

Friday, November 11, 2005

Session 14.1

8:00 A.M. – 8:50 A.M. POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.....Bayou

Presider: Sandra M. Harris, Troy University

The Long-Range Effects of Parental and High School Resources on Postsecondary Educational Outcomes

Edward B. Reeves, Morehead State University

Do parental resources and high school resources have long-range consequences for postsecondary educational (PSE) success? If so, which set of resources carries the greater weight? Can these different sets of resources be substituted for one another, or are they complementary (i.e., the effect of each is intensified by the other)? Answers to such questions are important for education policy. For example, if empirical evidence points to these sets of resources serving as substitutes for one another, then the improvement of high schools may be expected to enhance the equal opportunity of all students in postsecondary institutions. But, if the evidence reveals that parental and high school resources, when combined, produce greater PSE attainment, then the improvement of high school quality could disproportionately favor the educational fortunes of students whose family backgrounds are advantaged.

These issues were addressed using a sample of 3,455 seniors in 279 high schools taken from the National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS:88/2000). The author used a variety of parental and high school resource variables to capture the advantages and disadvantages of high school seniors in 1992 (along with a number of control variables). The dependent variable was an ordinal scale of postsecondary degree outcomes in 2000. Using multilevel ordinal regression, the author found that both parental resources and school resources contribute to PSE attainment, although parental resources have somewhat greater weight. Of perhaps greater importance, the analysis showed that the interaction of these two sets of resources has a positive, statistically significant, and substantively important effect on PSE outcomes. Students whose family backgrounds are advantaged benefit disproportionately from attending high quality schools, and vice versa.

The models demonstrating these results were extremely robust, with the proportionate reduction of error approaching 0.90 in some instances. The results of this study provided insight into the intergenerational reproduction of educational status in the United States (Bowles, Gintis, & Groves, 2005; Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 2005). The policy implications of the findings are clear and cautionary. A policy that centered solely on improving the quality of high schools could have the unintended consequence of creating greater inequality of PSE outcomes.

A National Report Card Model for Technical Education Institutions - A Final Report

Bill Coulton, Council on Occupational Education

The difficulties involved in measuring and comparing educational performance among postsecondary public institutions are well documented. An often heard lament is that there are no common benchmarks that will allow meaningful institution-to-institution and state-to-state comparisons. Five state agencies overseeing public postsecondary technical schools and colleges in Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, along with the Council on Occupational Education (COE), sought to develop common benchmarks and a common report card. A grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), a unit of the U.S. Department of Education, partially funded the project for three years. It concluded August 30, 2004.

Outcomes of the project had a major impact upon operations of COE, four state agencies, and 756 public and private postsecondary campuses, and affected indirectly more than 211,000 students each year. Questions about consistency and reliability of data remained throughout the course of the project. A fear on the part of many participants that the data would be misused by oversight officials, state legislators, and others also prevailed. The summative evaluation results were positive. A post-project survey of institutions recognized in the 2004 Report Card sought to obtain responses about the uses and misuses of the data reported. The results found no misuses by any person or agency. In fact, the institutions used the Report Card appropriately as a morale booster for staff and faculty, as a prospective student recruiting tool, as an example of quality performance in attracting prospective employers of graduates, and as a positive public relations story with boards of education, labor organizations, and community groups. The negative and positive lessons learned from this project can certainly be applied to future accountability projects. Sample report cards were provided.

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curriculum for ESL students is necessary and crucial because research has clearly established phonemic awareness and phonics skills as significant in early reading development and in literacy achievement (Strickland, etc. 2000).

It is very challenging for the teacher to teach phonic skills to the students who do not speak any English. Traditional phonics exercises frustrate both teachers and students because students do not have sufficient linguistic knowledge to manipulate the language. Using interactive media such as video, audio, and computer software has provided a new avenue to teach phonic skills. Technology can create a relaxing, non-threatening learning environment to motivate ESL students to explore the new language. This paper described the integration of different media to bring the phonics skills alive for the ESL students and to meet their different learning styles. Examples of successful use included one fourth-grade student who used Hooked on Phonics and gained nine levels in one school year.

Teaching and Learning with Computer Technologies: A Case Study of Teacher Perceptions

Kathryn C. Poland, University of Louisiana – Monroe

To better understand how computers are affecting the teaching and learning process in a Title I elementary school, a qualitative case study was conducted to examine teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and practices regarding the use of computers for teaching and learning in school. This study addressed the following research question: How do teachers perceive the use of computers for teaching and learning in the school? A local elementary school was chosen as the site of this case study because of its accessibility, favorable reports of computer technology use in the school, and a climate of participatory acceptance by the principals and teachers. Methods of data collection included informal interviews with administrators and teachers, classroom and computer lab observations, examination of documents, and the administration of open-ended questionnaires to teachers and to fourth- and fifth-grade students.

Data from the questionnaires were analyzed by comparing, contrasting, grouping, and tabulating responses from open-ended questionnaires. Several themes emerged from the data. Teacher responses were grouped into four categories: (1) teacher computer use, (2) benefits to teachers, (3) benefits to students, and (4) problems. To provide confirmability of this case study, key informants and a peer debriefer reviewed the data analysis. The amounts of money being invested in educational technologies and the mandates from national, state, and local authorities that require teachers to integrate technology into their teaching warrant close investigation of the status of computer use in schools. Integrating technology into teaching is a complex phenomenon. This descriptive case study could help educators and researchers better understand how computers are affecting the teaching/learning process.

The Dilemma of Using Technology to Enhance Creativity

Li-Ching Hung and Lishu Yin, Mississippi State University

Instructional technology is designed to enhance learning. Technology creates a learning-rich environment intended to stimulate and promote students' creativity. However, the failure to adequately train instructors and to appropriately implement technology will limit students' creativity. Technology can create a niche to nurture creativity in a creative mind (Sternberg, 1999). Creativity should possess some degree of quality of the combination of uniqueness and usefulness (Moss, 1996). Technology with visual and audio aids helps increase a spectrum of the occurrence of both uniqueness and usefulness. Incorporating technology into art therapy working with sounds and colors strengthens children's imagination and intuition (Hoy, 1998). However, if technology is not used appropriately in the classrooms, a negative impact may occur. An attempt to utilize various technologies by a teacher results in frustration for both the teacher and the student.

Concerns and specific suggestions were provided in this paper. Examples included: (1) putting students on the computer without giving direction and supervision causes the failure to reach the expected goal, and (2) teachers, because of a lack of training, do not know how to incorporate instructional technology effectively in their daily teaching activity to enhance students' learning.

Session 14.3

8:00 A.M. – 8:50 A.M. HIGHER EDUCATION – P-12 PARTNERSHIPSMississippi Queen

Presider: James H. Lampley, East Tennessee State University

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Evaluating the Effectiveness of the International Baccalaureate Programme at the Middle School Level: A Partnership Involving University and Public School Faculty

Paul T. Hackett, Columbus State University; James E. Witte and Maria Martinez Witte, Auburn University; Iris Saltiel, Troy University; and Mike Johnson and Kathy Hesler, Richards Middle School

This paper reported the results of the first-year evaluation of one project aimed at bringing together professionals from postsecondary and K-12 environments. The project was implemented at Richards Middle (RMS) in Columbus, Georgia and involved a collaborative partnership between several universities and RMS, resulting in a school-based evaluation initiative with direct implications for strengthening leadership, training, and instructional practices in schools. Faculty researchers from three universities from two states worked collaboratively with faculty and staff of a middle school that had just completed the first year of implementation of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme program in the sixth grade.

The primary goal of this inquiry was to evaluate the effect of the program on student achievement. A second goal of the investigation was to evaluate the effectiveness of the staff training and development process employed during the initial year in terms of effective professional learning practices. A third goal was to investigate the effectiveness of the collaborative process itself in terms of the implementation of the dialogic approach discussed in Clark et al. (1996).

To effect evaluation of student performance, researchers analyzed quantitative reading and math scores from the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the Muscogee Assessment Program (MAP) tests. The research team twice surveyed teachers regarding their perceptions of the effectiveness of the IB Programme in order to gauge their perception regarding the effectiveness of teacher training and the degree and quality of implementation of IB practices in the classroom. In order to evaluate the collaborative effort itself, team members kept and shared extensive field notes on the implementation of the IB Programme at RMS, on efforts at professional learning, and of the development of the assessment model for the study.

Evaluating a “Professors in the Schools” Program: Lessons Learned

Beverly M. Klecker and Daniel L. Seth, Morehead State University

This paper described the evaluation for the third year of a continuing “Professors in the Schools” program. A concern for professors in teacher education programs has been the disconnect between the cultures of higher education and P-12 schools. At one university, this concern was addressed through a P-16 effort funding a “Professors in the Schools” fellowship grant. Selected professors (N=22) partnered with public school personnel of their choice. Each professor spent a minimum of 45 hours during one year in the public school. Many studies have focused on the participation of university professors in the public schools (e.g., Carino, 1990; Faetz & Warner, 2001; Hudson-Ross & McWhorter, 1997; Smith, 1969). The evaluation for the first two years of the grant in this study was a qualitative analysis of the journals that each professor maintained throughout the 45 hours (Barnett, Aagaard, & Stanley, 2003). The evaluators for year three added quantitative measures to the qualitative analyses to triangulate data to verify and validate the qualitative analysis (Patton, 1990).

The evaluators designed a 10-question survey. Each question was followed by a five-point Likert-type item rating scale. Following each quantitative item, an open-ended question asked respondents to illuminate their quantitative ratings. Data were collected at two points, the beginning and the end of the school year, through electronic survey delivery. Data were analyzed, and the results were presented at the end-of-program meeting for faculty verification. Results indicated a very high degree of learning and satisfaction by the professors. These ratings increased across data collection points one and two. Presenting the qualitative illuminations immediately following the quantitative ratings greatly enhanced the meaning of both the qualitative and quantitative data. Suggestions for improving the program were included in the results.

Community, Collaboration, and Clinical Practice

Margaret Morris and Carolyn R. Garvin, Mercer University

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Intercultural Communication in Graduate Seminars: The Experience of International Students “Doing Discussions”

Fanni L. Coward, University of Alabama – Huntsville

Although most educators believe in the benefits from having international students in American universities, studies have shown that international students are often quiet in the classroom, and that such quiet behavior is detrimental to their academic success. This study was an attempt to explore the nature of the experience in which international students engaged as they participated in the fast-speed exchanges commonly found in graduate-level classrooms.

Three graduate seminar classrooms in different disciplines were observed at an American university. The focus of the study was on the students from China, Korea, and Taiwan, but the other members of the class were also included in data gathering and data analysis in order to gather contextual information for interpreting the experience of the focal participants.

Because previous studies had lacked attention to the processes of participation, and because the participatory processes need to be described in authentic and context-specific ways, the research method utilized was a qualitative method, specifically the grounded theory techniques. The researcher observed and audiotaped recorded classroom discussions over a two-month period, interviewed the selected pool of participants (18 total), and used two questionnaires that included questions about personality tendencies, about experiences with different culture(s), and about specific incidents that were noted by the researcher. Other data resources such as syllabi, readings, discussion guide, and copies of some students’ assignments were also examined.

A model was developed that detailed systematically how different factors in the discourse environment interacted with each other in the participatory process of international students. It also illustrated how the students in the class continuously evaluated and readjusted their beliefs and values. The findings of the study informed a better understanding of intercultural communication in the classroom, thereby contributing to improved learning environments for both international and non-international students.

Session 14.5

8:00 A.M. – 8:50 A.M. GENDER ISSUES.....Riverboat

Presider: Christie J. Jones, Mississippi State University

Emotional Intelligence: Are There Sex Differences?

Martha Tapia, Berry College, and George E. Marsh II, University of Alabama

This study examined gender differences in emotional intelligence as measured by the Emotional Intelligence Inventory (EII). The EII is a 41-item Likert scale based on the original model of emotional intelligence developed by Salovey and Mayer. An exploratory factor analysis identified four factors, which were named empathy, utilization of feelings, handling relationships, and self-control. Salovey and Mayer define emotional intelligence as the ability to monitor one’s emotions, the emotions of others, and to differentiate among them; and it involves the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to regulate emotions reflectively to promote emotional and intellectual growth. This definition connects intelligence and emotion because it combines the ideas that emotion makes thinking more intelligent and that one thinks intelligently about emotions. From this point of view, a person with these abilities is considered a well-adjusted and emotionally skilled person; the lack of these abilities renders a person socially and emotionally handicapped.

The sample consisted of 234 students, 84 males and 150 females, enrolled at a private liberal arts college in the southeast. There were 32 freshmen, 70 sophomores, 67 juniors, and 58 seniors in the sample. The mean age of the participants was 20.50. Data were analyzed using analysis of variance with four factors of emotional intelligence (empathy, utilization of feelings, handling relationships, and self-control) as dependent variables and gender as the independent variable. Significant differences were found on three of the four factors. Females scored significantly higher than males in empathy, handling relationships, and self-control. These results suggested that gender differences in emotional intelligence were reflected in this sample.

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Gender Differences in Learning Styles Reported on the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ).

Rebecca R. Jacobson, Troy University – Montgomery; and Sandra Harris, Troy University

The performance of students has been studied in a variety of ways. Earlier studies centered on the influence of “psychological type” and gender. In less than five years, the number of non-traditional students attending college is reported to be between 50 and 75%. This growing population of students is gaining attention, and research should focus on the nontraditional student population in a variety of ways including gender performance and learning strategies. Nontraditional students are entering, or returning, to the academic environment with different motivations and learning styles. A summary of the literature on self-regulated learning reported that the nontraditional student differs from the traditional student in life style, goal orientation, motivation, and life experience. However, research on the influence of gender on self-regulated learning is just beginning. The literature indicates gender does influence performance.

The present study was an investigation of the differences in motivational factors and learning strategies as measured by the Motivated Strategies of Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) between male and female students. The MSLQ was given to 434 students (220 males and 214 females). The MSLQ is made up of 81 questions and divided into two categories: motivation scales and learning strategy scales. Reliability and the factor structure were established. A MANOVA was completed in an effort to evaluate the differences and similarities of student learning styles based on gender, evaluating all factors as reported by the MSLQ. Differences on individual scales were evaluated and significant differences were found on 8 of the 15 subscales. In terms of practical value, understanding the complex issues of strategy use and motivation by male and female students can add to the literature on education and psychology in areas of program design, classroom instruction, examination requirements, distance learning opportunities, and assessment.

Middle School Females’ Scientific Attitudes and Interests

Kathleen T. Campbell, Southeastern Louisiana University, and Deborah McCarthy, Academy of the Sacred Heart

As recent studies reveal, females continue to trail males in attitude and achievement in science despite modifications in pedagogy, classroom environment, teacher/student interaction, and textbook. The research shows that the largest gap in achievement favoring males is in physics, and American males scored significantly higher than their female counterparts in self-concept and attitude toward science. Furthermore, although females comprised half of the 2003 AP examiners in mathematics and most science fields, they represented only a small minority in physics and computer science. Mathematics, once considered the gateway to prestigious, higher paying jobs throughout much of the 20th century, has been replaced by science and technology in the 21st century. Yet females are remarkably underrepresented in these fields.

Nearly a decade ago, the present researchers conducted a study comparing attitudes toward and interest in science among three sets of eighth-grade females in three different settings: traditionally single sex, traditionally coed, and newly single sex. Results from the analysis of variance of the self-report, Likert-style questionnaire indicated that the females in the traditionally single sex classes had significantly higher scores on both attitude and interest. The present study compared current eighth-grade females at the same single sex school to the 1996 single sex females. In the present study, an analysis of variance indicated that the 1996 interest and attitude scores were higher than the 2004 scores. A scattergram of the two sets of scores, however, indicated several low-scoring 2004 outliers and several high-scoring 1996 outliers with the majority of scores in the same clustering. The researchers concluded that the attitude and interest in the single sex setting had been maintained overall. Recommendations included a follow-up study of the 2004 subjects during their senior year in high school at the same single sex school.

Session 14.6

8:00 A.M. – 8:50 A.M. SCHOOL CULTURE..... Creole Queen

Presider: Ying Wang, Mississippi Valley State University

Shaping Public Opinion: A View of Education from a Local Newspaper

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James D. Kirylo and Ann K. Nauman, Southeastern Louisiana University

Particularly as it relates to school reform and accountability, the general public receives a significant portion of its information on public education through the newspaper, a medium capable of shaping and forming public opinion. Knowing this fact, just what is “John Q. Public” being told by way of the news media? Are all aspects of education, both the positive and the negative, being explored? Is the language itself calculated to please a constituency, or is it less than honest, perpetuating a false reality of what schooling is and what authentic reform ought to be?

The Times-Picayune (circulation: 276,762; Sunday: 309,274) is the most widely circulated newspaper in the state of Louisiana, also reaching several Gulf Coast cities in Mississippi. In a computer search to find relevant articles from The Times-Picayune on school reform and school accountability, LexisNexis, an academic database, was used to enable the researchers to locate newspaper articles based on the key terms entered: school reform and school accountability. The time frame of the investigation was from April 1, 2003 to May 1, 2004, wherein 117 articles that had some reference to school reform and accountability were published.

To that end, this research presentation provided a brief history of how the authors came to be where they are today as it relates to the language of accountability and school reform. In addition, through what politicians, policy makers, and a population of educators are saying via The Times-Picayune, an explanation was given on how the printed media have a powerful role in shaping and forming public opinion, ultimately, rightly or wrongly, defining for the public what education is all about. Lastly, this presentation concluded with some implications relative to the language that politicians, policymakers, and educators use in describing school reform, accountability, and the realities of schooling.

An Investigation of Culture, Climate, and Principals’ Leadership in Low Performing Schools

Shana Corvers and Bobby Franklin, Louisiana Department of Education

Through its existing accountability system, the state of Louisiana is identifying schools that are high or low performing. The state is seeking to progress beyond the goal of only identifying high performing schools to gain a deeper understanding into “why” schools are high performing. Knowing “the who” does not tell “the why.” There has been little effort toward conducting in-depth, contextual studies into areas of school effectiveness that have not been traditionally measured, such as school climate, school culture, and principal leadership. Research studies of these aforementioned environmental components of school effectiveness learning and investigating the role of school climate, school culture, leadership, and other contextual factors upon learning success were done.

The purpose of this research was to uncover some possible contextual differences within schools that were similar in every aspect except for that of school performance and growth. Research supports the idea that the learning environment is crucial. Positive school climate and effective leadership remain key ingredients to a successful school. A strong, well-respected and effective leader is thought to be able to contribute to a positive school climate and an effective learning environment. This study employed the use of survey instruments, detailed classroom and school observations, various interviews, and structured focus groups with students, teachers and the principal. These methods were utilized to learn about the culture-climate of the school, as well as the leadership style and effectiveness of the principal. This information is rarely collected and used in tandem with school-level data about teacher quality (i.e. % of teachers with a master’s degree), school demographics (i.e., % of free and reduced priced lunch), achievement data, and financial data.

A Review of Cross-Cultural Studies on Educational Leadership and Management

Shujie Liu and Dianne L. Taylor, Louisiana State University

Hallinger and Leithwood (1996) and Bajunid (1996) identify societal culture as a missing variable in educational leadership theory and research. Four dimensions for organizing research on international school leadership are suggested by Paige and Mestenhauser (1999). One third of these, the comparative dimension, involves examining similarities and differences in leadership among various cultures and is used in the present study. Because cross-cultural studies of organizational management greatly influenced cross-cultural studies on educational administration, the authors also used work by Hofstede (1980) that identified leadership differences in 53 cultures as occurring mainly along four continua: power distance, uncertainty, masculinity/femininity, and individualism/collectivism.

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Literature was identified for review in this study using three decision criteria: (1) the literature reported or synthesized empirical research, (2) the research was published in an available refereed source, and (3) the study was conducted within the last 40 years. A matrix using the above continua was developed, and the data were coded for comparative analysis.

The authors used the individualism/collectivism continuum to demonstrate the findings. The concept of leadership effectiveness differs in East Asia from that in the West. In China, Thailand, and Japan, Walker and Dimmock (2002) report, effective principals center on ensuring collective harmony and enforcing standard approaches to curriculum and instruction that promote student adaptation to community expectations. By contrast, effective Western principals are inclined to respond to the individual needs or desires of teachers, students, and parents rather than to promote community expectations, which are often ambiguous.

The research strongly suggested expanding conceptualizations of educational leadership to include other cultures. Without such studies, Western scholars, who comprise a small percentage of the world's population, will exert disproportionate influence on theory, policy, and practice. This circumstance leaves educational management with a "vulnerable knowledge base" according to Dimmock and Walker (2000, p. 145).

Session 14.7

8:00 A.M. – 8:50 A.M. CHILDREN GRIEVING: AN EDUCATOR'S ACTION PLAN FOR EMOTIONAL HEALING (TRAINING SESSION)Meeting Room 253

Vincent McGrath, Linda McGrath, and Jack Blendinger, Mississippi State University

In this workshop, participants were given time to reflect on their doubts and learn appropriate methods to support students in the grieving process. Packets with information and materials on current practices in other school districts were included as handouts. The facilitators have personally experienced the loss of spouses, have organized a community grief support group, and have conducted several national conference workshops on grief support. Because children and adolescents struggle to understand death, this time of grief often interferes with learning. Teachers sometimes feel uncomfortable becoming grief counselors, and yet, they may be the only adults to whom children and adolescents can openly express their grief. But teachers who are open to innovative ways that have been used successfully by others can handle the situations in wise strategies founded on sound psychological and social research methods and a mix of common sense. To be effective, teachers need to develop the capacity to grasp the traumatic experience through its manifestations from the initial death of a loved one to the period of healing, which may take months and years. Students who are allowed to work through their grief in activities such as puppetry or stories experience less difficulty with their school work and develop healthy coping skills. One-on-one counseling and group discussions are also possible ways to support children and adolescents during their grieving caused not only by death, but also by divorce, chronic or terminal illness, or any other type of change to their normal routines.

Session 15.1

9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. OUTSTANDING PAPERSBayou**

Presenter: Gahan Bailey, University of South Alabama

Session 15.2

9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. ACHIEVEMENT.....Levee

Presenter: Jeff Whittingham, University of Central Arkansas

Discriminating Student Collaborative Learning Levels in Higher Education: Contributions of Institution and Personal Variables

John K. Rugutt and Caroline C. Chemosit, Illinois State University,
and Philip K. Kaloki, Dallas Baptist University

The authors of this study utilized the discriminant function analysis using extreme student groups (top and bottom quartiles) defined by students' collaborative learning scores to develop a model that best predicts group

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membership of the low and high levels of collaborative college students. The purpose of this study was to determine whether a model exists that significantly increased the researcher's ability to accurately classify the low and high collaborative learning students based on selected institution and personal variables (such as higher order thinking skills (HOTS), student motivation (MO), student faculty interaction (SFI), quality of teaching and learning (QTL), personal involvement of student (PIS), and self-efficacy (EFF) with a sample of 2,190 undergraduate students in a large public university in the South.

This study used measures contained in Student Assessment of Teaching and Learning (SATL, Short-Form), first developed by Ellett, Culross, McMullen, and Rugutt, (1996), and later revised by Ellett, Loup, Culross, McMullen, and Rugutt (1997). The measures assessed a wide variety of factors among college students. The response format for most instrument subscale items used in the study was of the Likert type. The reliability coefficients for HOTS, MO, SFI, QTL, PIS, and EFF were 0.83, 0.86, 0.92, 0.94, 93, and 0.78, respectively. The one-way ANOVA results showed that the groups were significantly different in all the study variables.

The results of the discriminant analysis showed that substantively and statistically significant models exists that enhanced the researcher's ability to accurately predict student's classification into low or high collaborative learning groups based on the institution and personal variables. The lowest total percent correctly classified was at 84%, while the highest total percent correctly classified was at 83%. All of the model variables made significant differences between the low and high collaborative learning groups. Complete results of this study and procedures used were reported. Further, the major findings and conclusions of the study were also discussed in view of their implications for future research, measurement theory, research design, and practice.

The Interrelationships Among Rural Values, Parent Religiosity, Parent Involvement, and Student Outcomes in a Small, Rural Middle School

Stephen K. Miller, University of Louisville, and Carolyn B. Tucker,
Webster County (KY) Board of Education

Literature consistently reports that achievement lags in middle schools, rural areas, and the South. Rural values, parent religiosity, and parent involvement have all been linked to achievement. No research on the combined effects of these factors was located. Accordingly, this study examined demographic factors, rural values (anti-intellectualism, social conservatism/traditionalism, ethnocentricity, stewardship of earth, good old boy), parent religiosity (belief, ritual, experience, affiliation, bond), and parent involvement (belief, action) to determine their interrelationships with student achievement (GPA) in a small, rural, southern middle school. The students (N = 108) of the seventh and eighth grades and their parents comprised the population. A mail survey yielded 38 participants (both parents and students).

The researchers developed scales to represent the larger constructs--five rural values, five parent religiosity, and two parent involvement--based on the literature. Psychometric analyses (Cronbach's alpha and inter-scale correlations) were utilized to check these theoretically-based measures and reduce the scales to overall constructs, if warranted. Initial calculations confirmed that the scales functioned as intended so that factor analysis was not performed. Parent and student responses were combined when possible. The final set of scales included the five rural values and composite constructs for both parent religiosity and parent involvement. Forward stepwise regression was used to examine the relationships among the three types of independent variables--demographic, parent values (rural values and parent religiosity), and mediating variables (parent involvement)--and the criterion, overall student GPA. Results indicated that one demographic factor, specially designed instruction (student's enrollment in special education), and anti-intellectualism were the only significant factors in the full model, with an effect size of .37. These results were discussed in terms of the small sample, selection of participants, and educational implications for rural schools, including intriguing relationships among the scales.

Christian Faith on the Christian College Campus

James Lampley, East Tennessee State University

This research was conducted at a church-related, private, four-year college located in northeast Tennessee. Undergraduate and graduate students were surveyed to gain an understanding of their decision-making process when deciding to attend a Christian college. Social, religious, and academic areas were addressed in the survey questions. Prayer in the classroom, chapel and convocation requirements, and faith-based opportunities beyond the required on-campus religious services were also addressed. Other areas addressed in the research were

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the level of commitment to Christian values by the college, student body, and faculty and staff at the college. Findings of this research were surprising in some areas and predictable in other areas. It provided insight about the “Christian atmosphere” of this particular Christian college.

Session 15.3

9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENTMississippi Queen

Presenter: Angela R. Lee, Louisiana State University

NCATE Electronic Exhibits

Glenn Sheets and David Bell, Arkansas Tech University

Accreditation has been a topic of great discussion/debate across the nation in recent years. In 1985 the state of Arkansas implemented a policy that in order for colleges/universities to have a teacher education program and be able to have their candidates licensed they would have to be accredited by NCATE. With universities meeting new performance-based standards, documentation of evidence has become even more important. At present, universities have the option of having a paper-based exhibit room or an electronic exhibit room. Universities are beginning to make the transition from a paper-based exhibit room to an electronic exhibit room, some with great difficulty. The statement of the problem in this study dealt with the following questions: What is an electronic exhibit room? What are the advantages and disadvantages of using an electronic exhibit room vs. a paper-based exhibit room? What aspects need to be considered in the development and its continued maintenance and operation? Is an electronic exhibit better when all factors are considered?

The Communication of Faculty Development by Administrators at a Research II Institution

Terry D. Allen, University of North Texas

This study examined the communication practices used by administrators to communicate faculty development at a mid-sized, urban, research-based institution of higher education. Specifically, the formal and informal systemwide network communication, the communication used to facilitate change, small group communication, and the resulting organizational climate from superior-subordinate communication in the dissemination of faculty development were investigated.

The study was limited, because of time constraints, to a sample of convenience. A single research institution in the Carnegie 2000 category of Doctoral/Research Universities-Extensive, or more accurately a “Research II” university in the Carnegie 1994 category, located in the central United States, was used for the study population. Administrators were selected from organizational charts provided by the university web site based on job description and/or management responsibilities. A total population of 78 administrators was identified for this institution. The study population was composed of a university provost, a university director and assistant director, nine deans, seven associate deans, one special staff, 50 department heads/chairs, and eight program coordinators from five colleges and four schools.

A 62-item survey was hand distributed to each administrator. Anonymity was provided through survey return by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Of the population of 78 only 11 responses were received, providing a response rate of 14.1%. Statistically, these results cannot be meaningfully generalized to the population, but practical significance was also considered.

The sample of 11 was composed of seven men and four women and, as a minimum, represented all four levels of administration. A limited description of the responding sample’s communication practices was obtained through application of a descriptive research design. The practicality of utilizing this level of investigation and the resultant implications were assessed for future research.

Educator Ethics Violations: A Study of One State’s Reported Violations

Rosa L. Weaver, Northern Kentucky University

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This study examined the reported educator ethics violations over a four-year period. Data were obtained from the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board, the agency that certifies, suspends, revokes and denies certification for teachers and administrators. The purpose of this study was to look at the frequency and severity of the violations and to share this information with educator preparation programs and districts that are responsible for ongoing ethics training for educators.

There were over 600 cases reported between 2001 and 2004. Demographics of the educators included the kind of charge, the length of licensure, whether the educator worked in urban or rural districts, and the disposition of the cases. The cases included conduct unbecoming a teacher which sometimes occurred outside of school. Some educators were charged with inappropriate relationships with students, which can include border crossing. Other cases involved felony and misdemeanor charges, assault, testing violations, and breach of contract. When the cases were investigated, some educators were dismissed, while others were admonished, sent to an ethics class, some are still awaiting court decisions, and many lost their licensure for periods ranging from a month to life.

The findings of the study demonstrate the importance of ongoing ethics training at the preservice level and during the careers of teachers and administrators. Discussions at the school and district level help educators understand the values of the community in which they work. Teachers and administrators make hundreds of decisions each day. It is imperative that an ongoing conversation occurs to help educators make the best choices and not risk losing their licensure or hurting a child.

Session 15.4

**9:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. INCREASING AWARENESS OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY
IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS (SYMPOSIUM).....Delta Queen**

Organizer: Christie J. Jones, Mississippi State University

LaQuanta Watson and Victoria Bowers, Mississippi State University,
and Anitra Shelton-Quinn, Humble Independent School District

As professionals collaborate to meet mental health and educational needs of culturally diverse students, it becomes imperative to employ culturally appropriate assessments, consultations, and interventions. This workshop blended essential aspects of cultural awareness, effective communication, and best practices into a symposium for effective research and service delivery.

Session 15.5

9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. MATHEMATICS EDUCATION.....Riverboat

Presenter: Martha Tapia, Berry College

Mathematics Self-Efficacy and Mathematics Anxiety

Reid Jones, Darlene Crone-Todd, Heidi Eyre, and Scott Hutchens, Delta State University

Substantial literature exists on mathematics anxiety, but little on how self-efficacy predicts mathematics performance. A previous report showed that mathematics self-efficacy was a better predictor of college algebra course grades than was mathematics anxiety. The present report was a replication and extension with a new cohort (n=182) that also evaluated the effect of variables on final examination scores.

Students taking either College Algebra or lower division psychology courses completed surveys and allowed access to their academic and course records. Surveys were administered one week before final examinations, suggesting that anxiety would be high. The Mathematics Anxiety Rating Scale (MARS-R; Chronbach=.92) and instruments developed to measure Mathematics Self-Efficacy (MSE; Chronbach=.89) and Mathematics Aversion (MAV; Chronbach=.74) were used. Other data included course grades and final exam scores in College Algebra, ACT-Mathematics, and Overall GPA. MSE(r=.52), MARS-R (r=.41), and MAV (r=.35) were significantly (p<.01) associated with course grades. Using survey variables to predict grades yielded a significant multiple R=.556[F(3,142)=21.22;p<.01]. MSE and MARS-R were significant (p<.01) contributors. Final Exam scores were used as the dependent variable in the same model yielding a multiple R of .603[F(3,67)=12.735;p<.01]. Once again MARS-R and MSE were significant contributors to regression, with MARS-R somewhat stronger in this model. Similar results were found in a statistics class (n=23). Affective and cognitive variables predict College

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Algebra performance almost as effectively as aptitude scores (ACT-M) and general academic performance (overall GPA). However, few institutions of higher education consider affective and cognitive variables in developmental mathematics courses. The MSE and the MARS-R could be administered in those courses, and students could be offered assistance as needed.

Cases Studies of Math Anxiety of Developmental Mathematics' Students

Christopher W. Guillory, Louisiana State University

These cases studies examined the affect of math anxiety on community college developmental mathematic students to determine: (1) how math anxiety affects student performance and attitudes in a college-level mathematics class, (2) how students' preparation time affects the amount of math anxiety they feel, and (3) to contrast the level of math anxiety between male and female students in different anxiety groups. Math anxiety has been defined as "feelings of tension and anxiety that interfere with the manipulation of numbers and solving of mathematical problems in a wide array of ordinary life and academic situations" (Richardson and Suinn, 1972). Green (1990) determined in a study of students enrolled in developmental math classes that student performance was best determined by a test anxiety pretest. Hancock (2001) showed students with high levels of test anxiety performed poorly in highly competitive situations.

A study of college students determined math ACT scores and general test anxiety to be significant predictors for math anxiety for male college students, and ACT scores, perceived math ability, perceived high school math teachers' teaching method, and attitude toward mathematics to be significant predictors of math anxiety in female college students. There was a significant difference in math performance between anxiety groups, but there was no significant difference in math performance between male and female students. Students who were better prepared for the class were better able to deal with the affects of math anxiety. Implications of these case studies suggested that students have different ways of coping with math anxiety, such as preparation and class involvement.

Preservice Teachers' Beliefs About Mathematics Before and After Completion of a Mathematics Methods Course

Marilyn Larmon, Gwen Autin, and Leigh Ann Beard,
Southeastern Louisiana University

Preservice teachers often respond to mathematics with feelings of anxiety. Contributing factors may include failure to understand mathematical content, a lack of success in mathematics classes, a feeling of lack of support in mathematics, and unfounded beliefs about mathematics. Teachers who experience mathematics anxiety tend to spend less time teaching mathematics, give more seatwork, and avoid other more helpful strategies.

There is emphasis today on the acquisition of content knowledge while some question the importance of methodology. This study examined whether mathematics beliefs change after completion of a mathematics methods course.

An adapted version of The Beliefs Inventory by Andrea Troutman was administered at the beginning of each semester to a total of 97 students. Students responded to 23 statements by choosing five levels of agreement. The course emphasized a constructivist view of teaching mathematics. Students also worked with classroom teachers in a field setting. At the end of the semester, the inventory was again administered.

Data were analyzed with independent t-tests. Using a Bonferroni Correction, significance was set at $<.002$. Responses to 10 of the statements changed significantly. Others, though not significant, moved in a more positive direction.

The study appeared to favor the body of evidence that views both content and pedagogy as important in the development of preservice teachers. While students' beliefs about mathematics were fairly favorable after courses in the content area alone, the methods course appeared to move students toward more positive beliefs about mathematics.

Session 15.6

9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. ENGLISH EDUCATION..... Creole Queen

Presider: Mitzi Trahan, Louisiana State University

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The Effect of Error-Based Grammar Instruction on the Writing of Rural Students in Fourth Grade and Eighth Grade: A Modified Replication of Feng and Powers' 2004 Study

Linda H. Thornton, Zhangli Niu, and Renee Gray, Harding University

This study explored whether the results Shoudong Feng presented at the 2004 annual meeting of MSERA would be replicable in rural settings at different grade levels. Arkansas teachers are charged with improving the writing of students to prepare them for the state Benchmark Exams in literacy administered at the fourth grade, sixth grade, and eighth grade. Feng and Powers (2004) tested the recommendations of Constance Weaver (1996) for improving the writing of 19 fifth-grade students in a suburban school in Arkansas. Their results provided possible evidence of the effectiveness of the treatment, but because of their single-group pretest-posttest design, the evidence needed to be strengthened by replication.

The convenience samples consisted of 35 fourth graders, reduced to 33 by mortality, and 16 eighth graders, all in small rural schools in eastern Arkansas. Fourteen of the eighth graders were African American. All remaining participants were Caucasian. The researchers collected and analyzed for grammar errors pretest essays from all participants, then developed and presented grammar instruction in individual, small-group, and large-group lessons based on the errors found in the essays. The students were then assigned essays to write on a similar topic, and the errors in them were coded by categories and counted. Results were generally consistent with those of Feng and Powers and indicated that in all categories of mechanical, sentence structure, and usage, errors were fewer in the posttest essays, except for apostrophe errors, which remained similar. Error category frequency counts were analyzed using chi square analysis, and the differences were statistically significant. Because of the threats inherent in single-group designs, further study of error-based grammar instruction using randomized controlled trials and a larger sample was recommended.

Making Strides on the Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing: A Middle School Case Study

Daphne W. Hubbard, University of South Alabama

In the state of Alabama, fifth-, seventh- and tenth-grade public school students are required to take the Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing (ADAW). The state assessment for seventh graders consists of holistic composition, writing mechanics, sentence formation, and grammar and usage. The ADAW scores do not limit students' progression through sequential grades or keep them from graduating from high school; however, the ADAW scores are used as one accountability measure for respective schools to meet their annual accountability goals or to determine their adequate yearly progress (Alabama State Department of Education, 2005).

Teaching students to write well is one of the most challenging instructional areas for teachers (Nagin, 2003); however, one rural, middle school in the deep south has increased scores on the ADAW by 56% over the past two years. The middle school is ranked fourth in the largest school district in the state of Alabama for its high scores on the ADAW, yet 73% of its students receive free or reduced lunches and live in a rural area with high poverty rates. In the middle school of approximately 650 students and 31 teachers, many teachers attribute three factors to the rise in student scores on the ADAW: the principal, the school culture, and teachers who are committed to best practice.

This case study examined the three leading factors attributed to raising student scores on the ADAW by examining quantitative data from actual student scores on the ADAW and qualitative data from structured interviews with the principal and teachers at the school. In an era of accountability with a renewed focus on writing well, the data collected from this study may provide concrete, practical ways for principals and teachers to increase student achievement in writing.

Effects of Writing Process on Student Achievement Attitude Towards Peer Feedback in a Rural School Serving a Predominantly Low Income African American Community

Danjuma R. Saulawa and Nicole Tolbert, Alabama State University

This study was conducted to find out if teaching writing as a process would have an impact on students' overall writing achievement. Specifically, the objective of the study was to answer the following questions: (1) What are the effects of teaching writing as a process on low achieving students' writing development

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and achievement? (2) What are the effects of teaching writing as a process on students' attitudes towards writing? and (3) What are the effects of teaching writing as a process on students' acceptance of peer suggestions? Subjects of this study were students in an elementary school in a rural central Alabama county. They were on free or reduced lunch. Most of them scored on level one in the state writing assessment. They were selected from a pool of 75 fifth graders, representing the number of students who returned their parental permission slips. A total of 35 students (13 males and 22 females) were randomly selected for the study.

Data for this study were collected using two seven-item attitude surveys, a pretest and a posttest. The pre- and posttest were analyzed using the rubric that teachers use in order to prepare students for the Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing.

The results of this study indicated that after frequent exposure to teachers teaching writing as a process, students' overall writing abilities were enhanced. Students who mostly scored at level one scored at levels two, three, and even four. In addition to their overall writing abilities improving, students' acceptance of peer feedback improved. The findings of the study also showed that students' attitudes towards writing changed slightly after exposure to teachers who teach writing as a process.

Session 15.7

9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. MAKE SHOW AND TELL COOL-TRAINING WORKSHOP OF PHOTO STORY 3 FOR WINDOWS (TRAINING SESSION)Meeting Room 253

Feng Sun and Jeff Anderson, University of Alabama – Birmingham

One must have a lot of photos stored in one's hard drive after this long summer vacation. This one-hour training introduced Microsoft Photo Story 3 for Windows in detail. It was a free program that brought life into one's favorite memories by adding motion, effects, music, and more to digital photos. The trainers worked through with the attendees about how to use this program to make the digital pictures as a live slide show for easy sharing with people and friends in a whole new way.

The workshop used digital pictures as an example to cover the following features of this program: (1) downloading and installing, (2) picture importing, (3) photo editing, (4) adding effects, (5) auto cropping, (6) adding captions and titles, (7) adding narration and motion animation and transition, (8) music importing, and (9) saving and sharing.

Session 16.1

10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. LEADERSHIP REDESIGN.....Bayou

Presenter: Sonja Y. Harrington, Alabama State University

Mercer University's Educational Leadership Program: A Journey to a New Level of Leader Preparation

Penny L. Elkins, Kathy Arnett, Vic Verdi, and Bruce Sliger, Mercer University

In response to a growing demand for quality school leaders and by recommendation of such organizations as the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), universities around the nation must develop and/or revise educational leadership programs that, among other things: (1) "give significantly more emphasis to preparing leaders who can improve the core function of the school curriculum – instruction and student learning, and (2) give more time and attention to mentoring and internships that allow aspiring leaders to practice leadership skills with master educational leaders in well-planned quality experiences." (Preparing a New Breed of School Principals: It's Time for Action, SREB, 2001, p. 25)

Mercer University has developed a new master's level, initial certification program in educational leadership designed to address these national concerns and to exceed current standards of school leadership in Georgia. Mercer's program has been designed to provide leadership candidates with a solid blend of educational theory and practice, giving them opportunities to apply research-based knowledge to solve field-based problems. Recognizing the importance of having the program relevant to both the opportunities and challenges facing today's schools, Mercer faculty sought input from many sources when developing the program, including local schools systems, other prominent leadership programs, and the most current national standards of NCATE – the Educational Leadership Constituent Consortium (ELCC).

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This session focused on the development of this program, as well as outlined the four unique aspects of candidate preparation: the Leadership Academy, the Leadership Portfolio, the Online Leadership Network, and the Mentoring and Internship experiences. Both qualitative and quantitative data were provided to document the evolution of the program, with specific attention given to successes and challenges since its inception in January 2005.

The Principal Internship: A Standards-Driven Field Experience Model

Jerry G. Mathews and James E. Davis, Mississippi State University, and Mark Neill, Idaho State University

The Principal Internship model illustrated in this paper was designed based on standards for effective school leadership. College of Education Standards for Advanced Professionals, Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards, and state principal certification standards provided the conceptual framework for it. The model emphasizes the combined efforts of principal interns, practicing professionals, and university faculty. The multiple and diverse roles and responsibilities of building-level leadership were described.

This paper illustrated the connections of the principal internship program expectations, based on actual practice, with the described standards for principal preparation. The practical applications of theoretical constructs served to provide prospective school leaders with meaningful, contextualized experiences in the field of effective building-level leadership.

The model included a comprehensive portfolio based on contextualized experiences carefully aligned with program standards. Five hundred forty hours of comprehensive principalship experiences are required at three education levels: elementary, middle/junior high, and high school.

Effective school leadership is the key to school improvement. A recent study by Hess and Kelly (2005) has questioned the viability of principal preparation in American colleges and universities. A similar indictment of educational leadership preparation programs was leveled by Levine (2005). Both of these critiques suggest a blend of strong content (rigor) and meaningful application. Both advocate a training program based on the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of future-focused leaders: those with leadership skills that are more practical than theoretical, and those with a deep understanding of the critical issues confronting education in an era of accountability. Today's educational climate requires front-line leaders with an appropriate balance of theoretical constructs and meaningful, contextual experience. The model illustrated in this paper meets all these requirements.

Construct Validity of the 21st Century School Administrator Skills Assessment

Gerald D. Coker, Ouachita Parish (LA) Schools, Cathy Stockton, Richland Parish (LA) Schools, and Susie Watts, University of Louisiana – Monroe

The 21st Century School Administrator Skills assessment, developed by NASSP in 2001, is used extensively across the United States to assess leadership skills. However, NASSP has not reported validity or reliability estimates for the instrument. Researchers have estimated that the instrument content measures administrator behaviors for which inferences were made (NASSP, 2001). The self assessment and observer assessment forms of the survey contain 67 behavioral statements that are arranged into 10 skill dimensions and four skill areas. Raters use a five-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always) to rate the frequency for which each behavior is observed. Quotient scores are calculated to compare average ratings on skill dimensions.

The purpose of this study was to explore the construct validity of the 21st Century School Administrator Skills assessment. A total of 1,060 teachers rated the skills of their principals using this assessment instrument. Although there are 10 skill dimensions on the survey, factor analysis extracted only eight factors that had eigenvalues greater than one. Behavioral statements that discriminate judgment and results orientation as skill dimensions on the instrument loaded on a common factor. Similarly, statements that discriminate development of others and understanding one's own strengths and weaknesses as skill dimensions loaded on a common factor. Skill dimensions that failed to differentiate when factor analyzed were common to a skill area on the survey instrument. Each of the six remaining factors extracted from the factor analysis corresponded to a skill dimension from the survey. With the exception of one behavioral statement, statements associated with a common skill dimension on the survey also loaded on a common factor. Although further studies are needed, this paper presented evidence to support the construct validity of the 21st Century School Administrator Skills assessment.

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Session 16.2

10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. COGNITION.....Levee

Presenter: Linda H. Thornton, Harding University

Aging and Driving: A Pilot Study Examining the Impact of Chemotherapy on Everyday Cognition

Linda Morse, Carolyn E. Adams-Price, Elisabeth Wells-Parker,
and Marsha T. Williams, Mississippi State University

There is considerable evidence that examined the impact of age on driving behaviors, although few studies have investigated the impact of aging and driving when the individual has taken adjuvant chemotherapy for treatment of cancer. This pilot study examined the effects of chemotherapy on the cognitive performance of female breast cancer survivors, and in particular, how it is related to critical daily activities such as driving performance. Participants included 40 women between the ages of 22 and 80 who completed chemotherapy for breast cancer at least six months prior to testing, and 30 age and education-related matched controls who had had general anesthesia for a surgical procedure at least six months previously. Participants completed a battery of instruments including the Mini Mental Status Exam, neuropsychological assessment, background information, and the Useful Field of View (UFOVÓ).

Older subjects performed more poorly than did controls on the MMSE, suggesting that chemotherapy may have had a general effect on cognition. The chemotherapy subjects performed significantly worse than controls on Trails B, which is especially related to everyday thinking problems such as driving. The UFOVÓ, which measures visual attention and which predicts driving performance and accident rates in older adults, consists of three measures: (1) processing speed, (2) divided attention, and (3) selective attention. The chemotherapy subjects were slower than the other subjects on processing speed, but did not seem to be affected on the other two UFOVÓ measures. Age affected all three measures of the UFOVÓ. This suggests that chemotherapy may affect the speed of visual processing, especially in older cancer patients, and that it may be predictive of driving difficulties. Much more definitive research is needed to address this issue fully. Additionally, more research on how to retrain older individuals' driving skills, as well as for cancer patients, is needed.

Barnett and Ceci's Taxonomic Framework for Assessing Far Transfer of Learning: Implications for Future Research

Gerald J. Calais, McNeese State University

Despite a century of research, debates about the nature of far transfer, the frequency of its occurrence, and the essence of its fundamental mechanisms have yet to be resolved. This confusion is due to the lack of a clearly operational definition of transfer and the failure to identify the various relevant dimensions for determining if and when transfer materializes, resulting in a comparison of "apples and oranges." To overcome this chaos, a taxonomic framework is employed to view previously published studies within this framework along nine pertinent contextual and content dimensions.

Information gleaned from articles and empirical studies was selected from psychologists of various theoretical orientations, including, but not limited to, the following: Susan Barnett, John Bransford, Anne Brown, Stephen Ceci, Zhe Chen, Micheline Chi, Mary Gick, Diane Halpern, Robert Haskell, Keith Holyoak, Lauren Resnick, and Robert Sternberg.

Barnett and Ceci's paradigmatic shift entails a definition of far transfer predicated on a taxonomic framework for interpreting the research literature on transfer along three content dimensions (learned skill, performance change, and memory demands) and six context dimensions (knowledge domain, physical context, temporal context, functional context, social context, and modality). Their proposed taxonomy addressed only the end points of the transfer process, not the components of the transition process per se.

Systematic explorations of the interactions of the taxonomic dimensions should facilitate one's ability to predict when, where, and how far transfer occurs. However, since this taxonomic framework centers only on the end points of transfer, a complete theory of transfer awaits acknowledgement of the systematic variations in transfer because of individual differences in the representation and deployment of knowledge, metacognition, or underlying educative processes. This paradigmatic shift in assessing transfer, undoubtedly, will also impact classroom

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instruction and assessment, curricular design, teacher educator programs, national standards, and state standards and benchmarks.

Piaget's Formal Operations and Parental Educational Level

Penny P. Ward, Denise Taylor, and Linda Morse, Mississippi State University

The first study used a pretest/posttest design to find out if college undergraduate students could be taught to reason on Piaget's formal operational level using an independent training method. The second study was conducted to further explore notable correlations from the first study of mother's education with posttest score and father's education with pretest score.

A pretest-posttest design was utilized in both studies to examine the effects of a training procedure based on Piaget's Pendulum Problem. The pretest and posttest contained questions that included three second-order formal operations: (1) combinations, (2) propositional logic, and (3) proportionality. Some questions were added and some altered for the second study to make the pretest and posttest more similar. The training method utilized the Pendulum Problem. The Pendulum Problem was broken down into small steps that were explained in detail.

Participants for both studies were recruited from sections of Early American History. There were 90 undergraduate students in the first study and 77 undergraduate students in the second study.

The second study corroborated the findings of the first, in that the average score went down from pretest to posttest, both as a whole and for most of the questions. The scores did improve significantly, however, on the combinational reasoning question, which may be the most similar to the instructional Pendulum Problem. The authors think that the decrease in scores is largely because of participant fatigue. Although the effect of mother's educational level did not appear in the second study, father's educational level did significantly correlate with pretest score.

Session 16.3

10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. READINGMississippi Queen

Presider: Daphne W. Hubbard, University of South Alabama

First-Grade Readers' Gains in Reading Accuracy, Fluency, and Comprehension Following Varied Enrichment Strategies

Brenda Beverly, Rebecca M. Giles, and Keri L. Buck, University of South Alabama

This study investigated reading differences for first graders who received systematic phonics instruction with decodable texts (Texts group) compared to first graders who received phonics instruction only (Phonics group) and first graders who were read aloud to from authentic literature (Literature group).

Participants (n = 32) were quasi-randomly assigned to groups and seen in 16, 30-minute treatment sessions. Reading was assessed pre- and posttreatment using the Gray Oral Reading Test, 4th Ed. (GORT-4; Weiderholt & Bryant, 2001) and a benchmark measure associated with Preventing Academic Failure (PAF; Bertin & Perlman, 1998). Texts treatment was characterized by multisensory, systematic phonics instruction using modified PAF materials and Merrill Readers.

Analysis of variance revealed a significant Time by Reading Measure interaction but not a Group main effect or interactions. Planned comparisons revealed significant gains in accuracy, fluency, and comprehension by the Literature group; however, the Texts group had significant accuracy and fluency but not comprehension gains. Findings varied for reading level. In the Texts group, below average readers demonstrated greater increases in comprehension than average readers, and their GORT-4 Oral Reading Quotient gains were significantly different. In contrast, comprehension improvements in the Literature and Phonics groups were led by average readers.

All groups displayed measurable reading improvements, but average readers benefited from authentic literature with comprehension strategies. Comprehension by below average readers benefited from small group, phonics instruction plus reading practice; after all, reading accuracy is a prerequisite for successful comprehension. A differential effect of decodable texts cannot be concluded (see Jenkins, Peyton, Sanders, & Vadasy, 2004). Balanced literacy programs – when truly balanced for word study, exposure to varied texts, and comprehension instruction, and when modified for individual needs – were indirectly supported. Findings were preliminary, and investigation has been underway to compare treated groups with untreated children using school-based measures.

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The Impact of Book Clubs on the Attitudes of Middle School Students Toward Reading**

Jeff Whittingham, Patricia Phelps, and Stephanie Huffman, University of Central Arkansas

An Examination of Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) Scores Using Generalizability Theory

Richard Kazelskis, Dana G. Thames, and Carolyn Reeves-Kazelskis, University of Southern Mississippi

The majority of reliability information available for the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) consists of alpha coefficients. Recently, Cronbach expressed doubts about the viability of coefficient alpha for estimating score reliability and suggested that generalizability theory provides the best information about score reliability (Cronbach & Shavelson, 2004). In particular, generalizability theory provides a framework for examining the extent to which an individual's observed score can be generalized to their universe score, where the score universe is defined over the set of admissible observations consisting of all combinations of facets that define how the measurements were taken (Cronbach, Gleser, Nanda, & Rajaratnam, 1972; Shavelson & Webb, 1991).

This study examined the reliability of ERAS scores using the methods provided by generalizability theory. A two-facet, crossed, persons-by-items-by-occasions design was used to carry out both generalizability (G) and decision (D) studies. The two facets were considered random. Analyses were carried out by racial group, gender, and total group for each of the subscale areas, recreational reading and academic reading, and for total attitude scores on the ERAS. Respondents were 755 students in grades four through six from schools in a southeastern state. The participant sample was almost evenly divided by gender. Nearly one-half of the respondents were European Americans (49.7%), and the rest were African Americans (50.3%).

Similar results were found across groups and across ERAS scores for both the generalizability and decision studies. Substantial variance components were found for items and the interactions between persons and items and between persons and occasions. Typically, two administrations of the ERAS were required to obtain generalizability and dependability values of .70, and at least three administrations were required for these values to exceed .80. Implications for school personnel who administer and interpret the ERAS were discussed.

Session 16.4

10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. SUBSTANCE ABUSE EDUCATION.....Delta Queen

Presenter: Rosa L. Weaver, Northern Kentucky University

Coalition Building in Communities: A Program Evaluation of Federally Funded Anti-Drug Projects

Sharon K. McDonough, Glennelle Halpin, and Gerald Halpin, Auburn University

The state of Alabama has entered into a cooperative agreement between the Office of the Governor and the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to develop a state-wide strategy to prevent the misuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD). One goal of the project is to improve prevention efforts by coordinating various state and federal resources to target communities, children, families, schools and workplaces. Relevant literature dealing with coalition building and sustainability planning was reviewed to provide a framework for the study.

With the \$9 million federal grant, two types of projects were funded – six implementation projects and six capacity building projects. This study focused on the six projects funded for capacity building and their processes of building coalitions during the first year of funding. Before prevention programs could be implemented, the first year of funding for these six projects was to be directed at building coalitions within their communities that would be able to both implement and sustain ATOD prevention programs. From this literature review came recommendations for capacity building of relevance not only to the capacity builders in this evaluation but also to others in various settings charged with the task of working together for the common good.

This presentation highlighted how research-based guidelines are being used in the Alabama substance abuse prevention efforts along with suggestions for others. Lessons from the field were shared about how research

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and practice are coming together, as well as implications for coalition building and program sustainability efforts within communities.

Changes on Adolescents' Behavioral Intentions, Risk-Taking Behaviors, and Action Plans Over Time

Tina Vazin and Huey-Ling Lin, Alabama State University

The purpose of this study was to determine the change of the self-reported risk-taking behavior (alcoholic beverages, and gotten drunk), outcome variable (had sex), behavioral intention, and action plan for students during 2001 to 2004. In 2004 data, a pretest was administered to a group of 6,209 seventh to 12th graders. Forty-three percent were females, while the remaining 57% were males. The participants were ethnically diverse with 69% African American, 19% Caucasians, and 12% others. Control group data have been collected based on selected characteristics. The control group was matched on any characteristics that would cause them to differ on their having sex when neither of them received the intervention. Selection bias has been considered into the resulting program effect estimate.

The instrument contained 41 closed-ended items. All of the variables were examined for content validity, and indices were tested for internal consistency. The dependent variable was the teen sexual experience that measured on a dichotomy scale. Response consistency was evaluated by correlating the dependent variables with independent variables. In order to review the trend of those key variables, descriptive analyses have been employed with the data set each year.

The percentage of students reporting "having a few sips of an alcoholic beverage within the last 12 months" increased over the years. The percentage of having alcoholic beverages, getting drunk, and having sex decreased after two-week intervention. Pretest and posttest results indicated that adolescents in abstinence group were less likely to report conducting the risk-taking behaviors, behavioral intention, and action plan after the intervention.

Teens are more likely to report their intention to not having sex and their intention to stay abstinent after two-week intervention. After a two-week intervention, teens are more likely to agree that the best way to avoid unwanted pregnancy and to protect health is to not be sexually active.

Session 16.5

10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. **ATTITUDES**Riverboat

Presenter: Mary M. Merrill-Lusk, Louisiana State University - Shreveport

Homework: Perceptions of First- and Third-Grade Parents and Teachers

Marilyn Larmon, Southeastern Louisiana University; Rose B. Jones and Mary Beth Evans, University of Southern Mississippi; and Phyllis Cuevas and Faye White, McNeese State University

While the use of homework to reinforce classroom activities has traditionally been a common practice in many school systems in the United States, best practices in its use continues to be the subject of debate. The strengthening of national and state standards and the publication of high stakes testing results have raised the level of school and teacher accountability. One outcome of the concern over these test results may be more stringent homework requirements at lower grades.

This study examined and compared the perceptions of first- and third-grade parents and teachers in two neighboring southern states toward homework assignments. Ninety-eight parents (64 first-grade and 34 third-grade) and 15 teachers (8 first-grade and 7 third-grade) in two schools completed a brief survey regarding their perceptions of homework requirements. Questions dealt with such items as the number of days homework was assigned, the amount of time to complete the homework, the type of assignments, the effectiveness of homework, and whether homework caused conflict or interfered with family life.

Data were analyzed using chi square. Several levels of significance were found between first- and third-grade parent responses, and limited significance was found when comparing states.

This study supported the idea that parents and teachers see the benefits of homework. It also appeared to show a trend for an increased amount of days for homework and time spent on homework at the lower grades that was above the amount recommended by research reported in previous literature.

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Examining Perfectionism and Dispositions

Gloria D. Richardson, University of West Alabama

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between educators' attitudes toward perfectionism and toward the dispositions selected by the College of Education at a rural, southern university. Two surveys were conducted to obtain data. The study was a pilot for the survey of perfectionism, Educator Self-Assessment of Perfectionism (ESP) and a continuation of the use of the revised version of the Survey of Dispositions of Inservice and Preservice Teachers (SDIPT2).

The ESP is an instrument with 40 items and responses that indicate a range from Not at all Characteristic of Me to Very Characteristic of Me. The SDIPT2 has 40 items with responses that range from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree; the alpha reliability coefficient is .92 (95% Confidence Interval [CI] = .90, .94). Research has identified characteristics of teachers that are similar across populations (Carr & Glaxton, 2002; Giovannelli, 2003); Levine (2002); Minor, Onweugbuzie, Witcher & James (2002); however, an investigation of perfectionism has traditionally been found primarily in the psychological arena (Tolin, Woods & Abramowitz, 2003; Rice & Slaney, 2002; Kawamura & Frost, 2004).

The research question for the study was: Do educators' tendencies toward perfectionism correlate with their attitudes toward selected dispositions? A sample of 48 teachers, counselors, administrators, and other individuals participating in education classes at the university completed the two instruments and a demographic survey. Analysis of the reliability of the ESP were included in the report. Results of the correlation between perfectionism and dispositions were shared. Discussion and recommendations for further use of the ESP were explored.

Anxiety and Attitude of Graduate Students in Online vs. On-Campus Statistics Courses

Thomas A. DeVaney, Southeastern Louisiana University

The purpose of this study was to compare the level of anxiety and attitudes of students enrolled in online and on-campus sections of a graduate educational statistics course. Students were asked to complete a web-based survey at the beginning of the summer 2005 term and again at the completion of the term. In addition, personal characteristics, information regarding the student's degree program, and number of online courses completed were collected. The anxiety component of the survey consisted of three subscales from the Statistics Anxiety Rating Scale, which uses a five-point scale ranging from No Anxiety to Very Much Anxiety. The attitudinal component consisted of four subscales from the Survey of Attitudes toward Statistics, which uses a seven-point scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

One hundred thirty-eight students completed the survey at the beginning of the term. Examination of the demographic information showed no difference in the gender distribution for the on-campus and online sections (approximately 80% female). However, differences did exist between the sections with respect to ethnicity and degree program. Analysis of data collected at the beginning of summer term indicated statistically significant differences on the test and class anxiety subscale and the affective attitudinal subscale. These results indicated that students in the online sections had higher levels of anxiety towards the class and tests while also having more negative feelings toward statistics. Cohen's effect size estimates associated with these differences were .77 and .81.

Upon completion of the end of term survey, analyses were conducted to determine differences in anxiety and attitude between on-campus and online students. Results were examined concerning changes in anxiety and attitude from the beginning to the end of the term. Limitations to the current research and recommendations for future research were discussed.

Session 16.6

10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT Creole Queen

Presider: Vincent McGrath, Mississippi State University

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Arkansas' Act 603, The Parent Involvement Plan: How Are We Doing?

Shelly Albritton, Jack Klotz, and Jackie McBride, University of Central Arkansas; Marcia Lamkin, Arkansas State University; and Kim Truslow, Maumelle (AR) Middle School

This presentation shared findings from the first year of a three-year study (2004-2007) that focused on parents' perceptions to determine whether public schools in Arkansas made progress in their implementation of the parental involvement programs mandated by Arkansas Act 603 passed into law in 2003. Act 603 directed each school building in Arkansas to implement a parent involvement plan by September 1, 2003. Drawing from the diverse literature that demonstrates the many benefits of parents' active involvement in the education process of their children, a number of studies have highlighted the positive impact that family involvement bears on student success, in addition to services and events that draw parents into deeper involvement with their students' academic lives (Epstein, 1991, 1995; Bagin, Gallagher, & Kindred, 1997; Fuller & Olsen, 1998; Henderson, 1988; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Lewis, 2001; Lumsden, 1998; and Peterson, 1989).

A convenience sampling of parents was drawn from Arkansas' P-12 schools. Subjects were asked to complete an attitudinal survey consisting of 32 items that was created using similar language from Act 603 in efforts to measure her/his perceptions of the school's parental involvement program and five demographic items designed for descriptive purposes and for comparing respondents' perceptions among grouping variables.

The presenters provided participants a summary of the first-year data gathered to examine statistical analyses of differences in parents' perceptions regarding the parental involvement plan at schools between respondents' age groups, race/ethnic groups, family structures, gender, grade level groups, and school building size. Participants in this session had the opportunity to discuss the first-year findings and implications, and to share professional experiences with parent involvement. Handouts were provided.

A Qualitative Study of Rural Values and Parent Religiosity in a Rural Southern Community

Carolyn B. Tucker, Webster County (KY) Board of Education, and Stephen K. Miller, University of Louisville

Middle schools, the South, and rural areas typically do not fare well on achievement assessments. In this qualitative supplement to a larger study, the researchers examined rural values (anti-intellectualism, social conservatism/traditionalism, ethnocentricity, stewardship of earth, good old boy) and parent religiosity (belief, ritual, experience, affiliation, bond) to explore their connection to middle school parent involvement in a rural southern community. The school and the surrounding local area comprised the community under study. The researchers gleaned data from interviews (students, teacher, bus driver, custodian, and community members), documents (school reports, community newspapers, and local church publications), and detailed researcher field notes (compiled by the senior author throughout the two-year study).

Interviews with subjects from various levels of parent involvement and student achievement (e.g., high parent-high student, medium parent-low student, low parent-medium student) and other school/community members, documents, and researcher field notes were analyzed holistically and presented in narrative format. Included in the analysis are quotes from interviewees focusing on both factual information and tacit revelations, as well as anecdotes, and illustrative scenarios pulled from other sources of data. The participant-observer role of the lead researcher allowed an otherwise unattainable perspective due to insider acceptance and understanding of the ethnocentric-xenophobic culture of this rural community.

Religiosity and rural values emerged as overlapping spheres of influence. Religion reportedly gained admission into the "next" life; cultivating a marijuana crop was acceptable if financially necessary in "this" life. Social and religious conservatism data were consistent with previous findings. Specific variables indicating promise for future investigation included stewardship of earth, good old boy, anti-intellectualism, primary affiliation, and affiliation bond. A multidimensional, multifaceted, richly textured study evolved, revealing a flavorful slice of American life. Implications were discussed for educators, researchers, and policymakers in rural areas.

Parent/Family Centers in Mississippi: A Descriptive Study

Rotiffany S. Pearson-Poxes and Thelma J. Roberson, University of Southern Mississippi

The intent of this study was to describe the characteristics of parent/family centers in Mississippi by determining: (1) the characteristics of parent/family centers in the state, including the types of resources, programs,

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activities, and materials they possessed, (2) the types of funding sources used to support parent/family centers, including the revenue sources and percentage of Title I money allocated, (3) how parent/family centers assessed their programs, and (4) the general role and/or function of Mississippi parent/family center directors. Three sources were used for obtaining data in this study: (1) parent/family center directors, (2) school district federal program coordinators, and (3) the Mississippi Department of Education.

All 152 public school districts in the state of Mississippi were contacted by phone. Representatives from the school districts self-reported the existence of 146 active school building-based and/or district-based parent/family centers. All were invited to take part in the study of parent/family centers. Only 42 superintendents granted formal permission for the study to be conducted in their school districts. A total of 62 school-based and district-based centers were housed in the school districts that consented to participate. The researcher designed two data collection instruments for use in the study: (1) the Mississippi School District Federal Program Coordinator Questionnaire, used to collect data on parent/family centers from federal program coordinators, and (2) the Parent/Family Center Profile Questionnaire, used to collect data on parent/family centers from parent/family center directors. Questionnaire distribution began in September 2004.

The research findings suggested that parent/family centers in the state of Mississippi were characterized by their ability to provide resourceful and well-equipped facilities. In addition, the parent/family centers were characteristically family-oriented and communicative. The variety of activities, programs, and services offered by the centers helped to emphasize those characteristics. The proper handouts and all references related to this study were given.

Session 16.7

10:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. USING DRAWING-TOOLS IN FLASH MX 2004 TO ENHANCE COMPUTER BASED DESIGN (2-HOUR TRAINING SESSION).....Meeting Room 253

Ai-Lun Wu, University of Tennessee

This presentation was designed to help the teachers who are interested in becoming a more independent, proficient 2 D designer to work with the drawing-tools that are located in Flash MX 2004 with the Wacom Pen and Tablet. Flash MX allows teachers to develop interactive images that they can use for the classroom setting. This training session was aimed at helping the teachers who have the Wacom Pen and Tablet and want to know more about the wide range of possibilities for using them with Flash MX.

The Wacom pen and tablet provide the teacher with a comfortable and easy way to work with different types of graphic images. One of the great advantages of using the Wacom pen and tablet is that users have greater control over their images than they do with a mouse. Teachers can easily edit digital photos, draw, paint, and sketch using a wide variety of software using the Wacom pen and tablet. (The Wacom tablet is compatible with both PC and Mac.)

The objectives of this presentation were: (1) introduction of the Wacom pen and tablet, (2) explanation of the difference between bitmap and vector-based images and the advantages and disadvantages of using these formats, (3) exploration of all the drawing and painting tools in Flash MX 2004, (4) demonstration of the use of the Wacom Pen to draw shapes and lines, (5) explanation of the multiple ways to use color in drawings, and (6) discussion of current copyright law, including the teacher's use of images for educational purposes.

There were three activities in this presentation: (1) connecting the Wacom Pen and Tablet to a personal computer, (2) exploring Drawing-Tools in Flash MX, and (3) creating a simple drawing in Flash MX.

Session 17.1

11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.....Bayou

Presenter: Rose B. Jones, University of Southern Mississippi

The Pattern of Language Produced by Preschool Children at the Computer Center

Shoudong Feng, University of Central Arkansas

While the role of computers in promoting young children's social and cognitive development has long been recognized (Clements, 1994; Haugland, 1992), the effect on language development has not been well researched. Bhargava and Escobedo (1997) examined the effect of the computer on the language patterns of a group

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of preschool students in an instructional setting and found that informing and directing were the most prevalent types of language produced, each taking up about 30% of the utterances. At present, what remains unclear, however, is the language pattern in a non-instructional setting. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to describe the language pattern of preschool students at the computer center during their free choice time. This effort will add a missing piece to the complete picture of the effect of computers on child language production.

Research generally finds positive effects of computers on young children's cognitive and social development (Clements, 1994; 1997; Heft & Swaminathan, 2002). Yet, research has not addressed the effect of computer on children's language development adequately. The only existing research on this issue, Bhargava and Escobedo's (1997), examined the language produced at the computer by a group of preschool children when they were receiving instruction on a software program. The current research described the nature of the language produced in a non-instructional context.

Participants were 18 preschool children enrolled in a rural Head Start Program. Videotaped data were collected through non-participant observations. Seven clips of various lengths were analyzed. A coding scheme based on Tough's (1977) language function taxonomy was developed and used to analyze the data.

It is found that, of the four types of language functions defined by Tough, directing and informing were the most widely used. The most striking difference between the instructional and non-instructional contexts is that directing is by far the most common type of language in the latter. The results may help classroom teachers and software developers to better utilize computers to enhance children's language development.

Spontaneous Forms of Writing Used by Young Children

Karyn Wellhousen, University of South Alabama

Sulzby (1986) studied young children's attempts to make meaning through writing using non-conventional forms. Five types of spontaneous forms of writing were identified: drawing pictures, scribble-writing, letter strings, invented spelling, and conventional orthography. Later research centered on transitions in children's spontaneous forms of writing once the phonemic relationship between letters and sounds was learned and used. Results revealed children's tendency to continue using scribble-writing and letter strings after the appearance of invented spelling as a form of writing (1998, 2001). It has been suggested that children continue using various spontaneous forms at once while the use of invented spelling gradually increases among older kindergarten students (2001).

Findings have suggested that children build a repertoire of linguistic tools in their attempt to communicate through writing and gradually abandon those that no longer serve their purpose. Manning and Underbakke (2005) reviewed multiple children's writing samples over time, and their observations revealed a gradual growth from drawing pictures to conventional spelling suggesting that there is a linear pattern to children's writing development. Levels ranging from 0-5 were established for the purpose of assessing children's writing and informing parents about their child's spelling development. A description was provided for each level. These corresponded closely but not precisely to Sulzby's five spontaneous forms of writing. A review of the research on spontaneous forms of writing provided a definitive source for understanding the body of research on this topic. Relatively few studies have compared the progression of children's writing development using spontaneous forms so all relevant research identified were included. The implications of the literature review was that further studies are needed to determine precisely how and when children adopt and abandon non-phonetic forms of spontaneous writing.

Examining the Relationship Between Home Environment and Early Literacy Skills

Mary M. Merrill-Lusk and Michael Welch, Louisiana State University – Shreveport

Although reading is an integral component of daily functioning, 21-23% of adults in the United States read at the lowest literacy level. In the South, reading statistics are bleak for both adult and childhood populations. Specifically, in Louisiana, 28% of adults are unable to complete a job application because of illiteracy. Additionally, 42% of fourth-grade and 51% of eighth-grade Louisiana students read below their grade level. Despite national efforts to increase reading skills, there has been no change in reading rates within the last 10 years.

As their child's first teacher, all parents have the opportunity to build a strong literacy foundation. Research suggests that a child's home environment has an impact on the acquisition of preliteracy skills. Within these skills lie the five building blocks of basic reading, which include spoken language exposure, print awareness,

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sounds knowledge, letter knowledge, and exposure to reading aloud. Children living in enriched environments that provide developmentally enhancing opportunities (i.e., books, parental responsiveness, communication and reading aloud styles) typically become better readers than their counterparts with fewer resources. Financially and instructionally, it is more efficient to prevent reading deficits than to be forced to remediate failed readers. That is, children reap greater benefits from early intervention versus remediation of their skills following their reading failure. Therefore, focusing on the home environment is critical, as this context affects early reading skills development before entry into formal education. Prevention of reading failure requires an understanding of the home environment. To further understanding, this research in progress examined the home environment of preschool children as it relates to their reading ability. Home environment factors that were examined included exposure to spoken language, reading aloud, printed materials, as well as parental responsiveness. Parental self-reports of home environments were compared to general outcome measures for early literacy.

Session 17.2

11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. ADMINISTRATIONLevee

Presider: David LaVetter, Arkansas State University

A Profile of South Carolina Superintendents and Their Contracts

Edward P. Cox, University of South Carolina

This paper presented the results of a recent statewide study of South Carolina superintendents and their employment contracts. The results of a survey mailed to each superintendent and data from the State Department of Education were utilized to create a demographic and contractual profile. Demographic information including race, gender, educational level, and age was summarized and compared with a national profile. Contract provisions regarding salary, fringe benefits, and job protection were also reviewed and compared with a national profile of superintendents' contracts and earlier statewide studies of superintendents. All 85 superintendents were surveyed, and 62 (72%) voluntarily provided information regarding their 2003-2004 contract.

The results indicated that South Carolina has a greater proportion of female superintendents than the national average. As a group, they are also older and hold proportionally more doctoral degrees than the national average. They have less experience as a superintendent and have been in their current position less than the national average. Some trends in the superintendents' employment contracts, like longer contracts, more specific severance arrangements, and pay for performance incentives, parallel national trends. Other trends, like less use of a district automobile, may not reflect the pattern in other areas of the country. The implications for aspiring superintendents were discussed. Charts and tables were used to present the most relevant results.

Why Are Graduate Students Entering the Field of Educational Administration in this Stressful Era of Accountability?

Geoffry Haines, Thelma Roberson, and Rose M. McNeese, University of Southern Mississippi

This paper presented the findings of a recent survey of 100 students enrolled in Educational Leadership graduate degree programs at a local university in the southern United States. With so many veteran school leaders leaving the field, why are these graduate students pursuing degrees in educational administration? The idea for the study began with a survey of novice, experienced, and retired principals who reported that school accountability was the number one issue facing school leaders of the day (Styron, Roberson, & Schweinle, 2003). Stress from higher accountability standards has been cited as the reason some principals have opted out of the profession. Currently, more than one half of the 403 school districts nationwide had trouble filling their vacancies. This, coupled with the fact that 40% of the 93,200 principals in the United States are nearing retirement, indicates that the situation of administrator shortages is getting worse (Rodriguez, 1999). Research has indicated that during the last decade there was a 42% turnover in elementary school administration and a 50% turnover in the secondary schools (Norton 2003) in the United States. This trend is expected to continue in the current decade. Understanding why some educators continue to pursue the field can be important to the recruitment and the retention of future school leaders and has implications for both K-12 schools and university EDA programs.

The researcher developed the survey instrument and provided copies to attendees along with the paper,

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which included an overview of related literature, the design concept of the study, the findings, and the implications. This study laid the groundwork for the researcher's dissertation.

The Need for Substitute Teacher Training

Tina Smith, Tennessee State University

The average student in the United States spends one year of education (kindergarten through high school graduation) being taught by substitute teachers (Smith, 1998; Russo, 2001), of which there is a growing shortage (Hopkins, 2002). Dorward, Hawkins, & Smith (2000) surveyed 500 school systems nationwide on issues regarding substitute teaching. Most of these districts do not require substitute teachers to have any kind of training. Students spend a significant amount of time with substitute teachers. Many of these teachers have not been trained on teaching methods or skills. These substitutes have the desire to do a good job, but lack the training that can give them the skills and confidence to adequately perform in the classroom.

Research has suggested that training can improve substitute teachers' skills and confidence level (Goldenhersh, 2005). Ostapczuk (1994) suggested that the most important area for improving substitute teaching is providing training on topics such as discipline and classroom management.

This study examined the perceptions and opinions of administrators and classroom teachers in Middle Tennessee regarding performance and training of substitute teachers. It also explored various types of substitute teacher training currently being done by a few school systems. The teachers and administrators completed surveys regarding substitute teacher performance and training. The surveys were developed by the Substitute Teaching Institute at Utah State University. The results determine if training is needed and if so, the type of training to be done.

Session 17.3

11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. HIGHER EDUCATION.....Mississippi Queen

Presider: Paul T. Hackett, Columbus State University

Faculty Evaluations on the Internet: Construct and External Validity

A. J. Guarino, Auburn University, and Rebecca R. Robichaux, Independent Consultant

Several Internet sites provide students an opportunity to evaluate postsecondary faculty members. These sites vary greatly in type of services provided, especially course selection and teaching effectiveness.

The purpose of this investigation was to explore the psychometric properties of a popular faculty evaluation web-site's 15-item web survey and external validity. Developed by students, this survey was based on student experiences with standardized evaluation instruments. Missing from the survey, however, was important student demographic information (e.g., year in school, class size, and expected grade) that previous research has found to affect professor evaluations. With regards to construct validity, a common framework used in developing student rating instruments is Marsh's Student Evaluations of Educational Quality, which defines nine dimensions of effective instruction: (1) learning, (2) enthusiasm, (3) organization, (4) group interaction, (5) individual rapport, (6) breadth, (7) examinations, (8) assignments, and (9) work/load difficulty.

Findings of this study revealed that these nine dimensions were poorly represented in the survey. Three of the dimensions (learning value, enthusiasm, and work/load difficulty) were missing entirely. The survey also lacked external validity in that no professor had more than 10 student evaluations, and over 90% of the professors were evaluated by only one student. Additionally, there was no procedure to verify that students completing evaluations had actually taken a class from that professor. After careful review of this faculty survey and student responses, the researchers offered limited support in terms of construct and external validity. The instrument is weighted heavily toward the dimension of examinations and fails to represent other critical dimensions of college teaching. Furthermore, the nature of responses suggests a possible "halo" effect. Finally, because the respondents were from a voluntary sample, it was difficult to evaluate biases introduced in such samples, and the representativeness of such samples was weak.

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Gender as a Factor in Online Education: Is Self-Selection a Determining Factor in Enrollment and Successful Student Outcomes?

Sherri L. Restauri, Gordon Nelson, and Frank King, Jacksonville State University

The substantial growth in student enrollment in online classes within higher education may indicate that a number of important variables are influencing student course selection and subsequent enrollment and retention. Along with this increase in student enrollment as a whole across online classes in higher education, the male gender has been noted within a tremendous amount of recent research as having a decline in enrollment within higher education overall, including specifically the online mode of learning. This study investigated the variables that may potentially be influencing the decline of the male higher education student's enrollment in online classes. The creation of a Likert-scale, closed-response survey addressed the issues of: (1) interest in the online format, (2) comfort in the online teaching and learning format, (3) Internet access patterns, (4) student's perceived learning styles, and (5) learning approach. To address gender as a potential factor in the responses to these five variables, these anonymous student responses were evaluated based on gender using ANOVA.

The sample in this study included a minimum of 100 participants from a southeastern university. They were selected based on heterogeneous qualities in online courses offered during the current summer terms. This selection of diverse courses allowed for generalization to a broad spectrum of disciplines. The results of this study aided researchers in further discerning the important gender-related student enrollment variables that are currently shaping our online higher education market today.

Enhancing WebCT with Centra to Deliver Online Content in an Educational Leadership Program Leaving No Graduate Student Behind

Shelly Albritton, Jack Klotz, and Anita Johnston, University of Central Arkansas

This presentation focused on a single case study of one principal preparatory program's instructional delivery to students in a distance learning setting. To guard against leaving a graduate student behind, this program has combined the best features of two online learning systems, WebCT and Centra. According to Auyeung (2004), "Both campus-based learning and distance learning have been transformed by technology..." and effective use of online learning systems "can be used to promote dialogue between instructors and students, as well as enhance collaborative learning" (p. 120).

Utilizing WebCT capabilities, all of the program information and materials are organized and maintained, and asynchronous dialog, through the use of the WebCT email and assignment tools, promote ongoing interaction between the instructors and students. Additionally, WebCT is used to promote small student groups working collaboratively on on-going learning projects by employing WebCT team tools, email, discussion bulletin boards, and chat rooms. For synchronous class meetings, Centra provides real-time, interactive class sessions utilizing audio and video technology as opposed to relying on strictly WebCT-based text chats for these class sessions. Effective teaching and learning is dependent upon meaningful, reciprocated communication (Ferguson, 2001). As opposed to traditional text chat formats, learners are able to contribute verbally to the flow of synchronous class interactions with the use of Centra without getting lost in a barrage of text chat on a computer screen.

The presenters provided participants an overview of the combined distant learning systems used to deliver online instruction in this program. The presenters also provided a summary of this program's student perceptions regarding utilization of the two systems in terms of their effectiveness for asynchronous and synchronous instructional delivery, as well as the impact on their learning experiences during class sessions and with collaborative learning experiences with their peers.

Session 17.4

11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. CULTURE.....Delta Queen

Presenter: Rotiffany S. Pearson-Poxes, University of Southern Mississippi

"We Have Teacher Day in China, They Have Secretary Day in the United States": Exploring an Asian Chinese Professor's Experience in the United States: A Case Study

Ying Wang, Mississippi Valley State University

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The purpose of this single case study was to explore the cultural impact on an Asian Chinese professor's perspective on the United States education and social interaction with native English speakers. The study also sought explanation about why, after all of these years of living and teaching in the United States, this professor remains unchanged.

Using a single case study, the researcher interviewed an Asian Chinese professor who had taught in the United States for 19 years, twice in the fall 2002 semester at a university in the southeastern United States. The researcher observed this professor while taking his two courses in the summer 2001 and in the Spring 2002 semester. Data collection ended when saturation was reached. The data were then coded, and themes were identified through categorical aggregation (Creswell, 2005; Stake, 2000).

The influences of culture and social knowledge are complex and far beyond description. After 19 years of living in the United States, this professor still asks his American colleagues to take off their shoes before they enter his house. He still calls those who had come to this country and earned their doctorate degrees earlier than he did Dr. so and so. Culture is such a mark that is deeply branded in one's blood.

It is important for one to understand the complexity of the human experience and how a culture influences one's perspective and interaction within and outside the cultural group. The process of acculturation is longitudinal, if not endless. Furthermore, while some may be willing to immerse and assimilate into the main stream, others may choose to maintain their heritage culture. Understanding and accommodating the differences or uniqueness from both of cultural groups should be promoted and advocated.

The Educational Autobiography: A Study in Black And White

Jenetta R. Waddell, Delta State University

This qualitative study investigated the life history of educational leaders who work in the Mississippi Delta. The participants were 20 students enrolled in advanced graduate courses in curriculum studies and educational philosophy. Some were school- and district-level administrators, while others were teacher leaders in P12 and higher education. The participants were purposefully chosen by the researcher to provide insight into the lived experiences of black and white educational leaders. They responded with written narratives to this question: What people, experiences, and events influenced your choice to become an educator and continue to influence your practice as an educator? The constant comparison method of data analysis was used to identify themes and relationships across the narratives.

The study was based on the theoretical frameworks of currere, the significance of place, and Critical Race Theory. Currere focuses on a highly personal interpretation of educational experiences that emphasizes intrapersonal understanding. The significance of place studies the impact that local geography, history, and culture have on one's past, present, and future. Critical Race Theory, including Critical White Studies, interprets the lived experiences of blacks and whites, with the intent of identifying factors that either oppress or emancipate. Finally, the researcher intertwined her educational autobiography with that of the participants, adding an auto-ethnographic component to the study. As a white educator, the author centered the story on insights from the field of Critical White Studies, which investigates and seeks to end the conferred dominance and unearned privileges of whiteness.

That Should be Easy for You. . . You're Black: An "Insider's" Reflections on the Problematics of Positionality, Representation, and Researcher Responsibility in a Qualitative Research Study

Tony T. Latiker, Jackson State University

This paper examined the major ethical dilemmas and methodological challenges that were encountered as an "insider" studying students at the author's undergraduate alma mater, a private black college. By critically examining status or position as an "insider," the author was able to expose some of the internal conflicts that minority researchers are likely to face while conducting research within their own communities. Drawing on personal experiences and the selected work of established minority researchers such as Vanessa Siddle Walker and Sophia Villenas, the author discussed how to address the issues of positionality, representation, and researcher responsibility while conducting quality qualitative research. Furthermore, the author argued that a researcher can strengthen her/his study by acknowledging the effects of cultural reference and addressing the challenges and dilemmas that arise from it through proper definition of researcher stance, triangulation in methodological approach,

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and critical reflexivity.

Session 17.5

11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. ACCOUNTABILITYRiverboat

Presider: John R. Petry, University of Memphis

The Intractability of Demographic Influence: Accountability Results for Urban Middle Schools in Kentucky

Stephen K. Miller and Beverly Derington Moore, University of Louisville

This study examined accountability data in Kentucky for middle schools in a large urban district. Based on the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS), the purpose was to determine the influence of seven socio-demographic factors on CATS performance assessment results for 2002 data. Results inform the policy debate surrounding high stakes standards-based accountability. All middle schools in the district constituted the population (N = 24). Outcomes came from the norm-referenced CTBS for Reading and Mathematics, criterion-referenced Kentucky Core Content Tests (KCCT) in Reading and Mathematics, and the Norm Referenced Test (NRT) Index and Academic Index used for calculating the overall Accountability Index. Actual dependent variables at the school level included: mean CTBS NCE scores for Reading and Mathematics (6th grade), mean KCCT scale scores for Reading (seventh-grade) and for Mathematics (eighth-grade), and the NRT and Academic indices. The independent variables were the school-wide percentage of students for the following factors (mobility is different): %Females, %HiSES (not eligible for free/reduced lunch), %Blacks, Mobility Rate (measure of student transfers), %Dual-Parent Families (reside with both parents, not blended or other family structures), %gifted, and %disability (special education).

Forward stepwise multiple regressions determined the significant demographic predictors of achievement and provided R2 effect sizes. Results indicated that the combination of comprehensive reform and high stakes accountability have been unsuccessful in eliminating the influence of demographic background. The R2 (variance explained) for the six regressions ranged from .85 to .89. Effect sizes this large (out of 1.0) are almost unheard of, indicating that in this urban district, demography is almost destiny. This is devastating, given the goal of Kentucky reform to produce both excellence and equity. These results were discussed in terms of specific variables that were significant, the policy debate on accountability reform, and efforts to close the achievement gap.

A Longitudinal Study of Student Participation Rates Before and After the Implementation of a High Stakes Accountability Program

Eugene Kennedy and Christopher Guillory, Louisiana State University

Most states have implemented high-stakes school accountability models in which school performance indices change from year to year. For example, the performance of students in the 2004-05 cohort may be used to set growth expectations for the 2005-06 cohort. A criticism of these models is that schools that serve large numbers of disadvantaged students, despite the fact that these students may show considerable academic growth, are more likely to fail to meet school-level growth expectations because their students rarely achieve at the levels of their more advantaged counterparts. A related concern among policy makers is that educators may be tempted to displace or otherwise remove from their schools students that are unlikely to demonstrate high levels of performance on standardized tests used for school accountability purposes. Of particular concern are suspensions, expulsions, within-grade retention rates, dropouts, and transfer rates.

The current study is concerned with changes in suspensions, dropouts, and expulsions for elementary (K-5), middle (6-8), and high schools (9-12) in Louisiana. The focus of the study was on the trend of these data before the 1997 implementation of the high-stakes school-accountability program and following its implementation. These data were modeled as a function of student demographics (percent free lunch, percentage minority) and school instructional resources (percent certified teachers, teacher turnover rate) using a random effects Poisson regression model. Separate models were fitted for each of the following dependent variables: suspensions per 1000 students, expulsions per 1000 students, and dropouts per 1000 students. Data on these measures were captured for five years prior to implementation of the accountability model and for five years following implementation of the model. A piecewise modeling strategy was used to compare the two trends. Hedeger's MIXPREG program was used to fit the models studied in this project.

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Impact of an End-of-Course Examination on Tennessee Social Studies Teachers' Instructional Practices

Kenneth E. Vogler, University of South Carolina

The purpose of this study was to determine the manner in which an accountability examination influences instructional practices. Data were obtained from a survey instrument given to a stratified random sample of Tennessee social studies teachers who taught the same content tested on their state's End-of-Course examination. An analysis showed teachers using predominately teacher-centered practices, and those spending the most time preparing students for the examination were using the greatest percentage of lecturing, textbooks, multiple-choice questions, supplementary materials, and textbook-based assignments. Also, a relationship was found between influence factors and time spent on test preparation.

A Validation Study of the Alternative Statistical Methods of Modeling the Valued-Added Effects of Teachers

Angela R. Lee and Eugene Kennedy, Louisiana State University

A major topic of discussion in the contemporary educational literature is the utility of the value-added (VA) approach to teacher and school accountability. Proponents put forth the proposition that VA accountability models have the potential to generate estimates of teacher and school effects that are independent of the confounding influences of the socio-economic backgrounds of students and other factors external to the school environment. Others point out the considerable challenges, both technical and practical, of realizing this goal. Despite the uncertainty reflected in these debates, the number of approaches to VA accountability has proliferated, and the number of states and school systems that are adopting or exploring this approach continues to grow. A persistent question both proponents and skeptics agree with, however, is whether VA models generate performance ratings that are valid. One approach to this question is to compare the relationship of various models with agreed upon indicators of effectiveness.

The purpose of the study reported in this paper was to compare teacher performance rankings from two of the more widely recognized VA models with measures of supervisor ratings of classroom instruction. The VA model studied is based on teacher impact on the growth trajectories of elementary students on a series of vertically linked benchmark examinations, which are given each nine weeks of the school year in a large urban school district. The authors produced VA rankings of these teachers using a hierarchical linear model and the layered mixed effects model and compare these with rankings based on supervisors' evaluations using the Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching. The classroom observation and achievement data were cleaned and analyzed.

Session 17.6

11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. IMPROVING STUDENT PERFORMANCE Creole Queen

Presider: Marilyn Larmon, Southeastern Louisiana University

An Exploratory Investigation of the Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory

Mitzi Trahan and Shujie Liu, Louisiana State University

Higher education has moved from focusing on curriculum content to curriculum outcomes that emphasize critical thinking. Because of this shift, research is needed to ensure that critical thinking activities are goal directed, measurable, and result in optimal learning. Researchers and educators have proposed taxonomies that elaborate on practical behaviors and attributes of critical thinking that promote thoughtful, competent, and effective problem-solving skills (Edman, Bart, Robey, & Silverman, 2000; Ennis, 1985), but it is not known if these constructs behave as intended.

Because of the increased emphasis on pedagogies that promote critical thinking, it is important that test developers create reliable and valid measures for testing the underlying constructs of critical thinking. The purpose of this study was to investigate the psychometric properties of the California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CCTDI). This study is important because the psychometric properties of the CCTDI have not been investigated within a higher education setting in previous studies.

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The instrument was administered to an incoming freshman class at a large southern Research I institution (N=2,027). Cronbach's alpha internal consistency procedures and exploratory factor analysis, using a Principal Axis factoring extraction method, were used to statistically investigate the interrelationships between the constructs embedded in the CCTDI. A six-factor model was selected as the final solution based on the percentage of variance explained, range of loading values for all models, possible presence of specific factors, and number of cross-loadings.

The results of this study are important from several perspectives. The six factors were matched to previous research on critical thinking. Additionally, the correlational aspects of the factors in this study continue to support the theoretical dispositions of critical thinking and their link to encouraging critical thinking practices in higher education. Further support for the use of the CCTDI in evaluating the quality of educational interventions, however, has been recommended.

Pre-Teaching Service Students' Perceptions Toward School Services for Gifted

Stacy L. Bliss, Stephani Choate, Katherine Sager, and Sherry K. Bain, University of Tennessee

The purpose of this research was to examine the perceptions of the school services for children who are gifted. The authors questioned a group consisting of 285 undergraduate students in two courses, human development and educational psychology. The participants were asked to respond to a series of questions, organized into the following three categories: forms and issues related to service delivery, the need for special services, and egalitarian versus elitist views of gifted services. In this presentation, the authors examined the responses to these questions and discussed them in terms of actual practices and misguided beliefs as represented in the professional literature on giftedness. Such perceptions can have a not-so-subtle impact on the acceptability of services and should be evaluated in terms of educational imperatives. Discussion also centered on the notion of dividing the gap between those children who were served as gifted and those who were not. Finally, the authors discussed the implications of the findings for teacher education programs and the impact such perceptions might have on the provision of programs for students who are gifted.

An Extended Experimental Analysis Based on Response to Intervention

Christie J. Jones and Laura Kuhn, Mississippi State University

Intervention design often presents educators with a challenge, as individual students respond differently to various interventions. The purpose of this single subject design study was due to the widespread use of the Response to Intervention Model as a means for enhancing student performance. In this study it was utilized to enhance the performance of a second-grader, instructional in reading and frustrational in math on a first-grade level. To address reading, a home-based Repeated Reading intervention was implemented, and math skills were addressed using various mathematical interventions over time, inclusive of the Folding-in Technique, Cover-Copy-Compare, and Repeated Math Practice with Goal Setting. The implementation of Repeated Reading and Repeated Math Practice with Goal Setting were the most effective academic interventions for the second grader's success to mastery on grade level. Therefore, this model is a useful method for providing educators with simple, effective strategies to enhance student performance.