Marywood University

23rd Annual Graduate Research Forum

April 24, 2014
Welcome to the 23rd Annual Marywood University Graduate Research Forum

Faculty members and Graduate level students of Marywood University were invited to participate in the 23rd Annual Graduate Research Forum. Participation in this poster format program includes both individuals who are voluntarily presenting examples of their scholarship presentations and presentation of required class projects. This booklet contains the abstracts of participants in this year’s forum. Abstracts are organized by college and alphabetized by first author’s last name.

Marywood University continues its tradition of encouraging the development of scholarship by celebrating the research and application projects that students and faculty have worked on during the past year. Throughout their graduate studies, students have been prepared to develop and test theories by examining current practices within their respective disciplines. Since last year, we have expanded the scope of the forum to include professional contributions as well as experimental approaches to research projects. The Graduate Research Forum is an opportunity for faculty members and students to share their knowledge with both our Marywood community and the larger community.

The Research Forum is the result of close cooperation of many people throughout the University. We would like to thank members of Marywood University’s Maintenance Department, Media Services, Print Shop, and Dining Services. We also extend a special thanks to Kristie Congdon for creating a multimedia accessible program for the forum, and Rima Anescavage for assisting with communications.

We are grateful to Deans Frances Zauhar, Gregory Hunt, Mark Rodgers and Collier Parker for their continued support of this endeavor. We also thank President Anne Munley, IHM, Ph.D., Dr. Alan Levine, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dr. Maria Montoro Edward, Vice President of Research, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs who further collaborative scholarship between our faculty and graduate students.

Most importantly we thank the faculty who encourage the spark of scholarship in our students and the students themselves whose intelligence, creativity, and enthusiasm make this event possible.

Christopher Brey, Ph.D., CLAS
Bruce Wisenburn, Ph.D., RCEHD
Michelle Gonzalez, Ph.D., RCEHD
Kimiko Tanaka, Ph.D., CHHS
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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the psychosocial, financial, and demographic factors that influence homelessness in order to identify effective means of homeless prevention. Research was conducted at the Catherine McAuley House and the Commission on Economic Opportunity, two agencies that serve those who are literally homeless. Archival data were collected through review of case records. Qualitative data were collected by interview at the Catherine McAuley House during the intake phase. Results indicate that out of the one hundred case records reviewed, the majority of women in our study became homeless due to the lack of financial resources or social supports. Qualitative results will also be reported in the poster presentation. Quantitative results indicate that in order for services to be truly preventative, the reason for homelessness must be considered.
Level of Rape Myth Acceptance Among the Student Population at a Two-Year College

Jonathan Blake
Sponsored by Dr. Kimiko Tanaka
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract

The aim of this proposal was to describe the level of rape myth acceptance among the student population at a two-year college. Sixty-three students completed a self-report online survey, which used a revised version of the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance (IRMA) scale to measure the variable, and a short questionnaire to collect demographic information. Mean scores on the majority of rape myth items indicated that participants generally disagreed with rape myths. On a supplemental basis, the study considered the level of rape myth acceptance in the context of gender, and found that female participants \((n = 39)\) had a statistically significant \((p < .05)\) higher mean of their total score of all the items \((m = 85)\), which related to lower acceptance of rape myths, when compared to men \((m = 63)\). The implications of this study are to direct future programming related to sexual assault prevention at this particular institution.
The Effects of Social Support on Elderly Depression

Annalisa Bova and Tara Wild
Sponsored by Dr. Kimiko Tanaka
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to assess the depression levels in older adults and examine how one’s social support system is related to depression in the elderly. The participants included anyone attending a specific senior center in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Thirty-one available participants were surveyed using the Geriatric Depression Scale (Greenberg, 2012) and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Basol, 2008). Correlation analysis indicated that the relationship between social support and depression is significant ($r(29)=-.426$, $p<0.05$), suggesting that participants with higher perceived social support are less likely to be depressed. It was found that 10% of the participants had only a moderate amount of perceived social support and that 20% of the participants were depressed. Further research should explore ways for social support to be emphasized for older adults to combat depression. Awareness should be brought to older adults to educate them on the importance of social support in one’s life.
The Impact of Rental Housing Assistance on the Psychosocial Well-Being of Individuals and Families

Mary Browne and Christian Budney
Sponsored by Dr. Lynn Hutchings
College of Health and Human Services, Marywood University

Abstract

The purpose of the study is to examine how the psychosocial well-being of individuals is affected by receiving rental housing assistance. There has been a long history of studies on the effects of housing conditions and housing assistance on health and economic self-sufficiency specifically, and fewer studies done on the effects of housing assistance on well-being. This study aimed to focus explicitly on the psychosocial well-being of individuals receiving rental assistance. The study was conducted in three local subsidized housing complexes in Northeastern Pennsylvania. A convenience sample of eight participants was used. The researchers’ surveyed heads of household using two surveys; the Ryff Scale of Psychological Well-Being, a 54-item survey that measures well-being, as well as a survey created by the researchers that included fixed choice as well as open-ended questions. The surveys were conducted and analyzed by the researchers to augment our understanding of factors that influence psychosocial well-being among those that receive rental housing assistance. The data were analyzed using SPSS and Microsoft Word.
Teachers’ Perceptions of Bullying Identification and Intervention

Mary Calhoun and Laura Fleming
Sponsored by Dr. Lynn Hutchings
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract
Bullying can manifest in a variety of ways including physical and verbal abuse, defamation, and alienation. This study examined a sample of teachers’ perceptions of bullying behaviors and methods of intervention. Forty-two elementary, middle, and high school teachers, of 109 total teachers, responded to an online questionnaire in which they were asked to critique the instances of bullying as well as their schools’ policies on bullying behaviors. Nearly half (48.78%) of respondents rated bullying in their school as not a problem or a minor problem, while 51.22% rated bullying as somewhat of a problem or a major problem. Despite respondents’ varied ratings of the seriousness of bullying within their school, most (88.10%) felt education on bullying should be a part of the school curriculum. Additionally, many perceived training on bullying identification, prevention, intervention, and school policy, to be worthwhile. While nearly half of respondents rated the seriousness of bullying in their school as low, the results of this study indicate a need for increased education on bullying.
VO2max predictions and accuracies of the Bruce, YMCA cycle ergometer, and arm ergometer submaximal tests

Wayne Chang, Nicholas Fiolo, Lindsay Howard, PJ Ligi, Tristan Ragland, Emily Richters, Nicole Short and Emily Wargo

Sponsored by Dr. Angela Hillman
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract

Maximal oxygen uptake (VO2max) is the gold standard measurement of cardiorespiratory fitness and is defined as the maximal amount of oxygen that can be taken in and utilized during exercise. Ideally VO2max is measured during a test to exhaustion; however, maximal testing has its limitations and submaximal testing can be used when maximal testing cannot be completed. The purpose of this study was to determine the efficacy of submaximal tests including the Bruce Treadmill, YMCA bicycle ergometer test, and arm ergometer protocol, compared to a traditional treadmill maximal VO2max testing. Eight healthy students (Age: 25 ± 2 yr, Height: 174.44 ± 10.08 cm, Weight: 69.29 ± 10.55 kg) completed each of the four VO2max tests. Maximal heart rate response was the lowest in the arm ergometer (153 ± 14 bpm) and highest in the traditional VO2max test (187 ± 4 bpm). The YMCA protocol (36.77 ± 10.73 ml·kg⁻¹·min⁻¹) elicited the lowest VO2max while the traditional VO2max test elicited highest (47.19 ± 11.23 ml·kg⁻¹·min⁻¹). Pearson’s correlations revealed the traditional VO2max test to be strongly correlated with the Bruce protocol (r = .90, p = 0.01) and the YMCA protocol (r = .84, p = 0.02). Additionally, the Bruce protocol and the YMCA protocol were strongly correlated (r = .84, p = 0.01). The Bruce and YMCA protocols may be the most accurate submaximal tests for a fit, young adult population. These findings are opposite to those of Whitehead et al. (2001) and may be attributable to the higher fitness level of the participants used in this study. More studies should be performed to test if different fitness levels contribute differently to submaximal testing protocols.
Challenges of the Homeless

Stephanie Cianfriglia
Sponsored by Dr. Kimiko Tanaka
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract
This is a descriptive study on the day-to-day challenges faced by the average homeless adult in America. It seeks to describe the various issues of being homeless, including but not limited to substance abuse, mental illness, disability, and unemployment. Its methods are to use a self-administered survey, disseminated to five area agencies specializing in temporary housing of the homeless. This survey determines the percentage of persons per issue mentioned above, as well as provides information on the attitudes of the person towards their homelessness. It hopes to contribute to social work practice and/or policy the most current information on homeless adults in America across the aforementioned sub-groups and over multiple etiologies.
Abstract
The purpose of this study is to measure the effectiveness or impact Pet Assisted Therapy has among the geriatric population. Does pet facilitated therapy increase socialization among geriatric adults? We are focusing on socialization because this is an excellent way to see if pet therapy has positive effects and outcomes on the clients. Our study will be measuring the impact of pet facilitated therapy on the geriatric adults at a local Veterans Center using a small sample size of 30 participants. This study will have relevance to the social work field as it deals with the caretaking and administering of and quickly growing at risk elderly population.
The Preferred Presentation of Fruits and Vegetables in Children and the Underlying Reasons Behind the Selection

Nicole Dobson
Sponsored by Dr. Ellen K. Payne
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract
The purpose of this study was to investigate the food presentation preferences of children based on five photographic presentations of fruits and vegetables. Twenty-eight children, ages 8-12, were interviewed and shown the different food presentation options. Participants were asked to choose the presentation that they preferred and other questions to help reveal the way the selection was made. Each interview was transcribed and analyzed to determine patterns and connections within data. The most favorable food presentations were a treat bag with a multi-colored balloon pattern and a traditional white plate. Several factors influenced their preferences including: (a) color, (b) maturity, (c) familiarity, (d) concern for the environment, (e) quantity illusion, and (f) treat bag confusion. From the data, it was concluded that the gender and age of the participant determined which of these factors had an influence on the preferences of each child.
The Effects of Cardiostrong on Heart Rate Variability

Nicholas Fiolo
Sponsored by Dr. Angela Hillman
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract
The facilitation of heart rate variability (HRV) recovery after exposure to physical and environmental stressors may promote better health for an athlete and thwart the development of overtraining. Hydration practices have been found to improve HRV recovery, and coenzyme Q_{10} remains a potential, yet untested, ergogenic aid for this purpose. The purpose of this study was to assess the effects of a sports drink containing coenzyme Q_{10} on HRV recovery post-exercise. 10 trained, recreational cyclists (9 male; 43.4 ± 7.93 years; 1.76 ± 0.08 m; 75.31 ± 12.85 kg; 60.10 ± 8.61 mL·kg^{-1}·min^{-1}) completed two submaximal cycling sessions in a randomized, placebo controlled cross-over experiment. HRV was assessed in resting conditions pre-exercise and in recovery positions post-exercise. Core temperature and body mass changes were also calculated pre and post-exercise. No main effects for drink condition were found for any of the dependent variables. Time effects were found on several of the HRV indices. Proper hydration may be an important component of sympatho-vagal balance restoration; however, more research is needed to determine if sport beverages provided an additional benefit on HRV restoration.
The Self-Awareness and Self-Care of Family Members of Alcohol and Drug Addicts

Kaitlin Fleming
Sponsored by Dr. Kimiko Tanaka
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the self-awareness and self-care needs of family members of individuals with addiction problems. Little is known about family members of addicts and how they are affected. A sample of twenty-five family members completed a self-administered survey. This study was important for social work practice as it brings awareness to the needs of a vulnerable population. The two variables were positively weakly correlated. As the emotional self-awareness increased so did the level of self-care.
Stress Levels of Medical Staff at a Rural Pennsylvania Hospital

Benjamin Fournier
Sponsored by Dr. Kimiko Tanaka
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract

OBJECTIVES: The objective of this study was to investigate what the stress levels of medical employees are at a rural Pennsylvania hospital. Stress levels among professionals in hospital settings are on average higher than in most other professions (Tsai, 2013). Therefore, investigating the stress factors that can be reasonably associated with stress levels is important.

METHODS: 47 medical employees that included physicians, nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, administrative staff, and social services staff completed a 26 question survey that assess level of stress based on stress factors that was developed by Tsai (2007). The reported score per stressors was averaged to conclude a reasonably assumed stress level. RESULTS: The average staff for social services employees (3.05) was not significantly lower than that of the mean of all other medical staff (3.1).

CONCLUSIONS: Medical staff stress levels at the rural Pennsylvania hospital do not have a significant difference based upon job position.
Attitudes of Employees Working with the Developmentally Disabled

Caitlin Gable
Sponsored by Dr. Kimiko Tanaka
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract

The goal of this study was to determine what attitudes employees who work with people with developmental disabilities hold. The study population was employees from an agency that works with people with developmental disabilities. Twenty-three participants responded to an anonymous self-administered questionnaire, the Mental Retardation Attitude Inventory-Revised (MRAI-R) scale by Hampton and Xiao (2008). Descriptive statistics suggest that employees who work with the developmentally disabled hold positive attitudes toward this population. On a supplemental basis, it was explored whether or not one gender had a more positive attitude towards individuals with intellectual disabilities. An independent-samples t test was conducted comparing the mean score of female’s attitudes towards individuals with intellectual disabilities to the mean scores of male’s attitudes towards individuals with intellectual disabilities. No significant difference was found. This study suggested that employees working with the developmentally disabled hold positive attitudes towards their clients. This study is important to the field of social work because it shows that employees view their clients positively; however, this study suggests that there are still opportunities for education to occur for staff to increase their positive attitudes towards their clients.
The Effect of Age on Victim Blaming Behavior

Kristina Greider
Sponsored by Dr. Lynn Hutchings
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between age and attitude toward victims of sexual assault, specifically the prevalence of victim blaming behavior among Marywood undergraduate and graduate students. This was done by examining participant responses to questions about the behaviors of victims and aggressor, following three fictional scenarios of sexual assault. It was hypothesized that undergraduate Marywood students will exhibit more victim blaming behavior than Marywood graduate students. Results of this study will be presented.
Emotional Support Program’s Impact on School Success of Students with Emotional Disturbances

Sarah Hasselback
Sponsored by Dr. Lynn Hutchings
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract
The purpose of this study was to evaluate the impact of the Valley View Emotional Support Program on enrolled students. Children with emotional disturbances have been identified as a difficult population to treat in school settings. Many studies have been conducted to evaluate the impact of school-based support programs on students with emotional disturbances. In order to augment these findings, the researcher investigated the impact of the emotional support program on students with emotional disturbances at Valley View School District. The program consists of 34 students. This study included archival data from student records and qualitative information gathered from parent surveys completed for this study. The study explored the emotional support program students’ attendance scores, behavior scores, and grades. The research hypothesis is that there is a relationship between these three variables. Results will be presented.
Students’ Attitudes Towards Research: A Comparison Among Programs of Study

Breanna Johnstonbaugh and Megan Weber
Sponsored by Dr. Lynn Hutchings
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract

Many fields of study require research studies as part of their degree requirements. Studies have been conducted on students’ attitudes towards research in social work and how this corresponds to students’ attitudes towards research in other disciplines. Unlike programs such as psychology, which place an emphasis on research, studies show that students in the field of social work express greater reluctance towards research activities. The present study investigates whether an association exists between students’ academic disciplines and their attitudes towards conducting research studies. This study compares attitudes toward research from among majors: Social Work, Psychology and Nutrition. The study was conducted using a survey containing statements that measured a like or dislike for research activities using a Likert scale. This consisted of a series of statements inquiring about the level of agreement of respondents. Forty-eight respondents representing undergraduate and graduate level students enrolled in Psychology, Social Work, and Nutrition programs answered the self-administered online questionnaire. Findings from this study suggest a significant association between a student’s academic discipline and attitude towards research.
Factors of Burnout in Staff Working with Disabled Populations

Kelly Kryspin
Sponsored by Dr. Kimiko Tanaka
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract

This study examined the role of social service employees that work with developmentally disabled populations, whom are considered to be important in helping to create the best possible way of life for these individuals. These staff members take on a lot of arduous tasks, which has lead to an increase in the rate of burnout over the past decade. Quantitative data ($N=19$) analyzed for this study was collected from a larger study. The Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire was created by Kristensen and Borg and distributed to an agency in Northeastern Pennsylvania that serves developmentally disabled individuals (2007). The Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (2007) was used to measure the psychosocial work environment and health for employees at an agency that is considered susceptible to experiencing burnout. Through the use of an independent sample $t$-test the relationship between work place environment and its effects on employee’s personal life, one can gain a more accurate sense of burnout from participants. Due to small sample size there is a greater chance for results to be skewed in this regard, however the results provide a number of factors attributed to burnout that should be further examined for future studies regarding this particular population.
Career Awareness among the GED & ESL Students in ABLE

Tiffany Murphy
Sponsored by Dr. Kimko Tanaka
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract

OBJECTIVE: This qualitative study from the General Education Development (GED) and English-Second-Language (ESL) evaluates how well the students understand Career and Education planning taught in the Adult Basic Literacy Education program (ABLE). METHOD: Fifty participants completed a 26-question survey from the Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL (ICA) manual, by Bower & Oesch (2013), provided by the state of Pennsylvania for transition students. Students in ABLE have been taught goals, and career awareness throughout the year by instructors. This survey was created to measure the amount of information students know about setting goals, and planning for their future careers. RESULTS: The research results will show that the GED and ESL students are either aware or unaware of how to set goals for the future and are ill prepared on how to achieve them. The amount of questions left unanswered, answered, or improperly answered will implicate that the students do or do not know about the work force and what is expected of them. It will implicate that they are either ready or need more education on career planning in the ABLE program. SPSS will be used for the collection of information.
The Relationship Between HIV/AIDS, Depression, and Illicit Drug Use

Gena Panatieri and Natalie Morabito
Sponsored by Dr. Kimiko Tanaka
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract

The purpose of this research study was to explore the relationship between depression and illicit drug use among HIV positive people. This study was a secondary analysis of de-identified data collected. The sample consisted of 102 HIV positive clients. 65.3% of HIV positive clients who were depressed were more likely to use illicit drugs. This research is relevant to social work because it will help determine if HIV/AIDS agencies are properly addressing all the issues that encompass an HIV positive diagnosis and then, as needed, referring these clients to mental health agencies and drug rehabilitation centers.
Key Components of Urban Blight Programs in Pennsylvania and Recommendations for Fixing Scranton’s Blight Problem

Todd Pousley
Sponsored by Dr. Alexander Dawoody
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract

As cities throughout Pennsylvania have struggled to address urban decay, best practices for preventing and remediating blight have emerged. This study aimed to identify the most effective means of fighting blight in metropolitan settings. A purposive sample of four cities with serious blight problems—Allentown, Pittsburgh, Pittston, and Scranton—was selected for comparison. An analysis of efforts to curb the incidence of blight in these cities revealed four key themes: (a) property code enforcement; (b) pre-sale inspections; (c) rental registration; and (d) acquisition of blighted properties. These themes are discussed in the context of the City of Scranton’s blight problem, and recommendations are made to help city officials combat blight.
Cultural Competency as Perceived by Faculty and International Students at Marywood University

Wendy Quinton
Sponsored by Dr. Lynn Hutchings
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract
The number of international students enrolled in United States post-secondary institutions is steadily increasing. Since diverse students can feel either alienated or empowered by what their teachers believe, say, and do in the classroom, this indicates the need for increased cultural awareness on the part of faculty. In a recent study of nurse/patient interactions, consistencies were noted between the nurse’s favorable perception of their own cultural competencies and the patient’s favorable perception of the nurse’s competencies, an indication that the patients were receiving culturally competent care. The current study investigated whether similar results would be found when comparing the results of a cultural competence survey among Marywood faculty and international students. A convenience sample was used, and all Marywood University international students and faculty were emailed a link to 10 question surveys, one geared to faculty and the other to students. Over 50 faculty and students have responded to the survey. Analysis will be conducted using SPSS, and results will be included in the poster presentation.
The Effects of Wellspring Camps on Nutrition Knowledge and Total Body Fat

Jennifer Violi
Sponsored by Dr. Shelby Yeager, Dr. Dan Kirschenbaum, and Dr. William Gear
College of Health and Human Services

Abstract
An increased rate of youth obesity has resulted in the development of weight loss summer camp programs throughout the nation. The purpose of the study was to assess the changes in nutrition knowledge (NK) and body composition of participants at Wellspring Pennsylvania, a full-immersion weight loss camp. All participants attended the weight loss camp in Scranton, Pennsylvania and had a BMI (M=33.86, SD=±6.05) that classified them as obese. Body fat percentage (BF) and NK were assessed at baseline and at the end of the camp session(s). NK was assessed using a validated questionnaire with internal reliability (0.80) and high test-retest reliability (0.71) (Fahlman, Dake, McCaughtry, & Martin, 2008). A bioelectrical impedance analysis (BIA) scale InBody520 assessed weight, body fat mass, fat-free mass, body water balance and body mass index. The degree that participants decreased BF tended to correlate with increases in NK, r (56)= -0.24, p < 0.10. Decreased BF (r (56) = -0.328, p<0.05) and increased NK (r (57)= -0.600, p < 0.01) was positively correlated with the number of weeks the participants attended camp. The changes in weight, BF, NK, and self-efficacy from pre-camp to post-camp were significant, p = 0.0001. Full-immersion CBT summer weight loss camps are effective in improving NK and decreasing BF in children and young adults.
Forecasting Models for Maximus Inc.

Abdullah Abonomi, Hamad Alruwaiti, Fanyu Wang and Bader Alhodithi
Sponsored by Dr. Ahmed Gomaa
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Abstract

The future is uncertain; no one can predict exactly what will happen in the future. However, in today’s business, developing some potential future probabilities is essential in order to know how to deal with uncertainty. Therefore, this research is about creating multiple forecasting models for Maximus Inc, an American for-profit privatizing company that provides business process services to government health and human services agencies. The target of our project is to enable the company to estimate the number of applicants in the next 12 months. These developed forecasting models can help the company develop its strategic planning on which they can meet the potential demand, including making critical decisions such as the number of employees that the company will need based on these potential applicants.
Jefferson Township Sewer Authority New System

Abdulmohsen Binsuwaydan, Saeed Al Moghrabi, Naimah Alrasheedi
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Abstract

Jefferson Township Sewer Authority provides water, sewer (wastewater) and reclaimed water services to the Jefferson Township community in Scranton PA. One of the challenges that faces the township is the unknown number of customers who are not paying their bills for more than 15 years. In addition, many residents built units in vacant lot without informing the sewer authority. This project has a number of goals including building a database to add the names and the contact information of the customers, minimizing the maintenance costs of Jefferson Township Sewer Authority, create an online payment to expedite the process of collecting the monthly payments and provide a statistical summary to help the township officials take more informed decisions.
Where to Be a Seller: A Recommender System to Help Sellers Choose the Most Suitable Website for Their First Online Store

Eman AlGhamdi
Sponsored by Dr. Ahmed Gomaa
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Abstract

Internet shopping became easier due to highly sophisticated recommender systems that nudge the buyer into the direction of an item that might be of interest to him or her. These recommender systems vary based on their intended function where some of them help buyers and some benefit sellers. The buyer focused systems generate recommendation for items that are most likely to be purchased, whereas the seller oriented systems are designed to lead the seller to the most optimized option where buyers are most likely to buy their items. The proposed recommender system utilizes the survey method to pinpoint the website that fits the seller’s needs. The system contains carefully designed question based on the features of the websites in hand presented in a user friendly interface. The websites included in the comparison are Amazon, both the individual and professional branches, Ebay, and Etsy. This research paper, will describe the differences between the various types of recommender systems and how to get the most out of them. Also, it will demonstrate how to act like a blueprint in order to analyze the contrast between the numerous features of the aforementioned websites.
Data Analysis for Maximus

Mohammed Alawafi
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Abstract

Developing and managing health and human services is the major objective of Maximus Inc., which is working with the government and other agencies to administrate and improve their programs. The purpose of this project is to help the decision makers to choose a better insight of their data to be able to better manage their business. This research generated random data points based on the forms used by Maximus clients using Excel. The data analysis includes data distribution identification and existing relationships between variables including Bayesian probability of related variables to gain better insights on Maximus clients.
Data Analysis for African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC) II

Mohammed Alawafi and Abdullah Alshahrani
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Abstract
In order to provide educational opportunities for Catholic women in Africa, African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC) has designed different programs and trainings in Central, West, and East Africa. ASEC tries to expand its programs, with a major goal being to make them approachable. Thus, since 2006 a large data set has been collected by transferring the results from various questionnaires and surveys. Through this project we will outline the organization’s future goals and its current data, and apply multiple technology software tools help ASEC to convert this data towards an efficient, tangible goal. The after effects of such a project can be far reaching and create real life results in the way ASEC functions and ultimately helps the women they are trying to reach.
Maximus Applicants Data Analysis
Ali Alhamdan
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Abstract

Nowadays information era is where the successes come from getting useful insights from the available data. Each organization or company has a lot of data either from its past or even from the current transactions. One main issue for most organizations is analyzing the data they have. This research is to analyze applicants’ data for one of the biggest government health services provider, Maximus Inc. In this analysis, some scientific modules and tools are used such as StatTool. Also, many links between different kinds of data will be analyzed and summarized such as different links between numerical and categorical data. Furthermore, part of this project is to generate dummy data that is really like the actual data by applying simulation methods in Microsoft Excel. All the analyses are part of Excel Module that is created from Maximus's forms. Therefore, the module is helpful and can be really used for the real data from Maximus Inc. Finally, the aim of this project is to assist decision makers at Maximus Inc.
Data Analysis for Maximus Inc.
Bader Alhodithi
Sponsored by Dr. Ahmed Gomaa
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Abstract

Any organization has a huge amount of historical data in its system. Successful organizations should be able to achieve the maximum advantage of this data in order to reflect positively on the goals of the organization and its strategic plans. This project is about summarizing and analyzing the historical data of Maximus Inc., an American for-profit privatizing company that provides business process services to government health and human services agencies. The target of this project is to end up with optimal insights for the company by developing appropriate summary measures, tables, and graphs that can provide better understanding of data.
A Framework to Evaluate Skype, Google-talk, ooVoo, and Yugma as Conferencing Tools

Naimah Alrasheedi (Nana)
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Abstract

People now communicate and collaborate mainly via the Internet, it is important to have the right tool available that is dependable and works properly, and also that is easy for collaborators to use and having a lot of features and cost effect. Making video calls is now easy and not as expensive as it was before. Having video conferencing with friends, peers, colleagues or business partners became a routine in our daily activities. Many applications and services are free. For corporates and those needing heavy-duty and reliable video conferencing services, there are paid services that are way cheaper than traditional video solutions. This research creates a framework to evaluate some conferencing tools based on the end users’ needs. Attributes evaluated include the video codec used for speed evaluation, the number of participants, and the cost. The conference tools that are evaluated in this research will be Skype, Google-talk, ooVoo, and Yugma. An automatic selection tool is developed to support the proposed framework, where the user inserts their needs and a proposed conference tool is suggested.
Abstract

This research is a literature review regarding Data Security in Cloud Computing. There is a need to store data in various sections within the cloud which includes public, private and limited access. After the storing and processing of data securely, it is also important to retrieve the data equally on the security basis. In order to ensure secure delivery, the SSL certification is used in the model which is used as a source of authentication for the online world. The clients and users are dependent on the providers for security measures. That is why it is hard for the users to make sure that they got the right kind of security measure. There are a number of components and security issues to the companies who are working in the cloud environment and are also working with the sensitive data of the customers. Data privacy is considered to be one of the most critical and important factor in the provision of cloud computing services as it acts like an obstacle when providing the cloud services across the border.
Abstract

The African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC) program is working on providing opportunities for higher education for religious women who did not meet the requirements to go to college. The target of this project is to end up with detailed insights from the existing surveys including appropriate summary measures, tables, and graphs that can provide better understanding of data.
Employee Satisfaction: “My Space Website”

Ashwaq Ashkan
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Abstract

Employee satisfaction should remain the main subject for the success of any organizational objectives. Employee satisfaction involves many factors, which can be psychological, physiological, and environmental to ensure a healthy work environment. Theories relating to employee satisfaction have been highlighted in the paper and they include; hierarchy of need theory, reference group theory and Herzberg’s motivation theory. Finally, this report suggests some solutions and ideas that could help to improve the level of employees’ job satisfaction such as “My Space Website” and also includes a comparison between this website and an HR software called Cezanne and Google apps. My Space Website, Cezanne, and Google apps provide different tools that enable employees to interact with each other efficiently and effectively. In this paper we are going to know which one is effective for employees in terms of socializing.
A QuickBooks Plug-in for Non Profits

Rawan Assaf
Sponsored by Dr. Ahmed Gomaa
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Abstract

This research presents a non-profit plug-in addition to QuickBooks. QuickBooks is an accounting system that serves effectively small to mid-size originations. It also serves both profit and nonprofit organizations. The plug-in will streamline the communication between the organization and its members and donors. To achieve the required development in Quick Books, there are two essential stages of developments plan. The first stage of the development plan is to add a new center to Quick Books: "Member Center". Member center will help accountants in nonprofit organizations to track and apply members' transactions smoothly as a different aspect from customers. First, it will make the working with members' transactions easier than working with them while they are part of the existing “Customers Center”. This research is based on the assumption that Members are not necessary customers or donors. They are different. Conversely, customers are not always members at the organization. The second stage of the development plan is to connect the QuickBooks to Outlook. Quick Books to Outlook connection is simple. There is already connection done between the two systems by Intuit Co. By connecting the two systems it will be easy for the accounting department to send the needed information by Outlook to the communication department. This connection reduces time and effort for both of departments.
Trends in inspections, violation frequency, violation type and employment comparisons in Pennsylvania’s Marcellus Shale

Patrick Bayer
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College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to understand in more depth how often unconventional gas wells in Pennsylvania’s Marcellus Shale are subject to inspections, how often violations are discovered, and if there are fines levied, along with the types of violations most noted among data spanning from the beginning of 2001 and July of 2013. Also, being looked at is comparative unemployment, to see if there are trends in Pennsylvania that point to a change in unemployment since the advent of shale gas in the state in comparison to national data and neighboring New York State, which has effectively had a ban on gas development.
Generation of Rad61 Reagents used to Identify its Interaction with the Nuclear Envelope Protein Mps3 in Budding Yeast

Keri Bensley
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Abstract

Rad61 is a radiation sensitive protein found in budding yeast which counteracts the ability of reactions essential to sister chromatid cohesion. This process, mediated by the cohesion complex, is vital for chromosomes to separate with high fidelity during meiosis and mitosis. In order to research other functions and interactions of Rad61, several reagents need to be generated. The generation of a knockout Rad61 strain of yeast will be made in addition to a tagged strain of Rad61. This will be accomplished using the Longtine method which uses gene specific primers that are placed in a thermal cycler to undergo a Polymerase Chain Reaction, or PCR. From here, the amplified PCR product is purified and transformed into yeast for homologous recombination. The generation of these yeast strains will allow us to study the interactions of Rad61 with the nuclear envelope protein Mps3 and identify overlapping functions in chromosome processes.
Effects of Temperature on Enrollments at Penn Foster, Inc.

Sara Dellecave
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College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Abstract

Penn Foster is a nationally accredited Online Education company. Founded in 1890, Penn Foster has been a leader in career-focused distance and hybrid learning for over 120 years. More than 13 million people have enrolled in the College, Career School and High School to learn advanced skills, further their education and better position them for life success. This Analyze Penn Foster’s 2013 enrollment data across all programs to draw conclusions on whether the changes in temperature across different regions of the United States have notable effects on enrollment numbers.
Policing Special Offenses: The Problem and a Possible Cure

Daleta J Eroh

Sponsored by Dr. Brian Monahan
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Abstract

The history of policing seems to have always been demonstrative of both the population and the needs of the time. When we look back at the expansion of the railroad, a different kind of policing was needed. Once identified, new police agencies were developed. Today, a present need is seen with the policing of vulnerable populations. Policing of the elderly, juvenile offenders, mentally ill and the homeless, have reached a point where innovative and intense measures need to be implemented. By examining the training for police, the fear of crime, victimization and the rate of offense for these populations, this paper aims to identify the existing gaps within the system, while also showing if these needs are ignored, the end result will be problematic.
Online Medical Education System

Taghreed Faydi
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Abstract
Online education is an innovative shift in the field of learning. However, the online study today does not include the physical interaction required in more specialized fields, such as Radiology Technicians where face to face interaction with faculty members and presence in Radiology labs is required. This project proposes a hybrid educational system, where most of the classes are taken online, while a face to face interaction resides in pre-approved satellite locations close to the students’ residence. The application is a need in countries such as Saudi Arabia, where some students would like to earn an American Degree, but cannot be present in the United States. The project presents an Accounting Information system for a company that facilitates the approval process of the satellite locations, and the students’ recruitment process.
Case Study: Maximus, Inc. and Strategizing Paper-based Data Capture

Johnny Gallis, Corey Kujawski, and Kelly Shaffer
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College of Liberal Arts and Science

Abstract

Despite the technological advances of mobility and cloud technology, some methods of collecting information have not changed in thousands of years. Paper-based forms remain a widely utilized method for capturing data. The ability to capture paper-based data and seamlessly incorporate it with its electronic brethren remains a large problem for many companies regardless of industry or size companions. There is a vast amount of information acquired by companies with insufficient guidance regarding the best method to consume and digest the data. Maximus, Inc., a local firm contracted to the Federal government to process Healthcare applications and appeals, faces such a challenge with the receipt and processing of handwritten forms. This project will address the complications surrounding paper-based data capture and research potential solutions for addressing the best strategy to tackle this paradoxical problem.
Understanding the Involvement of Chromatin Associated Proteins in Chromatin Function and their Connection to Mps3

Katrina Kincel
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Abstract

In *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* the nuclear envelope protein Mps3 functions in numerous nuclear processes such as spindle pole duplication and sister chromatid cohesion. Other functions of Mps3 also include anchoring telomeres to the inner nuclear membrane and most recently identified in the repair of DNA double stranded breaks. Mps3 interacts with several chromatin associated proteins such as Ctf18, Elg1, Rad24 and Htz1. Rad24 is a checkpoint complex that regulates signal transduction cascades that are triggered by incompletely replicated or damaged chromosomes. These cascades lead to cell cycle arrest and DNA repair. Htz1 is a histone variant which is exchanged for histone H2A in the nucleosomes during times of transcriptional regulation to prevent the spread of silent heterochromatin. Recently Htz1 was identified to physically interact with Mps3 along with functioning in DNA damage repair pathways. Sister chromatid cohesion aids in the repair of damaged DNA. Therefore, we hypothesize Htz1 plays a role in sister chromatid cohesion because of the physical association with Mps3 and its role in DNA damage repair. Because Mps3 and Rad24 physically associate in addition to a physical association between Mps3 and Htz1 we also hypothesize a physical association also between Rad24 and Htz1. This interaction would support a role for a protein complex made of these proteins (Mps3, Htz1, Rad24) which functions in DNA damage repair and other chromatin related processes.
Quantitative Easing effect on Asset Allocation

Michael Kondrat
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Abstract

This research investigates the relationship between the Federal Reserve’s Monetary policy tool QE2 QE3 (Quantitative Easing) and the effect on asset allocations in several portfolios with varying risk sensitivity. Specifically this research will look closely at different types of portfolios with different levels of fixed income securities and equity holdings and the effect QE2 and QE3 had on these investments. A recommendation structure based on the user risk appetite is presented to maximize the possible profit.
Electronic Health Records In Private Physician Practices

Bashir Mahmood
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Abstract

The healthcare system in the United States is constantly undergoing changes to match the needs of the population, which is fast growing. Modern technology and information system is significantly contributing in its development. The majority of hospitals in the United States are now implementing a new system called Electronic Health Records. In particular small physician offices are quickly adopting the system. This paper analyzes the impact of adopting the system in small practices as well as identifies the advantages and disadvantages of applying this system. Furthermore, it determines the changes in the quality of healthcare after adopting the electronic health records in these practices. In addition, the paper lists some of the main barriers and obstacles that are standing in the way of the small practices to adopt this system as well as some recommendations that could help them to overcome these obstacles.
What is impacting the stock price most?

Mingxin Mao
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Abstract

Technology is changing rapidly; companies are developing diverse products to adapt in the competitive market especially in electronic market. When investors trying to analysis company’s stock price to get ready for an investment or just for understand the industry, it is hard to figure out that which product impact the stock price most from the financial report or balance sheet. The purpose of this research is to understand how different product affects the stock price and which product makes the most profit. As the world most popular phone company, Apple and Samsung will be two examples in this research.
Biochemical Adaptation of Algae to Ocean Acidification

Joshua Mecca
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Abstract
Ocean acidification is one of the serious environmental problems resulting from 33.5 billion tons of carbon dioxide produced each year from the burning of carbon based fuels. A dramatic consequence of decreasing pH is the decline of coral in large portions of the Great Barrier Reef because of its inability to defend against this change. An unknown consequence is how Ocean Acidification will impact the bottom of the food chain upon which marine organisms depend. Similar to coral, algae cannot defend against pH calling into question whether this population will collapse or adapt. The catalytic activity of the algae is governed in part by the protonation state of enzymes and thus dependent on pH. The goal of this study is to determine whether enzymes in algae have already adapted to the change in ocean pH that has occurred over the last 5 decades. To examine this point, growth rates in algae collected and preserved over the decades were compared under the more acidic conditions. It was found that under the more acidic conditions the algae, *Nannochloropsis gaditana* isolated in 1998 had an advantage in growth rate compared to algae isolated in 1952. This is consistent with the hypothesis that ocean acidification has altered the evolution of algae and that at least certain strains will still flourish in the future, although the types and diversity of algae remaining may dramatically alter the diversity of organisms depending on algae as a food source. Future studies will next examine the underlying biochemical adaptations that allow these algae to grow at these pHs.
The Recruit, the Academy, and Community Policing

Deanna Parker
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Abstract

Adequate police training has been an issue in the United States for over a century. Recently it has become an increased problem as more departments are integrating community policing. Why are so many agencies struggling to make this type of policing effective in their community? Why are so many police officers individually struggling with adapting to this model? Many departmental heads ask this same question, but continue to conduct “business as usual” and wonder why it isn’t working. This paper reviews various scholarly articles on community policing, academy training and police personalities. It discusses problems at the foundational level – the initial application process, the individual recruit, and the traditional academy training curriculum. The results from this research were found that as the styles of policing change, the type of individual that is recruited must change. The traditional academy curriculum must adapt to this new style of policing to create a more effective individual police officer and in turn, a more effective police force.
Abstract

This study focuses on social businesses, and the system of labor ministry in Saudi Arabia. The Ministry of Labor is responsible for all activities that relate to the affairs of labor such as implementation of the Labor Law and matters relating to labor disputes. The labor ministry portal (Kafeel) is used by government and business owners to process an employee’s paperwork. Nitaqat portal is an employer ranking system that is aimed to stimulate enterprises to offer jobs for Saudi people as a new benchmark. However, state governments have a major role to play in formulating rules and policies that sustain labor rights. Current policies do not support the free will of the employee to change employers. This study will specifically consider the advantages, and disadvantages of the existing systems and provides recommendations that could be implemented to avoid any inconvenience in the future to help protecting employee rights, and it should be beneficial for all of the government, labor, and businesses owners.
Investigation of Fatty Acid Metabolism in *Caenorhabditis elegans* by Krüppel-like Transcription Factors

Megan Schilling and Jessica Plisko
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**Abstract**

Mammals have the ability to store energy as fat in adipose tissue where the regulation of fat is directly related to the organism’s fitness. In humans, when fat storage is in excess, this leads to obesity which may have devastating effects that include diseases such as type-2 diabetes and heart disease. Since *Caenorhabditis elegans* has the ability to regulate fat metabolism dependent on their food availability and their homology to humans, it makes them an excellent organism to study fat biology. The nematode’s sequenced genome contains conserved genes and mechanisms, including the mechanism for fatty acid synthesis and fat metabolism as well as three Krüppel-like Transcription Factors, KLFs. KLFs regulate lipid accumulation within the intestines of the worm and are major factors in adipogenesis. *Caenorhabditis elegans* contain klf-1, klf-2, and klf-3. These genes correspond to human KLFs, *Ce-klf-1* and *Ce-klf-3* relate to human klf-1 and *Ce-klf-2* to human klf-7. The genes exhibit large deletions, *Ce-klf-3* of 1.6 kb and *Ce-klf-2* of 2.1 kb, that cause negative regulation of fat in the intestines as well as reproductive and developmental defects. Expression data of the *Ce-klf-2* gene will be obtained through qRT-PCR to determine the expression patterns of the *Ce-klf-2* versus the *Ce-klf-3* gene expression which was previously found. Also a double mutant containing both the *Ce-klf-2* and *Ce-klf-3* gene will be studied in order to observe possible synergistic effects.
Crime News as Moral Discourse:
Examining Media Coverage of the Casey Anthony Trial

Adriana Serpico
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Abstract

The American public heavily relies on news media as the primary source of information regarding crime and the criminal justice system. As a result, media messages about crime have been found to be significant forces in how we think about and respond to crime in modern society. This study explores how morality-laden rhetoric and framings are used to guide the selection and presentation of crime news. A content analysis of six weeks of the leading cable news coverage of the 2011 Casey Anthony trial reveals how moral rhetoric (e.g., “good versus evil” and “justice versus injustice”) are used to structure audience perceptions regarding the main events, characters, and criminal justice proceedings. The discussion explores how crime news positioned as part of a broader “fight for justice” influences media routines, shapes public perceptions, and guides the policy response to crime concerns.
Police Suicide

Matthew Tintle
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College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Abstract

This paper studies the history and culture of the United States Police. The purpose is to identify what factors put members of our police force at high risks of suicide and risky behavior. The focus is on the culture of police and psychologically traumatic police work experiences, the development of posttraumatic stress (PTSD) in officers, and the inordinate use of alcohol associated with this condition. The impact of these work related factors and their association with suicide ideation and attempts is studied. Prior research suggests that certain traumatic police work exposures increase the risk of high-level PTSD symptoms, which subsequently increase the risk of high alcohol use and suicide ideation. The combination of PTSD and alcohol use can lead to a large increase in the risk of suicide ideation. Some goals of this study are to pinpoint potential problems within police practice that lead to PTSD and ways that they can be handled in a more effective manner. Also, finding areas for improvement within training techniques, policies, and job routines that can make a difference in the lives of these police officers that are helping to serve and protect our country.
Implementation of Loan Risk Grading Model

Fanyu Wang
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Abstract

Growth in commercial lending has been critically significant. In banking system, commercial bank’s basic function is commercial real estate, non-real estate, corporation and residential lending. A model which has an ability to assist bankers in determining risk level would play an important role. In addition, a good model improves loan operational and lending effectiveness and efficiency. This paper outlines the suggested risk rating matrix or model for all commercial loans. It presents the setting and basic definitions common to the model specifications. It implements the risk rating model, illustrates the characteristics and the results obtained from the model using specific equations and explains how to apply it in reality.
CBS Blue Bloods Compared to Real Crime Rates

Sarah Wheeler
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Abstract
Although most people do not have direct interactions with the criminal justice system, people still have thoughts and perceptions of the system (McNeely, 1995). Murder is known to be the most common crime depicted on TV (McNeely, 1995), but to what extent is the frequency of this crime accurate? This paper seeks to compare the crime rates, victim/offender relationship and clearance in the CBS television show Blue Bloods to the actual crime rates in New York City, the location of Blue Bloods.
Exploring Zines Through
the Application of Letterpress Printmaking

Jess Meoni
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Insalaco College of Creative and Performing Arts

Abstract

Zines, short for magazine or more specifically, fanzine, are handmade publications of a limited circulation with a wide variation of alternative topics. Letterpress printing is a technique of printmaking that utilizes movable type and ink to make impressions on paper. Typically, zines are created in a cut-and-paste collage style in addition to the literature produced with a typewriter, and finally, photocopied for distribution. However, with the resurgence of letterpress printing in the last decade, this method of production has influenced a new wave of “zinesters,” redefining the hobbyist as a book artist. This research project is designed to find the relationship between zine culture and the letterpress process, uncover the forerunners of these crafts, and explicate on the value of typography and imagery within both areas.
Freedom from Expectations:
Exploring Help-Seeking and Openness to Art Therapy in Male Military Personnel

Jacqueline M. Reynolds
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Insalaco College of Creative and Performing Arts

Abstract
The following thesis research study explored how masculine gender role norms among male members of the United States Military may affect help-seeking behaviors and a willingness to pursue art therapy. Identifying a perceived weakness and surrendering to help-seeking contradicts military values, and many individuals who need psychological support are left untreated (Blocker & Miller, 2013; Golub et al., 2013). The Bem Sex Role Inventory, short form (Bem, 1974), was used to quantify an individual’s level of masculinity. The Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale, short form (Fischer & Farina, 1995), was used to determine willingness to seek behavioral healthcare. After completing a series of surveys, participants were exposed to two experimental brochures: one was designed to appeal more to men, while the other included elements men tend to dislike about behavioral healthcare. The design of the study and the experimental brochures were inspired by the research of Robertson and Fitzgerald (1992), Lorber and Garcia (2010), and Hammer and Vogel (2010). It was hypothesized that male military personnel who identified as masculine would be resistant to seeking help through traditional therapy but open to art therapy when it was presented as a task-oriented, pragmatic problem solving approach to therapy. Participants were nine male members of the U.S. Military ranging in age from 21 to 46. The results showed a wide variety of preferences among participants that could be incorporated into mental health and art therapy treatment of male veterans, and suggestions for discussing and advertising behavioral healthcare were explored. This study was limited by a small sample size and confinement to one branch of service and geographical region.
Parenting Experiences, Body Esteem, and Romantic Relationships

Marissa Barash
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Reap College of Education and Human Development

Abstract
A solid foundation of research exists that illustrates important relationships among relationships and body image. Numerous aspects of family relationships and romantic relationships have been explored in relation to body image. The objective of the current research was to build upon the existing knowledge. Body esteem, experiences of parental warmth, rejection and overprotection, and attachment in romantic relationships were explored among male and female undergraduate and graduate Marywood University students. Study hypotheses include 1) body esteem will be negatively related to rejection and overprotection and positively related to warmth parenting variables, 2) all parenting variables and body esteem will be related to attachment style, and 3) body esteem will be a strong predictor of attachment style controlling for parenting variables. Participants’ ages ranged from 18 to 70 years old. There were 25 males and 154 females. Participants were recruited via email advertisement with a link provided to Survey Monkey to complete the measures. Correlations and regression analyses were conducted. Parental warmth and rejection were both significant predictors of body esteem and body esteem was a significant predictor of both anxious and avoidant attachment styles in romantic relationships. Furthermore, results indicated that avoidant and anxious attachment styles in romantic relationships were predicted by parental warmth and rejection.
A Preliminary Study: Examining Females’ Trust in Intimate Relationships Predicted by Parental Divorce

Whitney Chappell
Sponsored by Dr. Tracie L. Pasold
Reap College of Education and Human Development

Abstract

The current study explored trust in relationships, attitudes towards marriage, and parental relationship status among 117 female undergraduate students attending Marywood University. The results indicated a significant correlation between specific aspects of intimate relationship trust and overall attitude toward marriage. No significant relationship was found between participants’ parental relationship status and participants’ trust in intimate relationships or marital attitudes. The current age of the participants with divorced parents was significantly correlated with attitudes towards marriage with those participants reporting more negative attitudes toward marriage. Participants who were married had higher levels of trust and participants who were single had more positive views of marriage. Overall, trust was found to be a significant predictor of attitudes toward marriage when considering the entire population.
The Role of Educators in the Prevention of At-Risk Students’ Incarceration

Mark Fryer
Sponsored by Dr. Michelle Gonzalez
Reap College of Education and Human Development

Abstract

The incarceration of juvenile delinquents presents many problems and burdens on today’s society. Teachers, juvenile criminal justice officials, as well as school counselors, behavioral specialists, social workers, and administrators can play a role in alleviating some of these problems through educational programs and collaboration between community agencies. However, the opinions of the experts who deal with this population to handle these problems have not been sufficiently addressed in the literature regarding the incarceration of at-risk students. My literature review and qualitative study critically explores the roles of these experts in preventing this population from incarceration and their potential lifetime of criminal behavior. The purpose of this study is to explore the ways that educators may prevent at-risk students from becoming involved in the criminal justice system and going to jail or prison. Educators refer to teachers as well as school counselors, and administrators. They can educate at a traditional school, alternative school, or correctional facility. At-risk students refer not only to those students who are at risk for school failure or dropping out of school but also for those students, who are at risk for antisocial behavior, or juvenile delinquency which may lead to arrest, adjudication, and/or placement in a residential juvenile correctional facility or jail.
Effects of Transition Services in Alternative Education

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Abstract

Compared to typical high school students, students enrolled in alternative education settings are not exposed to the same support and guidance about opportunities after graduation. Transition services which provide students with information about obtaining a job, living independently, and options about higher education are often not provided to “at risk” students. This study determined the effects of transition services delivered in an alternative education setting. The participants, who were identified as needing special education services, had graduated a year prior to this study. The participants were selected through a recruitment email. The participants were asked 10 questions via phone interview about how the services had affected their lives after graduation. The questions investigated the overall effect of transition services and specific effect in the areas of independent living, obtaining a job, and higher education. Future research on transition services should incorporate more information concerning financial aid opportunities for students pursuing higher education.
Do Interpersonal Problems Mediate the Relationship between Attachment Style and Depression?

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Abstract
Depressive symptoms are present in numerous psychological disorders and can manifest in devastating ways. Theories such as those provided by Sullivan and Lewinsohn illustrate the importance of interpersonal functioning in depression (Joiner & Coyne, 1999). Many studies have investigated the effects of adult attachment styles, or schemas of the self and others in romantic relationships, on interpersonal functioning and depression. The current research seeks to illustrate the correlation between attachment styles, interpersonal functioning, and depressive symptoms by positing that interpersonal problems mediate the relationship between attachment styles and depression. Participants were 168 undergraduate and graduate university students. Results suggest that interpersonal problems partially mediate, or explain, the relationship between attachment styles and depressive symptoms. These findings shed light on the social context of depression and suggest that interpersonal patterns may have an impact on depressive symptomatology; thus, conclusions regarding targeting interpersonal behaviors in psychotherapy may be beneficial to consider.
Brain Based Learning in the Classroom and Its Impact on Struggling Readers

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Abstract

Brain based learning strategies have emerged as a significant tool for increasing a student’s ability to comprehend and acquire new knowledge. This study examined teachers’ knowledge of and utilization of brain based learning strategies in the classroom and its impact on struggling readers in a Title I reading program. The purpose and significance of this study was to determine if brain based strategies were being used within the learning environment in a small suburban school. This study investigated teachers’ knowledge of brain based learning strategies and implementation into classroom instruction. Following the implementation of brain based learning strategies, data was compared to examine whether fluency was affected in struggling readers.
Reflected Appraisals: What You Think of Me

Christina Kane
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Abstract

This study investigates self-esteem (SE) and self-concept clarity (SCC) as predictors of reactions to evaluative feedback (Reflected Appraisals, RA). SE and SCC are positively correlated (Campbell, 1990). This study examines the link between self-conceptions and feedback. SE and SCC are predictors and RA is the criterion. Marywood students will complete SCC and SE scales and a task which entails being randomly assigned to report and rate on the RA scale a positive or negative evaluative feedback event. Hypotheses: positive correlation between SE and SCC; negative correlation between SE and RA in positive and negative conditions; and negative correlation between SCC and RA in positive and negative conditions. This research extends laboratory findings out into the ‘real world’ and may shed light on predictive roles of SE and SCC for self-concept change and identity formation.
Inquiry in the Virtual Classroom: A Teacher’s Guide to Web-Based Middle School Instruction

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Abstract

This professional contribution addresses the need to enhance a web-based middle level science curriculum through the use of inquiry. Through practice of inquiry-based science, students will be engaged in authentic science learning while developing a better appreciation for science. The concept of inquiry is examined, as well as its place in the science classroom. Different teaching practices, their effects on students, and the inquiry connection with literacy are explored, in addition to the challenges and issues associated with inquiry in the virtual classroom. A framework for inquiry-oriented instruction in the middle school level was constructed and sample lessons and an inquiry rubric are provided in an attempt to move toward an improved middle level science curriculum in a virtual environment.
It Takes a Village

Kelsey Uppling and Trina Williams
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Abstract
The present research reviews the collaborative community partnerships necessary to effectively transition young adults with autism spectrum disorder to adult life. Individual participant progress will be highlighted regarding vocational training, socialization, and independent living skills. Program development, perspectives from various stakeholders, and outcome data from participants and their parents are shared.