her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education, Master's degree in Education – Guidance and Counseling from the University of Central Oklahoma, and Doctorate in Curriculum and Teaching. Dr. Seay's research interest includes: professional practices, teacher dispositions, resiliency, accepting feedback, and self-efficacy.

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Dr. Spencer Vogt obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Middle Grades Education from York College. Later, he received a Master of Science in Educational Technology from the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Now he has a Doctorate in Educational Technology from Walden University. His focus is on digital game-based learning (DGBL) in the classroom. Spencer taught in the middle school classroom for 10 years as a social studies teacher. He joined the Peru State College School of Education as an Assistant Professor of Education and Technology Coordinator in 2014.

## **Abstract**

This presentation addresses the long standing problem of educators failing to recognize victims of child abuse and neglect. The methodology included viewing the catalogues for teacher education programs identifying required degree course work which had wording specific to child abuse and neglect. If the program lacked specific course work on child abuse and neglect, course descriptions were examined to see if the topic of child abuse

and neglect was a clear component. This certainly contributes to the failure of many educators to recognize and properly report possible victims.

Online Proceedings

# **Publishing Beyond the Discipline: Journey of Three Scholars in a Multidisciplinary Effort**

**Brian J. Cowley**  
*Park University*

**Laurie N. DiPadova-Stocks**  
*Park University*

**Donna M. Ehrlich**  
*Park University*

Brian completed a B.S. at Utah State University in Psychology (1987), a M.S. at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale in Behavior Analysis and Therapy (1989), and a Ph.D. at the University of Kansas in Developmental and Child Psychology (1998). Their previous teaching posts were at Northeastern State University as an Assistant Professor (4 years) and at the University of Florida as a Senior Behavior Analyst (2 years). Brian is in his 19th year at Park University and is a Full Professor. Brian's current research centers around LGBTQ issues and Genocide.

Dr. DiPadova-Stocks is professor of public administration at Park University. Her research interests are focused on organizational hierarchy and Max Weber, service-learning and student philanthropy as pedagogies of engagement, and inclusion. She is published in a number of peer-reviewed journals, and has held national elected positions in the American Society of Public Administration and the Academy of Management. She joined Park University in 2004 as head of the Hauptmann School of Public Affairs, becoming its second Dean after Dr. Jerzy Hauptmann, founder of the school. She now serves graduate students at Park University's campus in Gilbert, Arizona.

Donna M. Ehrlich, Ph.D., is Associate Professor and Program Coordinator, Computer Information Systems at Park University with a Ph.D. in Information Systems from Nova Southeastern University Graduate School of Computer and Information Sciences. Dr. Ehrlich has served in higher education in various roles assisting in developing new programs and new concentrations currently working on a Business Analytic program. Prior to her academic career, Dr. Ehrlich worked in various technology leadership roles in Fortune 500 organizations including telecommunications and oil and gas industries, sharing her experiences now in the classroom. Dr. Ehrlich enjoys researching, learning, and working with others in a life-long educational journey.

### **Abstract**

Two colleagues in different disciplines responded to a call for proposals to a journal symposium. The journal, *Public Integrity*, is a leading peer-review journal in public administration. The topic of the symposium was: “What does it mean to be a man or a woman in the 21st Century? An Ethical Imperative for Public Administration”. Our proposal was accepted and we embarked on crafting the manuscript. Even though we— one in public administration and one in psychology—were comfortable with our thinking on the topic, we decided to ask another colleague (in computer science) to join us. The three of us are good friends.

Online Proceedings



# Enhancing Educational Practice Through Intentional Self-Care: Strategies for Teachers of Trauma-Burdened Students

**Susan Egbert**

*Utah State University*

**Sean Camp**

*Utah State University*

Dr. Egbert is Clinical Associate Professor of Social Work in the Department of Sociology, Social Work & Anthropology and the MSW Program Coordinator. She joined the department at Utah State University in 2008. Dr. Egbert received her social work education at Brigham Young University (BSW 1989), Portland State University (MSW 1994), and the University of Utah (PhD 2001). Susan has over 20 years of experience in technology based distance education delivery. She is passionate about improving the welfare of children, strengthening families, and promoting human healing through direct social work practice, research, and systems change. Her special interests include adoption, foster care, social welfare and social policy, and the prevention of child abuse.

Sean has over 15 years of experience in teaching social work education courses in the distance learning context. He has been active in the field of foster care and adoption for over 20 years. He received his Master of Social Work from University of Georgia in 1991 and was State Director for a multisite Child-Placing Agency for many years before coming to Utah State University as a Clinical Assistant Professor of Social Work. Sean has specialties in the areas of working with children who have been abused, transitional behavioral difficulties, and child sexual behavior management. Sean also serves as the Clinical Director for a local treatment foster care agency and is engaged in policy advocacy at all levels of practice, both state and federal.

## **Abstract**

Secondary trauma is a reality for educators who witness the struggles and pain of students – a phenomenon particularly prevalent in the era of COVID-19. Self-care practices are critical to maintaining a healthy life balance and avoiding compassion fatigue and burnout. This presentation addresses: (a) recognizing and responding to trauma-reactive behavior; (b) sources of vicarious trauma experienced by educators; (c)

warning signs of secondary traumatic stress; and (d) compassion fatigue prevention. Practical application will be emphasized.

**BEST PRESENTATION WINNERS**

*Selected by Peer Review*

Online Proceedings

# Made in China: The Economic Headwinds of an Economic Superpower 2.0

**Bradford R. Frazier**

*Belmont Abbey College*

**Alan R. Belcher**

*University of Arizona Global Campus*

## **Abstract**

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, China was facing significant challenges as the global manufacturing landscape was rapidly changing. Trade wars, declining global demand, in addition to the pandemic, threatened to slow or halt China's meteoric growth as a manufacturing superpower. This *Made In China 2.0* presentation analysis continues this same premise one year later to examine the current status of China's economy post Covid-19 and looks ahead to the China's future as a leading manufacturing global hub.

# Avoiding the Important Conversations Student Teachers Learning to Teach Skills Separate from Content

**Paul Sylvester**

West Chester University

**Steve P. Myran**

Old Dominion University

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

Steve Myran, Ph.D. Director, Alliance for Equity Based Research and Practice, Old Dominion University. I am a former public school teacher and administrator and have worked extensively in school/university collaborative research and practice partnerships. Influenced by Dewey's (1902) recognition that the underlying challenges in education are imbedded in their normative organizational and social structures, I've been interested in unpacking and understanding these structures to identify the constraining and limiting organizational norms and their associated practices. Much of my current work critically explores the dynamics between and among the dominant neo-managerial norms and the science of learning, and the associated implications for school improvement, equity and social justice.

## **Abstract**

Scholars have noted that in US K-12 schools the teaching of skills has taken precedence over the teaching of content. This study addresses three short-comings of the literature: 1) none of the existing studies in this area are empirical in nature; 2) none looks at these issues in the context of student teaching; and 3) none has looked at the implications of the situation for education related to social critique. Using an inductive, qualitative methodology we coded 167 lesson observation summaries and triangulated those with 22

interviews of student teachers in grades K-4. Our findings showed that instruction is typically focused on teaching one mandated skill after another with little opportunity for students to do social critique. In our analysis we highlight examples of times when student teachers taught content well-suited to engage students in social critique but were used only as carriers for instruction in skills.

### **Purpose**

Across the last four decades, scholars have noted that in US K-12 schools the teaching of skills has taken precedence over the teaching of content (Hirsch et al., 1988, 2010; Labaree, 2004; Neem, 2020; Nichols, 2017; Ravitch, 2002; Shulman, 1986; Wexler, 2019). The roots of what Ravitch has called “the contentless curriculum” (2002) have been traced back to the influence of the pedagogical progressives on the culture of schools of education (Buras, 1999; Hirsch et al., 1988; Neem, 2020; Shulman, 1986; Wexler, 2019), changes in the academic norms of undergraduate programs (Nichols, 2017), the advent of the Internet (Nichols 2017), the culture wars related to the standards movement (Neem, 2020; Wexler, 2019), standardized tests (Neem, 2020), and most recently, the Common Core curriculum (Neem, 2020; Wexler, 2019).

The purpose of this paper is to investigate whether this often-observed theme of a lack of content in instruction is present in the lessons implemented by a group of 41 student teachers teaching in the K-4 grade span over the course of four years. Further, we look at whether the content of these lessons engaged students in making sense of the social content being studied (e.g. bullying, racism, or environmental issues) or some form of social critique/social action related to such issues.

The current study will address three shortcomings of the literature: 1) none of the existing studies on dominance of a skills orientation is empirical in nature (although Wexler, 2019 does provide anecdotal examples in her journalistic account); 2) none looks at these issues in the context of student teaching; and 3) none has looked at the implications of the situation for education related to social critique.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Data from this study were analyzed through the lens of critical theory. A critical theory orientation to research is predicated on the goal of changing the world in positive ways. Positive change—in this view—first involves identifying constraints or “themes” in a social situation (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Freire, 1982; Kincheloe et al., 2011). The second step is to re-present these themes to students for them to unpack. Uncovering these tacit, socially constructed constraints is meant to help students to transcend them (Freire, 1982). In terms of this research, our critical approach leads us to look at themes in student teachers’ lesson planning regarding which pedagogies and which forms of knowledge are given legitimacy and power (McClaren, 2003). We unpack the assumptions and

implications of this dominant paradigm so that, in the follow-up to this research, we will be able to re-present these themes to our next cohort of student teachers. The intent in doing so is to have them actively “unpack” these themes to gain a critical praxis that allows them to transcend the limits of their situations (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Freire, 1982; Kincheloe et al., 2011).

A critical research approach also holds that interpretation by researchers happens throughout the research process, making objectivity impossible (e.g. Kincheloe et al., 2011; Denzin, 2017; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). For this reason, researchers must strive to make explicit their own positionality and assumptions (Kincheloe et al., 2011). In the actual paper we will include descriptions of this positionality and ways that this may have influenced our interpretations.

### **Research Methods**

We used an inductive, qualitative methodology to code 167 lesson-observation summaries and triangulated those with 22 interviews of student teachers in grades K-4. These student teachers’ in-person placements were cut short due to schools shifting to online instruction because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the purposes of this research we use the following definitions:

- “Skills” refers to knowing how to do something.
- “Content” refers to knowing something.

Our analysis focused on three questions:

1. Do the student-teachers’ lessons reflect the often-cited pattern of focusing more on instruction in “skills” and less on “content” (as defined below)?
2. How often do these lessons engage their elementary students in making sense of social content being studied or some form of social critique/social action related to such issues.
3. How do student teachers explain their processes of lesson planning and the influences on these processes?

Using the lesson summaries, and, when necessary, referring to a running record that captures student- teacher dialogue, action, and work products, we coded lessons according to the following criteria:

1. Lessons focused on teaching skills and not content.
2. Lessons focused on content but not skills.
3. Lessons focused on teaching both skills and some content.

**Example of Lessons Focused on Teaching a Skill (or Skills) and not Content:**

- Example: Graphing numbers of different colors of Valentine's Day candies. (The instruction is on the skill of graphing. The use of Valentine's candy was a "carrier" for teaching this skill.)

**Example of Lessons Focused on Teaching Content but not Skills**

- Example: Listening to a book on the moon and then viewing a model about the phases of the moon. (The content of the lesson entailed the phases of the moon. No skills were taught.)

**Example of Lessons Focused on Teaching Both a Skill and Some Content**

- Example: Reading a book about skeletons and doing a worksheet about the main idea and details. (The content is about skeletons, and the skill is identifying the main idea and details.)

Note that sometimes when an instructor was teaching skills, content was being used as a carrier for the skills—i.e. there was not instruction in the content itself. Alternatively, when an instructor was teaching content, sometimes skills were involved, but there was no instruction in them—they were merely carriers for the content.

Using 167 of these lesson summaries, we began our analysis by coding based, adding or altering codes as we found aspects of the lessons that were unaccounted for in our initial categories. We then circled back to re-code the original examples in iterative cycles.

As we coded, we developed interview questions to help us to understand student teachers' thinking about the process of planning lessons. We conducted 22 semi-structured interviews asking student teachers about how they plan lessons, what influences them in their planning, and how well their coursework at the university prepared them for different aspects of lesson planning. In the course of these interviews, two questions were dropped and one was added, cases that did not fit the prevailing patterns were analyzed.

### **Data Sources and Evidence**

A key part of our data collection comes from the first author's ongoing work as field supervisor of student teachers for the teacher education program at his university. Lesson summaries came from four years of supervision. When observing each student teacher's lesson, he took a running record to capture as much dialogue, action, and student work as possible. Following the lesson, he and the student teacher would leave the classroom to debrief. In the debrief, the student teacher would first identify what went well and what they would do differently. The pair would then review the running record to identify important moments and issues. The two would then collaboratively list what worked that should continue and set three to four goals for future lessons.

The second key data source was semi-structured interviews of 22 student teachers after the close of the semester whose foci are described in the Research and Methods section above.

### Results

In coding the lessons, we found that instruction in skills did take precedence over instruction in content. When we examined all of the lessons taught, 67% were focused on skills and not content, 22% on skills *and* content, and 9% on just content.

Math and English subjects were overwhelmingly skewed towards instruction in skills rather than content. In math, 85% of lessons were (not surprisingly) focused on skill instruction. In English/Language Arts (ELA), 76% of lessons were focused on skills rather than content. When there was instruction in content, it tended to be in science or social studies. There were very few (14) social studies lessons taught.

*Table 1: Percentages of lessons related to skills, content, or skills and content*

	Skills but <i>not</i> content	Skills <i>and</i> content	Content but <i>not</i> skills	TOTAL lessons	PERCENTAGE of total lessons that are in this subject area  *Some lessons combine subject areas and were counted for both
Math	88%	12%	0%	41	25%
ELA	76%	17%	7%	98	59%
Science	13%	69%	22%	33	20%
Social studies	8%	62%	31%	14	8%
All subjects	67%	24%	9%	167	100%

We found very few lessons that engaged students in making sense of social content being studied or some form of social critique/social action related to such issues.

*Table 2: Percentage of lesson related to social critique or social action*

	Percentage of lessons that have social critique in the subject area(s)	TOTAL Lessons in this subject
ELA	2%	99



Science	0%	33
Social studies	14%	14
All subjects	2%	167

In the interviews, we found that student teachers' processes for lesson planning typically began with the requests from the mentor teacher regarding what is mandated to teach—objectives from the textbook, the district's curriculum, or the state standards. Student teachers also commonly cited a desire to make their lessons engaging and/or fun, and differentiate them to meet the varied needs and abilities of students.

Only infrequently were standardized tests mentioned as influences in lesson planning. Two factors that might have influenced this are the following: first, 12 of the 22 student teachers interviewed were not in grades that were tested (i.e. grades K-2); second, because of COVID 19, student teachers who were interviewed did not do in-person instruction close to the administration of the tests, when often the most intensive test-prep happens. Exceptions to these patterns mentioned in interviews were the following: considering students' interests and questions; considering what it was that she, herself, wanted to teach when planning her instruction; connecting lessons with what came before or what came after that lesson. This last item is consistent with our analysis of lessons where we found only 16% of connected to a larger unit of content.

Some factors in lesson planning that were notably missing were student teachers' own passions, their interest in changing the world, the funds of knowledge that the elementary students brought, community resources, or sites to study.

### **Scholarly Significance of The Study**

Our findings present a stark picture of the instruction being conducted by the student teachers in the K-4 classrooms we studied—that instruction is typically focused on teaching one mandated skill after another, largely separate from content and meaning making; that the content taught is commonly relegated to science or to the infrequently taught lessons in social studies; and that student teachers are not bringing their own passion for subject matter to their teaching, nor are they tapping students' interests or funds of knowledge.

Looking at these findings through the lens of critical pedagogy, we see the kinds of knowledge being legitimized and given power are those that lack any opportunity for making meaning of social phenomenon or doing social critique. While Freire criticized banking pedagogy that “deposits” inert, decontextualized knowledge into the minds of students (1982), what we found is arguably worse than that—little content is even deposited. The issue is not that hegemonic content is being “delivered,” but that little

content, of any kind, is. It is the null curriculum that is most important here, rather than the taught one. These conditions are clearly oriented towards maintaining the status quo that includes rampant inequality, white supremacy, and environmental degradation. This research addresses the existing literature on these topics in a number of ways. Our work begins to address the lack of empirical research regarding the assertion that US K-12 schools tend to focus more on instruction of skills than of content. Ours is the first study we know of that considers these issues in relation to the student teaching experience. And while others have called for greater content to be taught, they have called for implementing an ideology-free transmission model, rather than for engaging students in social critique. The findings of this study will next be used as codifications presented to student teachers for them to decode, fostering dialogue regarding their own teaching.

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Online Proceedings

# Agreement Between University Supervisors' and Cooperating Teachers' Evaluation of Physical Education Student Teachers

**Seidu Sofo**

*Southeast Missouri State*

**Adolfo Ramos**

*Southeast Missouri State*

Dr. Seidu Sofo, is a Professor of Physical Education at Southeast Missouri State University, Missouri, USA. Sofo received his Ph.D. in Human Performance Studies with a concentration in Physical Education Pedagogy (Cognates: Health Education and Educational Research) from The University of Alabama, USA. He obtained a MS.Ed. in Physical Education Pedagogy from the State University of New York College at Brockport, NY., and a B.Ed. in Physical Education and a Diploma in Biology from the University of Cape Coast, Ghana. Before transitioning to higher education, Sofo was a secondary physical education and integrated science teacher in Ghana. His research has focused on: teacher education, children's physical activity and health, perceptual-motor development, and postcolonial pedagogy.

Dr. Ramos is an Associate Professor of Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) at Southeast Missouri State University. He received both his D.A. and M.S. from Middle Tennessee State University. Murfreesboro, TN, USA. He obtained a BA.. in Physical Education Teacher Education from the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico. He teaches courses in the PETE program including Teaching Techniques of Physical Education, Secondary Physical Education Field Experience, Adapted Physical Education as well as Team and Individual Sports. Dr. Ramos' research is focused on three main areas in the study of physical education teacher education studies: (1) The learning of novel motor skills (Feedback), (2) Teaching Methods and the Use of Technology in Physical Education and (3) Pre-service Teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge.

## **Abstract**

Student teaching is an important component of teacher education. Congruity between university supervisors' (US) and cooperating teachers' (CT) evaluations of student teachers is paramount as student teachers may imitate CTs' teaching and practices even if they conflict with the philosophy and practices of their teacher education programs.

Therefore, the purpose of the study was to examine the agreement between university supervisors' and cooperating teachers' evaluations of student teachers. Participants included 11 physical education student teachers (63.64% male and 36.36% female) enrolled in a semester-long student teaching experience at a teacher education program in Missouri, United States. The Missouri Educator Evaluation System (MEES) served as the main data source. Data for four performance indicators on the MEES were used for the study: student engagement in subject matter (SM), differentiated lesson design (DLD), classroom management techniques (CM), and assessment data to improve learning (AL). Each indicator was assessed on a scale of 0-3, with "2" representing "Meets Expectation" and "3" representing "Exceeded Expectation." The results showed that the mean scores from the university supervisors and the cooperating teachers were 2.5 and 2.7 respectively. In addition, the cooperating teachers' evaluations of the student teachers were consistently higher than those of university supervisors' scores on all four performance indicators. The highest mean difference was in DLD (.35), followed by SM (.25). However, Independent t-Test Analyses indicated that the mean differences for all the four performance indicators were not significant. Conducive collaboration between university supervisors and cooperating teachers is necessary to create positive learning environments for student teachers.

# Trained to Understand: Preparing Teachers to Work with Students Affected by Trauma

**Regina Rahimi**

*Georgia Southern University*

**Delores Liston**

*Georgia Southern University*

Earned an Ed.D. in Curriculum Studies in 2002. Worked in public middle/high schools for 15 years. Currently a full professor in Middle and Secondary Education at Georgia Southern, Armstrong Campus, where I have been for 14 years. I have published two books, *Pervasive Vulnerabilities: Sexual Harassment in Schools* with Peter Lang; *Promoting Social Justice through SOTL* with Indiana Press. Additionally, I have numerous other publications. I am currently working on research involving Trauma-Informed Pedagogy.

Delores D. Liston, Ph.D. is Professor of Curriculum and Foundations at Georgia Southern University. She is author of *Joy as a Metaphor of Convergence: A Phenomenological and Aesthetic Investigation of Social and Educational Change*, *Learning to Teach: A Critical Approach to Field Experiences* (with Natalie Adams, Christine Shea and Bryan Deever), as well as *Pervasive Vulnerabilities: Sexual Harassment in School* and *Promoting Social Justice Through the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* (with Regina Rahimi). She is also LCSW licensed through the State of Georgia.

## **Abstract**

This presentation will provide an overview of current research on Trauma Informed Pedagogy and its application for students and teachers. Implications and strategies will be shared.

# Classroom Teachers' Response to the COVID-19 School Closure: A literature Review

**Olivia P. Modesto**

*Texas A&M University*

Olivia Panganiban-Modesto is an Assistant Professor at Texas A&M University-Kingsville. She graduated from University of Santo Tomas (B.S.E. English, cum laude) and University of the Philippines (M.Ed. English). She taught English in the Philippines for 11 years before migrating to the U.S. to teach High School English in Brownsville, Texas. In 2013, she completed her doctorate degree in education from Walden University. She teaches reading education courses in the Department of Teacher and Bilingual Education and the Program Coordinator of master's in reading program. Her most recent publication focused on the lived experiences of Filipino migrant teachers in South Texas.

## **Abstract**

One of the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic is school closures. This presentation will focus on the issues teachers had to face as written in academic literature. Literature search was conducted using the key words, "school closure COVID-19" and "classroom teachers COVID-19". Literature reviewed was limited to studies conducted U.S. Seventeen academic articles were analyzed. Results pointed to teachers quickly converting traditional to remote instruction and the challenges faced to meet student needs.

# Attitudes, Behaviors, Dispositions, and Values: Character-Building in the Classroom

**Joseph Spadano**  
*Rivier University*

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

## **Abstract**

This presentation is research proposal that originated from a collaborative project that was assigned in the undergraduate education course, Assessment Informed Instruction. In the beginning of the course, students were asked three questions, 1. What knowledge or skill is of most worth?; 2. What are effective pedagogical strategies for teaching that knowledge or skill?; and, 3. What are effective evaluative schemes for measuring that knowledge or skill? The students' answers to these questions did not involve important topics in mathematics, language arts, or other content areas. Instead, the overwhelming replies involved Attitudes, Behaviors, Dispositions, and Values (A, B, D, and V). In the collaborative project, each student was assigned a different A, B, D, and V. Students were asked to provide, 1. an operational definition, including what it looked like and sounded like in the classroom, for their A, B, D, and V, 2. How they would teach their A, B, D, and V, and 3. How they would measure their A, B, D, and V. The results of this assignment will be shared and suggestions for next steps or further investigation will solicited. experiences.



# Resilience and Self-Care during COVID-19

**Heather Dye**

*East Tennessee State*

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

## **Abstract**

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

# Discovering Unexpected Connections to History

**Tracey Huddleston**

*Middle Tennessee State*

Professor at Middle Tennessee State University for twenty-nine years after earning Ed.D from Mississippi State University in Elementary Education. Teaches graduate students earning their initial license after earning an undergraduate degree in an area other than education. Research interests include effective strategies for integrating curriculum as well as assessment.

## **Abstract**

Preparing pre-service teachers to teach Social Studies in the elementary classroom by arming them with accurate information yet avoiding contentious topics, presents an interesting challenge for university professors. As students conducted their own investigations and interviews, the results were unexpected, surprising, and impressive. Besides fostering a renewed interest and appreciation for significant events in US history, these authentic experiences also cultivated a depth of community within the class.

# Entrepreneurs' Risk-Taking Behaviors: A Social Cognitive Perspective

**Chuanyin Xie**

*The University of Tampa*

Chuanyin Xie is an associate professor of management at the University of Tampa. His research interests include new business creation and growth, managerial/entrepreneurial behavior, competitive strategy, business in emerging economies and management education.

## **Abstract**

Two approaches have been used to study entrepreneurs' risk-taking behaviors: supply-side and demand-side. The former focuses on personal characteristics, while the latter emphasizes the importance of the environment. This study attempts to integrate the two approaches based on social cognitive perspective: individuals exist within a situation and the individual behavior results from his or her processing information about the situation. I argue entrepreneurs' risk-taking behaviors are affected by their cognitive structures interacting with the information from the environment.

# Succeeding in the New Normal: Training Faculty to Employ Evidence-based Practices and Innovative Techniques in Online Modalities

**Leroy Hamilton, Jr.**  
*Norfolk State*

**Berkley N. King, Jr.**  
*Norfolk State*

An experienced grant writer, Dr. Hamilton has secured more than 3.1 million dollars in external funds to develop academic support systems for promoting student retention and success. A published author and researcher, Dr. Hamilton has presented at numerous regional, national and international conferences about student success.

Dr. King is a well-published author, grant writer and researcher. He is an active member in a variety of professional organizations including: National Science Teaching Association; Virginia Association of Science Teachers; Kappa Delta Pi Honor Society; Historically, Black College and University Faculty Development Network; and African American and Blacks in Higher Education.

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## **Abstract**

To respond to the COVID-19 virus threat, institutions have adjusted instructional practices to avoid disruptions in instructional delivery. The primary adjustment has been the transition from face-to-face to online teaching, with online classes being the norm for tens of thousands of students. The unprecedented shift to online modalities demands a resilient, talented faculty and effective training. Therefore, major concerns in higher education include the degree of readiness among faculty for online teaching and the efficacy of their training for this task. Research in these areas will guide institutions as they adjust to new realities. The Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework guided this research in preparation for faculty to transition from teaching Face-to-Face to Remote/Online Modalities.