The University of Tampa
College of Social Science, Mathematics and Education

2023 UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

April 26, 2023
4 - 6 pm
Plant Hall, Fletcher Lounge

Welcome!

2023 Undergraduate Research Conference

About the Conference

The University of Tampa Undergraduate Research Conference allows students to present original, empirical research within any of the disciplines represented by the College of Social Sciences, Mathematics and Education. At the third event help in April 2008, prizes for best posters were awarded. The fifth event (April 2010) saw a wider representation of posters from across the college.

Example citation for the work presented here:

Einstein, A. & Blessing, S.B. (2023, April). Investigations into the psychology of time perception. Poster presented at the Spring 2023 CSSME Undergraduate Research Conference, Tampa, FL.

For more information about this and previous conference, including all past abstracts, please search “CSSME research” at www.ut.edu.

A Word of Thanks

2023 Undergraduate Research Conference

This conference would not be possible without the dedicated mentors and instructors who assisted our student researchers with their projects. The faculty mentors who have guided students in their projects this year include:

Stephen Blessing
Kathryn Branch
Kimberly Cummings
Meredith Elzy
Sara Festini
Yvonne Franco
Kevin Fridy
Cynthia Gangi
Leslie Jones
Benjamin Marsh
Mary Martinasek
Kathleen Moore
Sarah Orban
Binod Rimal
Michael Stasio
Ryan Welch
Erin Yuen

Presenters

Last Name	First Name	Poster #	Department	Page #
Albanese	Cordelia	1	EDU	3
Alt	Kaitlynn	46	PSY	21
Benedict	Jaley	2, 3, 35	PSY	6 and 17
Bermudez	Francesca	2 and 35	PSY	6 and 17
Blumberg	Benjamin	4	PSIS	7
Boutin	Samantha	5	PSIS	7
Brancaleone	Isabella	3	PSY	6
Brennan	Tommy	4	PSIS	7
Brewer	Kylie	6	PSY	7
Brittain	Lucas	7	PSY	8
Campbell	Ashley	8	PSIS	8
Carnevale	Rebecca	9	EDU	8
Casillas	Marianna	10	PSY	9
Chesson	Caroline	11 and 26	PSY	9 and 14
Clair	Anneliese	12	PSIS	9
Clouthier	Courtney	36	PSY	17
Connelly	Shannon	30	PSY	15
Conness	Ben	38	PSY	18
Cuttler	Sarah	6 and 10	PSY	7 and 9
Cyze	Lauren	29	PSIS	15
D’Allesandro	Angelina	2 and 35	PSY	6 and 17
Damico	Taylor	17	PSY	11
DeFalco	Kelsey	13	EDU	10
DePamphilis	Gian	14	PSY	10
DiGiovanni	Alexandra	15	EDU	10
Durham	Maya	2	PSY	6
Fabbri	Shane	40	MAT	19
Fiorenza	James	16	PSIS	11
Fioretti	Lilly	41	PSY	19
Fournier	Annette	17	PSY	11

Presenters

Last Name	First Name	Poster #	Department	Page #
Gamboian	Gigi	33	PSY	16
Gervais	Emma	18	PSIS	11
Giarratana	Sebastian	2 and 35	PSY	6 and 17
Girace	Alexa	19	EDU	12
Haight	Isabella	20	EDU	12
Hernandez	Alexandria	44	PSY	20
Hoffmeister	Stacey	11	PSY	9
Kegler	Grace	21	PSY	12
Kelly	Amanda	22	EDU	13
Kollmer	August	3	PSY	6
Kralj	Sara	23	PSIS	13
Loehr	Annie	36	PSY	17
Loraine	Olivia	24	EDU	13
Marolf	Lauren	25	PSIS	14
Martin	Makenzie	29	PSIS	15
Messercola	Lauren	26	PSY	14
Mihalik	Sydney	27	PSY	14
Milford	Patricia	2 and 35	PSY	6 and 17
Naseef	Alexis	44	PSY	20
Ninivaggi	Isabella	28	EDU	15
Norwood	Dawn	44	PSY	20
O'Leary	Liam	23	PSIS	13
Osseiran	Olivia	33	PSY	16
Overby	Sydnie	29	PSIS	15
Peacock	Tim	4	PSIS	7
Pineda	Alexia	30	PSY	15
Polete	Morgan	11	PSY	9
Prailes	Erin	31	CRM	16
Retherford	Rebecca	32	PSY	16
Reuter-Lorenz	Patricia	21	PSY	12

Presenters

Last Name	First Name	Poster #	Department	Page #
Rhea	Hannah	33	PSY	16
Rojas	Rachele	32	PSY	15
Rokes	Elizabeth	34	EDU	17
Rothe	Destin	3, 7, 35	PSY	6, 8, 17
Rudzinski	Claudia	36	PSY	17
Rutigliano	Riley	37	MAT	18
Sanders	Emma	27	PSY	14
Santer	Jenna	38	PSY	18
Schlichte	Parker	39	PSIS	18
Scrivano	Lexie	30	PSY	15
Stephens	Brooke	10	PSY	9
Stuber	Darri	37	MAT	18
Tardieu	Sebastian	40	MAT	19
Theodoropoulos	Christofer	41 and 42	PSY	19
Triano	Emma	43	EDU	20
Valderrama	Jocelyn	2 and 35	PSY	6 and 17
van Wert	Natalie	44	PSY	20
Walters	Tori	45	CRM	20
Weiland	Matthew	4	PSIS	7
Wergers	Michael	23	PSIS	13
Willett	Kelly	46	PSY	21
Wood	Lily	39	PSIS	18
Yoh	Caitlyn	47	EDU	21

Abstracts

1. Keeping Kinesthetics in Kindergarten; Supporting ELL Readers

Author: Cordelia Albanese

This presentation investigates ways a teacher candidate used strategies with her below level kindergarten student to drive instruction. Research indicates that literacy paired with movement results in significant gains for below-level readers (Callcott, Hammond, & Hill, 2014). Three strategies were implemented over a 10 week semester including CVC Fun, Alphabet Soccer, and Piping Up for Letters. Findings indicate that the student felt most engaged when using kinesthetic activities and when their mind was stimulated. As time progressed, the student became more interested in reading strategies and our weekly visits. This study is significant to me as a future teacher because it informed me of how to apply research based strategies for facilitating kinesthetic strategies in my classroom.

2. Influence of Celebrity Self-Disclosures on Mental Health Stigma and Help-Seeking

Authors: Jaley Benedict, Jocelyn Valderrama, Patricia Milford, Francesca Bermudez, Sebastian Giarratana, Angelina D'Alessandro, Maya Durham, & Erica Yuen

This study investigated how celebrity self-disclosure of mental health difficulties can decreases stigma and improve help seeking behavior. Participants (n = 343) were randomly assigned one of three groups. The first group read celebrity self-disclosures, the second group read the same self-disclosures but with made up non-celebrity names, and the third group was the control group and viewed philosophical quotes unrelated to mental health. Participants then completed self-report surveys on their attitudes and beliefs toward mental illness and help-seeking. We hypothesized that college students who read the celebrity quotes will have less stigma toward mental health and treatment and will have a greater willingness to seek help. Results from the data analysis and the implications will be discussed.

3. Country of Origin Effect on Coffee Perceptions

Authors: Jaley Benedict, Isabella Brancaleone, August Kollmer, & Destin Rothe

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of a product's Country of Origin on perceptions of coffee. Country of origin can be a factor that influences product perceptions based on stereotypes about the country. Participants (n = 64) were randomly assigned to view a coffee ad for a new coffee brand that was either made in the US or Columbia. We hypothesized that participants would perceive coffee from Columbia as having a better taste, as being more sustainably made, and would indicate a greater likelihood of purchasing compared to coffee from the US. We predicted that coffee from the US would be perceived as more ethically produced and have higher quality packaging with fewer defects than coffee made in Columbia. No difference in cost was predicted. Results and implications will be discussed.

Abstracts

4. Analyzing the Relationship Between Herder Mobility and Economic Development

Authors: Benjamin Blumberg, Tim Peacock, Matthew Weiland, & Tommy Brennan

Through researching the economic development trends and patterns associated with African herders and farmers, we seek to answer the following question: to what extent does semi-permanent or permanent settlement improve or harm the socioeconomic livelihood of African herders? Our research surveys this question through studying three distinct types of herders: those deemed "traditional," or non-settled with a herd; those deemed "semi-permanent," or semi-permanently sedentary with a herd and agriculture; and those deemed "permanent," or fully sedentary with no heard, through leveraging data from the AFR Barometer, which surveys the economic, social, and political livelihood of all African citizens. Our study seeks to analyze the implications of these variables on the socioeconomic landscape of East Africa.

5. Why Do People Leave Their Countries as Refugees?

Author: Samantha Boutin

What causes people to leave their home countries as refugees? Refugees relocate for a variety of social and economic reasons. Social implications such as threats to personal safety and fear of persecution as well as economic hardship and lack of opportunity are significant push factors driving populations elsewhere. In recent years, populations are being forced from their homes due to climate change related push factors such as famine and drought. This project highlights push factors while emphasizing climate change as a valid push factor for refugees. While global organizations recognize social and economic push factors, climate change has yet to receive the same consideration. The implication for research on climate change as a push factor is that the presence of a relationship between climate change and refugees may call to attention a new perspective surrounding global migration.

6. How Cell Phone Presence Affects Attention and Memory

Authors: Kylie Brewer & Sarah Cuttler

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence that the presence of cell phones has on attention and memory. With the overwhelming rise of technology, cognitive processes should be monitored to understand the effect it has on these processes. For example, prior research has found that cell phone presence can affect inhibition and complex attentional tasks (Schwaiger & Tahir, 2021). Participants in our study were asked to watch a video and either had their cell phones on the table or outside of the room. Participants answered questions regarding the video verbally, and then they completed a Qualtrics survey involving demographic and phone-usage information. We hypothesized that those who had higher phone usage would do more poorly on the attention video when their cell phone was on the table. Results and implications of the findings will be discussed.

7. Does distracting noise affect the Auditory Gaydar?

Authors: Lucas Brittain & Destin Rothe

The present study aims to investigate the impact of auditory noise on an individual's Auditory Gaydar. Auditory Gaydar is the instinctual ability to identify if someone is homosexual. Multiple research studies have found differences in speech patterns between homosexual and heterosexual individuals, but evidence for the responsible auditory features is inconclusive. Participants were randomly assigned to listen to sixteen male voices and indicate whether the individuals were heterosexual or homosexual, either with or without distractor noise. We hypothesized that the distractor noise would impair participants' Auditory Gaydar. Results and implications will be discussed.

8. Can Music Export Increase An Actor's Power in International Society?

Author: Ashley Campbell

Can an increase in the exportation of a nation's culture increase overall power of a country in the international order? Power is fungible, meaning power can be converted into various forms. Countries have a comparative advantage exporting their culture because it is unique to them. This lack of competition allows for greater exportation of their culture and increases their economic and overall power. I argue that nation-states that export greater amounts of music will be more powerful than nations that export smaller amounts of music. I estimated a linear regression to observe any relationship between foreign direct investment outflow levels, as an indicator of international influence, and music exports. I conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship between these variables, indicating a relationship between the exportation of music and power of international actors.

9. Promoting Letter-Sound Verbalization to Overcome Speech Difficulties

Author: Rebecca Carnevale

This study investigated how a preservice teacher drove instruction to help a below-level kindergarten student, experiencing speech difficulties, learn phonics. Literature indicates using movements while teaching reading and writing gives an advantage to primary aged children, if taught alongside explicit instruction in precursor literacy skills (Callcott et al., 2015). Multiple strategies were used for letter-sound verbalization such as the use of a ball, singing "Who let the 'r' out," and a whisper phone. Data indicates that the student developed phonic skills when they were able to hear themselves speak and took movement breaks. This research is significant since once the student was able to hear themselves speak, their speech and phonics improved; therefore, teachers need to remain aware of other indicators that can hinder the student's literacy progress.

Abstracts

10. The Influence of Packaging Color on Product Perception

Authors: Marianna Casillas, Sarah Cuttler, & Brooke Stephens

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of color on product perception and purchase intentions of peanut butter. Different colors can be paired with specific adjectives that allow consumers to perceive a product, brand, or label based on the color. For example, past research has found that the color red, along with other warmer colors, can be associated with being sweeter and green has been linked to environmentally friendly products. Participants in our study were randomly assigned to view an image of a jar of peanut butter with either a red label or a green label and completed an online Qualtrics survey regarding the peanut butter's ingredients, production, quality, and taste. We hypothesized that the green peanut butter jar would have higher ratings, among all categories except taste. Results and implications of the findings will be discussed.

11. Diving into Dolphin-Assisted Therapy

Authors: Caroline Chesson, Stacey Hoffmeister, Morgan Polete, & Meredith Elzy

In Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT), animals act as a source of comfort, distraction, companionship, and grounding for patients (Mims & Waddell, 2016; Wijker et al. 2021). Dolphins are a unique addition to AAT and share many positive qualities with traditional animals used, allowing clinicians to capitalize on the engagement between the patient and animal due to dolphin's natural charisma, intelligence, and receptiveness to human interaction (Nathanson, 1998). Dolphin-assisted therapy appears to be effective at reducing pain, depression, and anxiety among veterans with PTSD (Chesson & Elzy, 2023). The current study seeks to further explore potential reasons why dolphin-assisted therapy is effective. We coded qualitative data to examine relationships among an individual's interpersonal connectedness, positive and/or negative affectivity, and outcomes from the dolphin experience.

12. Why Pastoralists in Africa are Not Voting: A Comparison Between Voting Rates of Farmers and Herders

Author: Anneliese Clair

Pastoralists in rural Africa have a harder time registering and participating in voting than farmers, due to a voting system that does not cater to their nomadic lifestyles. The dominant research on this topic covers only a small portion of Africa, digging into factors such as poverty level to explain a lack of voter representation from rural African nomads. In using data from the AfroBarometer Data Set, I am able to dive deeper into other factors which make voting a challenge for pastoralists, such as trust in local government, election fairness, and past voting experiences. My findings indicate that pastoralists have a much harder time accessing voting booths than their peers who are sedentary farmers, due to the structure of voting centers in Africa not being able to meet the needs of nomadic herders.

13. Short Term Rewards for Struggling Readers

Author: Kelsey DeFalco

This presentation looks at how a teacher candidate used data to guide her phonics instruction with her struggling kindergarten student. Research suggests that struggling readers are often subjected to reading material that is too advanced and further impairs their learning (Allington, 2013). Multiple strategies were implemented throughout the course of a 14-week semester, including, mood gauging, phonics stars, phonics bingo, sight word matching, and short term rewards. Findings indicate that the student needed extrinsic motivation and improved reading when focused on quick activities done in under ten minutes. This study is significant to me as a future teacher because it teaches me to work with, and not against, my student's attention span.

14. The Psychological Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Subclinical Obsessive-Compulsive Traits and Biased Memory Recall

Authors: Gian M. DePamphilis, Sara B. Festini, & Michael J. Stasio

Individuals with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) or those presenting with sub-clinical levels of OCD are subgroups who may be negatively affected by the emphasis on hygiene throughout the pandemic. An increase in media representation coverage of the pandemic may have also left thoughts of contamination salient in individual's memories, creating negative memory biases towards the pandemic. Participants listened to pre-recorded narratives (positive, neutral, or negative) of a pandemic-related experience and provided an open-ended response related to their own experiences. Additionally, participants took the Dimensional Obsessive-Compulsive Scale (DOCS; Abramowitz et al., 2010). There were no significant differences found in OCD-like symptoms or memory recall between the narrative groups; however, on average, participants scored higher on the DOCS compared to past undergraduates.

15. Using Student Interests for Phonics Instruction

Author: Alexandra DiGiovanni

This study explores the different ways that a teacher candidate implemented strategies with her Kindergarten students, in compliance with her collaborating teacher, in order to help learners with their phonics skills. Research specifies that once students have a solid understanding of the sounds of speech, they are ready to learn how these sounds are connected with the letters of the alphabet (Moats, 2023). Throughout the course of ten weeks, three strategies were implemented, including, alphabet identification, word/sound bingo, and Chicka Chicka Boom Boom scavenger hunt. Findings indicate that the students felt intrinsically motivated to practice on improving and strengthening their ability to correlate sounds with letters in the alphabet. This study is notable to me as a future educator because one day I will have a student(s) that may struggle with their phonics skills.

16. Between Law and Liberty- The Impact of Police Militarization on Human Rights

Author: James Fiorenza

In the increasingly complex and risk-generating world we live in, the need for unorthodox and strategic solutions to challenging national security threats is growing. Many digital-age tragedies such as the Columbine massacre of 1999 or the World Trade Center attacks of 9/11 have only increased calls from the public and civil servants alike for a more "militarized" police force to meet these challenges with equally dangerous use of force. Yet the impact of this police militarization on human rights has not been evaluated analytically. Thus, the purpose of my research is to analyze the impact police militarization has on the respect for human rights from states that militarize their law enforcement organizations (LEOs). My analysis will cover the impact civilian LEOs such as SWAT Units have on respect for human rights.

17. Comparison of Decision Making Individually and in Groups

Authors: Annette Fournier & Taylor Damico

This study aims to examine the differences between group and individual decision-making, focusing on the speed, accuracy, and confidence of decisions. While previous research has generally shown group decision-making to be more effective, Carbone et al.'s (2019) research revealed success with individual decision-making may be under harsh conditions. The current study intends to explore the success of decision-making, in both contexts, under calm conditions. By introducing the advantages and challenges of group decision-making, we are able to see the shift in goal from decision-making to achieving consensus and the importance of shared cognition. Additionally, the study examines the cognitive capabilities and requirements utilized in group decision-making, including organizational-dependent cognition. With this information, the most effective decision-making strategies can be supported.

18. How Does State-Established Religion Affect Poverty Within the Nation

Author: Emma Gervais

World religions, while diverse in their own right, share many underlying lessons and morals their practitioners spend their lives striving to embody. These uniting principles are that of generosity and kindness. This paper sets out to determine how state-established religion affects poverty within a nation. Because of the morality taught by religions around the world as well as the social capital religious organizations foster within communities this paper argues that if a nation has a state-established religion poverty within the nation will be lower than that of a nation without an established religion. A regression model using state-established religion as an independent variable and economic growth as a dependent variable resulted in a positive and significant correlation between the two variables.

19. Developing Phonics Through Interactive Games

Author: Alexa Girace

This presentation explores how a teacher candidate implemented interactive strategies and games with her first-grade student to help him learn how to fluently read. Young readers benefit from learning through play, and teachers can introduce familiar games to help support students' literacy growth (Smith, 2022). Through the course of a 10-week semester, some strategies that were utilized include: matching card activities, video games, and picture-word identifications. Findings indicate that the student felt more intrinsically motivated and focused when engaged with game play, which reflected an improvement in their phonics, literacy, and self-monitoring. As a future teacher, this study is important to me because one day in my classroom, I may have a student who does not know how to read and I need to know how to implement strategies to help with their phonological development.

20. Phonics, Painting, Fun: Incorporating Personal Interest in Literacy Strategies

Author: Isabella "Izzy" Haight

This study evaluated how a pre-service teacher incorporated a first-grader's personal interests into instructional vocabulary strategies, alongside his first-grade teacher. Research on teaching vocabulary emphasizes that if students do not have consistent exposure to words, their vocabulary knowledge will not be moved to their long-term memory (DeHart, 2022). Throughout 10 weeks, five strategies were implemented: (1) Mad Lib, (2) If the Word Fits, (3) Action Ring Sort, (4) Semantic Mapping, and (5) Compound Word, Compound Meaning. Findings showed that the student was willing to participate in vocabulary strategies when I adapted them to consider his personal interests. As a future teacher, I learned how to reach my learner through literacy instruction that incorporates his personal interests.

21. Hand Dominance and Aging: A Potential Window on Brain Organization

Authors: Grace Kegler, Patricia A. Reuter-Lorenz, & Sara B. Festini

Several decades of research suggest that even healthy aging leads to changes in hemispheric dominance. One way to assess this possibility is through hand preference or hand dominance. In this research, we conducted a literature review that focused on articles evaluating manual motor tasks, self-reported handedness preferences, and patterns of brain activity associated with motor movement in younger (ages 18 to 30) and older adults (over the age of 60). Our analysis indicated a general decrease in hand dominance with age, moving more toward ambidexterity. However, older adults self-reported a stronger right-hand preference than younger adults. We also noted that manual asymmetries (superior with one hand over the other) in older adults depended on the task. When evaluating research on brain activity, older adults tended to rely more on both hemispheres for one-handed tasks.

Abstracts

22. Letter Blending Through Game Play; an ESE's Journey

Author: Amanda Kelly

This study shows how a preservice teacher applied kinesthetic strategies with her first-grade students, alongside her collaborating teacher. Research on early intervention tells us that working with students at a young age allows us to catch any confusion a student may have in reading and literacy, rather than letting it become a life-long struggle that they face. (Pinnell & Fountas (2009). When Readers Struggle ch 2-3.pdf.) Game play strategies were implemented through a 10 week semester, including Word Swat, Word Snake, and Pizza Rhyme. Findings indicate that the student feels intrinsically motivated when able to participate in engaging games and activities that allow them to take control of their own learning. This study is important to me as a future teacher because I will be better equipped to work with students through research based strategies.

23. Terrorism and the Farmer-Herder Conflict in West Africa

Authors: Sara Kralj, Liam O'Leary, & Michael Wergers

Our research analyzes the farmer-herder conflict in West Africa in a security sense. As a result we ask if an increase in the tensions of the conflict ultimately leads to an increase in terrorism in the areas where the conflict is most prevalent. Our main hypothesis is that an increase in conflict does lead to an increase in terrorism in the area. Additionally, we hypothesize that this could ultimately lead to an increase of trafficking and a general displacement or immigration by people affected by the conflict. The data we have and will continue collecting will be primarily focused in on the conflict as it is in Nigeria. Current data as well as recent literature tends to support our hypotheses, at least in the case of Nigeria.

24. Keeping Up with Kinesthetics

Author: Olivia Loraine

This study examines ways a teacher candidate applied strategies with her first-grade student to develop her phonics skills, and thus her ability to read. Research in phonics indicates that there are systematic and predictable relationships between letters and sounds that students use as a strategy when developing their reading (Robertson, 2000). Three strategies were implemented throughout the course of a 14-week semester, including letter-sound bingo board, sight word swatting, and sound segmenting puzzles. Findings indicate that the student felt intrinsically motivated to learn letters and their sounds when kinesthetic activities were incorporated and frequent positive encouragement occurred. This study is significant to me as a future educator because it taught me how to apply research-based strategies to facilitate phonics development and reading.

25. Does Forced Migration Increase Human Trafficking?

Author: Lauren Marolf

Does forced migration affect human trafficking? Forced migration is defined as people compelled to seek access to rights or protection outside of their home community. Human trafficking is defined as the unwilling movement of people. Currently little literature exists connecting the two variables. In addition to being connected to unemployment and war, both variables are typically illegal across the globe, making them difficult to measure. Through a linear regression model, I find that the estimate is positive and significant suggesting that as forced migration increases, human trafficking increases. The results of this study imply that with better migration policies, stronger regulation on human trafficking may follow. For future studies, other control variables may be explored.

26. Memory Matching Game: Exploring Memory Recall Across Different Age Groups

Authors: Lauren Messercola & Caroline Chesson

The purpose of conducting the study is to examine recall and memory across different age groups. 30 participants (N=30) were recruited to participate in our study; 15 were over the age of 50 with an average age of 20.8 and 15 were under the age of 30 with an average age of 63.57. Participants played two rounds of an online matching memory game online, one at a higher and lower difficulty. A direct link to an online interactive game will walk participants through the game. The cards used in gameplay show colorful icons and photos that are easily identifiable. Once matched correctly, cards disappear, and the experiment continued until all pairs were matched. Data was collected from all four trials, such as the number of moves and percent accuracy. Our analysis supports stronger memory recall for participants under the age of 50.

27. Fraudulent Website Detection

Authors: Sydney Mihalik & Emma Sanders

This study compares familiarity with technology with the ability to detect internet fraud within different age groups. The populations being studied are young adults and people over the age of 55. There are 3 parts to this study, a pre-test in which participants are asked to determine whether a website is fraudulent and their confidence. A short lesson will be presented to the participants regarding tips for identifying online fraud after. Lastly, participants will complete a post-test similar to the first using the information they have learned. Our hypothesis states that younger participants will score better on the pre-test, and both age groups will improve their ability to detect internet fraud within the post-test. We also hypothesize that participants who score higher with computer familiarity within both age groups will score higher with their ability to detect internet fraud.

Abstracts

28. The Benefits of Using Kinesthetic Activities and Games in Literacy

Author: Isabella Ninivaggi

The study examines ways a candidate teacher applied kinesthetic activities and games with her below level reading first grade student. Research shows that adding movement to reading lessons reinforces key concepts and helps fidgety students concentrate (Lyding, 2022). Several strategies were used throughout the course of a 14-week semester. The three that were the most successful with the student included the Sight Word Bingo Board, Sight Word Sprint, and Sight Word Egg Hunt. The research indicates that the student was more motivated and showed the most improvement when there was a game or kinesthetic activity involved in their learning. The study is significant to me as a future educator, because it teaches me how to use different research to implement the best kinesthetic activities and games into my future classroom.

29. How Climate Change Affects the Herder/Farmer Conflict in Africa

Authors: Sydnie Overby, Makenzie Martin, & Lauren Cyze

This paper examines the environmental impacts that have an effect on the farmer/herder conflict in Africa. We examine the climate change that impacts both farmers and herders throughout Africa. We hypothesize that climate change leads to an increase in violence between herders and farmers in Africa. We find that there is a direct correlation between climate change and conflict.

30. Phoneme Manipulation: Effects on Brand Perception

Authors: Alexia Pineda, Lexie Scrivano, & Shannon Connelly

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of phonemes in a brand name on perceptions of a fictitious energy drink. Phonemes have been found to impact perceptions of product femininity and masculinity. Previous research has shown that brand masculinity is perceived when a brand name utilizes a stop and a back vowel, whereas brand femininity is perceived when there is a fricative and a front vowel. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two fictious energy drink brand names: Saratie and Parato. An online Qualtrics survey was given to rate the pleasantness, ruggedness, purchase intentions, and perceived masculinity and femininity of the brand. We hypothesized that Saratie would be rated as more pleasant and feminine, while Parato will be rated as more masculine and rugged. Results and implications of the findings will be discussed.

31. The Benefits of Using Trauma Informed Yoga as a Healing Method For Survivors of Sexual Assault

Author: Erin Prailes

After experiencing a sexual assault or attempted assault, many survivors endure trauma and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). In many instances, survivors are referred to various forms of behavioral therapies, such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. However, many researchers have realized that trauma causes a disconnect between the mind and the body, making behavioral therapies less effective for sexual assault survivors. In recent years, professionals have turned to Trauma Informed Yoga therapy, a physical and mental practice that focuses on regaining power and control over the body and acknowledging feelings that arise in one's mind. This study explores the benefits of incorporating Trauma Informed Yoga therapies and mindfulness techniques in the healing journey of sexual assault survivors.

32. Visual Valence and Dichotic Listening Task Perception

Author: Rebecca Retherford & Rachele Rojas

The objective of the current study is to examine a link between visual stimuli with differing valence, perceived dichotic listening task emotional tone, and word memorization. In the present study, 30 participants (18-26 year-olds; 15 females, 15 males) self-reported their emotional state; participants were shown a set of three images with a researcher-selected visual valence and instructed to identify each image's emotion. Participants were administered the same dichotic listening task with differing emotional tones and were directed to recall as many words as possible and indicate the tone of the audio. We hypothesized that depending on the visual valence presented, the participant will memorize the words with the congruent tone and have a corresponding mood change.

33. Consumerism: How Does Country of Origin Influence Your Preference?

Authors: Hannah Rhea, Olivia Osseiran, & Gigi Gamboian

The current study investigates how the country-of-origin influences consumer's perception and judgment on clothing. Country-of-origin judgments arise from stereotypes concerning political, social, and economic aspects of a certain country. Previous research suggests that clothing made in China is rated based on the country's perceived value and methods of production. Participants completed an online Qualtrics survey and were randomly assigned to view an image of a tee shirt from either China or the United States. The participants then answered questions on a Likert scale regarding the shirt's perceived quality, price, trendiness, sizing and were asked if they would purchase the item. We hypothesized that the shirt from China would have lower ratings, among all five categories, than the United States. Results and implications of the findings will be discussed.

34. Implementing Student Letter Recognition with Evidence-Based Strategies

Author: Elizabeth Rokes

This study examines ways a preservice teacher applied strategies with her first-grade student to help her develop phonemic awareness skills. Research on developing phonemic awareness tells us that "letter identification is a crucial pre-skill to reading success" (Bechtolt, Blecher, Derby, McLaughlin, 2014). Three strategies were implemented throughout the course of a 14-week semester, including flashcards, letter worksheets, and sight word letter recognition games. Findings indicate that the student struggled with retention and focus when executing letter recognition strategies. This study is significant to me as an educator because it teaches me how to apply evidence-based strategies for developing students' phonemic awareness skills in my classroom.

35. College Students' Perceptions, Use, and Beliefs Regarding Delta-8 THC

Authors: Destin Rothe, Jocelyn Valderrama, Jaley Benedict, Francesca Bermudez, Patricia Milford, Angelina D'Alessandro, Sebastian Giarratana, Cynthia Gangi, Mary Martinasek, Kathleen Moore, & Erica Yuen

This exploratory research study consists of two parts: The first study examined college students' experiences with and perceptions of Delta-8 THC, including perceived benefits, drawbacks, and differences to regular marijuana. Data was collected online through Qualtrics with a mixed methods approach. The results indicated that many college students perceive Delta-8 THC as helpful for their mental and medical health. The majority of participants believed Delta-8 THC to be weaker than Delta-9 THC. Conformity was less significant in students' motives to use Delta-8 THC, while the enhancement motive was the strongest. The results of this study informed the second study investigating whether an intervention video affects college students' knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behavioral intentions regarding Delta-8 THC. Data collection for this experiment is still ongoing.

36. Consumer Perceptions of Restaurant Brand Names

Authors: Claudia Rudzinski, Annie Loehr, & Courtney Clouthier

The purpose of this study was to investigate consumer perceptions of fictitious brand names of chicken sandwich restaurants. Many consumers go about their daily lives and choose products, services, and restaurants based solely on brand name. Brand name is a crucial component in the consumer world. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two fictious restaurant brand names, either Kwikki-Chikki or The Patio Bar & Smokehouse. Participants completed a Qualtrics survey asking about perceptions of experience, service, environment, and targeted patrons. We hypothesized that consumers would perceive The Patio Bar & Smokehouse as more likely to have late night dining, live music, and a welcoming environment. We hypothesized that consumers would perceive Kwikki-Chikki as more likely to have fast service and be marketed towards children. Results and implications will be discussed.

37. Predicting Ecological Debt

Authors: Riley Rutigliano & Darri Stuber

In the modern age of consumption and intensive resource use, it is important to look introspectively at human behaviors over time. In this project, we implemented a data analytical process to indicate the degree to which natural resources are overused. Based on their ecological footprint and biocapacity with an extensive set of related defining characteristics, countries that overuse their resources are deemed ecological debtors, while those that underuse them are ecological creditors. We predicted creditor/debtor class using three classification models: logistic regression, decision trees, and random forest. Through our comparison, we deemed the logistic regression to produce higher accuracy and f1-score values than the other two models. The resultant model is advantageous to use when evaluating the future environmental footprint of all countries throughout the world.

38. Consequences of Boredom in College Students with ADHD

Authors: Jenna Santer, Ben Conness, & Sarah Orban

Are people with ADHD more bored? We expect ADHD participants to exhibit greater trait and state boredom than non-ADHD participants. Trait boredom was measured using a self-report scale. State boredom was induced experimentally by randomly having participants watch a boring or neutral video and completing the Multidimensional State Boredom Scale before and after watching the video. ADHD participants (n=17) report more trait boredom relative to controls (n=26), $t(41)=-5.97$, $p<.001$. A mixed factorial ANOVA with Group (ADHD/Control) and Video Condition (Boring/Neutral) as between subject factors, Time (Pre/Post) as the within subject factor, and state boredom as the dependent variable revealed significant main effects for Time, $F(1,39)=46.96$, $p<.001$ and Group, $F(1,39)=18.84$, $p<.001$. Specifically, ADHD participants were more bored before and after watching both videos compared to controls.

39. The Impact of Governance on Farmer-Herder Conflicts in West Africa: Analyzing Trust in Governmental Institutions Within Pastoralist and Agricultural Communities

Authors: Parker Schlichte & Lily Wood

This research attempts to test the relationship between herding and farming communities in West Africa and the relationship they have towards both formal and informal institutions of government. Prior literature blames the ongoing farmer-herder conflict on the lack of a relationship between farmers, herders, and the government. Based on this literature, we hypothesize that herders have a weaker relationship towards formal government institutions, whereas farming communities trust and rely on formal government institutions more. Herding communities would then have a stronger relationship with informal institutions of government, such as religious leaders. The data suggests that there is actually a relatively weak relationship between farming communities and formal institutions of government, and similarly, a weak relationship between herders and informal institutions of government.

Abstracts

40. Predicting Client Behavior of a Bank Using Machine Learning Models

Authors: Sebastian Tardieu & Shane Fabbri

This study aims to predict client deposit behavior using the bank dataset provided by Sergio Moro (ISCTE-IUL), Paulo Cortez (Univ. Minho), and Paulo Rita (ISCTE-IUL). We employ three classification machine learning models: Logistic Regression, Decision Tree, and Random Forest. A comparative analysis evaluates model performance based on accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score, as well as feature importance and hyperparameter tuning effects. The best performing model will be selected, offering valuable insights for financial institutions to optimize marketing strategies, improve customer retention, and drive deposit growth. By leveraging machine learning, our study assists banks in developing a data-driven approach to understanding and predicting customer behavior, leading to efficient resource allocation and enhanced profitability.

41. Mathematical Priming

Authors: Christofer Theodoropoulos & Lilly Fioretti

The purpose of this study is to test the priming effect on people solving simple math problems. In this study, college aged individuals are randomly assigned into one of two groups. Each group is tasked with filling out an online survey via Qualtrics. Among these two surveys, group one first read a passage about solving math equations using fractions while the second group read a passage about using decimals to solve math equations. After reading the different passages, each group solves the same set of 15 math problems. It is hypothesized that due to the priming effect, the group that reads the passage about fraction usage is more likely to solve for fractions during the math test in this study while the group that reads the decimal passage is more likely to solve for decimals.

42. The Influence of Big-5 Personality Traits on Google Usage

Author: Christofer Theodoropoulos

There is great variation in how efficiently people utilize Google, Bing, Siri, and other search engines to answer questions. The goal of this study is to analyze this variation through the lens of the big-5 personality model proposed originally by Goldberg & Lewis (1996). Different types of people utilize different strategies when locating information online via Google. The speed and accuracy at which people find information online is hypothesized to be influenced by their levels of each of the big-5 traits. The goal of this study is to analyze each of the big-5 traits and determine how different types of individuals use search engines. Furthermore, the speed and efficiency of Google usage will be explored in this study to understand how the big-5 traits influences IQ.

43. Vocabulary Development Through Game Play: An ELL's Journey Towards Comprehension

Author: Emma Triano

This presentation examines how a student teacher assessed a second grader to determine literacy development needs and applied evidence-based strategies to develop his vocabulary and comprehension skills simultaneously in reading. Professionals recommend developing students' vocabulary skills through playing games and claim it can lead to better comprehension skills. (Bradley, 2023). Throughout the course of 10 weeks, three strategies were implemented, including, comic strip writing, synonym and antonym online games, and "Can Do: Reading Game." Findings show that the student was motivated to learn when games, especially online games, were included in our learning activities. This study has been significant to me as a future teacher because it has taught me how to use assessment to select strategies that meet my students' needs as learners of reading.

44. Water: Does Packaging Color Matter?

Authors: Natalie van Wert, Dawn Norwood, Alexis Naseef, & Alexandria Hernandez

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effects of packaging color on perceptions of water. Research shows that consumers often presume that environmentally friendly products are more expensive. Furthermore, blue is viewed as a cool color, which increases perceptions of hydration in blue products. We conducted a study that showed participants an online picture of a water bottle with either green or blue packaging. They were then asked a series of questions regarding their opinions on the product. The questions, delivered through Qualtrics, asked what they thought about the water's hydration, price, and impact on the environment. We hypothesized that water bottles with green logo would be perceived as more sustainable and expensive than water bottles with a blue label, whereas those with blue label would be perceived as more hydrating and refreshing than those with a green label.

45. A Comparative Study on Rape-Kit Backlog Policies, Procedures and Laws

Author: Tori Walters

This research focuses on the laws, policies and procedures surrounding untested Sexual Assault Kits (SAK) in the United States. Thousands of SAKs remain untested and the policies of testing vary from state to state, with no overarching federal law. Nationwide movements have called for reform of state and federal statutes to expand victim's rights and decrease the backlog, however not all states have instituted new policies. This research uses a case study to examine the testing process of a Sexual Assault Kit and whether the process would change based on the state where the Sexual Assault Kit was collected. Finally, this paper discusses the benefits of increased SAK testing, and their implications for policy and the public. Keywords: Sexual Assault Kit (SAK), backlog, untested, reform.

Abstracts

46. How Music Influences Memory and Recall

Authors: Kelly Willett & Kaitlynn Alt

Many studies have looked at ways to improve memory and retrieval; many of these studies have looked specifically at how music and different genres of music could improve or worsen your memory. In one study researchers found music influenced higher-level cognitive processes such as memory (Johndro H., Jacobs L., Patel A., Race E., 2019) For this study we placed participants into three groups—one group that had no music, a group that listened to classical music and a group that listened to jazz music. Participants were then presented with 18 words to memorize and later asked to recall as many as they could. We hypothesized that the participants who listen to classical music would have the best recall.

47. Promoting Literacy Through Interactive Activities

Author: Caitlyn Yoh

This study examines the way a preservice teacher supported a second grade student to build his phonic skills. Research states that below level learners often feel unmotivated to read because they feel as if they are not able to (Ullah, 2013). The key to literacy skill development in below level learners is to build confidence and keep them engaged. Strategies such as kinesthetic activities, interactive games, and online computer games were utilized in this study. Findings indicate that the student felt intrinsically motivated when learning was made fun throughout games and activities. Increased retention was also found when using strategies mentioned. This study is significant to me as a future educator, because it teaches me how to apply research- based strategies to further the literacy of my students.

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