

Initial Forays into Psychological Science

John Brown University

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John Brown University

Volume 4, 2008

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Editor's Corner

Working on this publication, the fourth volume of *Initial Forays into Psychological Science* (IFPS), has been a learning experience for everyone involved. Since its inception, the IFPS has been used as a teaching tool for undergraduate students who are interested in research. In the past students have submitted original research and participated in the peer review process. This year the student editorial board also took responsibility for the publication process including selecting the articles for inclusion, deciding the design and layout of the journal, and formatting and publishing the final product.

This volume is also unique in that it is being published in an entirely online format for the convenience and accessibility that an online publication offers students. We hope this journal serves as a model for the Research Methods class as well as other students who are learning about the research process.

The editorial board would like to thank the student authors who submitted work and the peer review board who gave us valuable feedback on each article. We would also like to thank Dr. Richard Froman for his guidance and support through the research process. His dedication to teaching and quality undergraduate research is reflected in the quality and content of this journal.

The future of IFPS is in the hands of students who come after us. We sincerely hope that this volume serves as a springboard for new and innovative ideas for this journal and undergraduate research at John Brown University.

Katherine Grimes, Allison Kunkel, Melissa Kaupp, Editorial Board for IFPS



The members of the Peer Review Board for the fourth volume of IFPS. Pictured from left to right: Melissa Kaupp, Allison Kunkel, Katherine Grimes, Eryn Scroggin, Kenneth Boggs, and Peter Reither. Not Pictured: Carrie Seay. The editorial board is to the left.

Instructions for Contributors

Initial Forays into Psychological Science (IFPS) is a journal which solicits manuscripts from undergraduate students in psychology classes at John Brown University. Manuscripts may include research projects conducted for classes, theoretical and review papers written for classes and empirical or theoretical research conducted as part of a course of independent study while an undergraduate student at John Brown University.

1. The author must have been a student in a psychology class at John Brown University at the time the paper was written. The paper must have been read and commented on by a John Brown University Psychology Department faculty member. Submission of research to IFPS is not limited to psychology majors but it is limited to students enrolled in psychology classes at John Brown University.
2. Manuscripts can not be submitted for publication in IFPS while they are being considered for publication anywhere else.
3. Manuscripts must be formatted in accordance with the manuscript style of the latest edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual. Manuscripts must be submitted electronically as an attachment in either Microsoft Word format or Rich Text Format. Use a 12 point readable font (such as Times New Roman).
4. In the submission e-mail, provide your school e-mail address and a more permanent summer or post-graduation e-mail address, if one is available.
5. The review process will be completed during the course of the next Fall semester by the students in the Advanced Research Seminar. The members of the ARS course will act as reviewers for all of the submitted manuscripts and there will be a student editorial board appointed by faculty. The reviewers will work in groups so that students' submissions will not be reviewed by anyone in their group. The review process is likely to require the author to make some revisions over the course of the Fall semester. Revisions need to be made and re-submitted in a timely way in order to ensure full consideration for publication.
6. The IFPS will be made freely available online for use by Research Methods students in the following semester to be used for assignments in the course. It will be published on the Psychology Department website at <ftp://acadweb.jbu.edu/psychology/IFPS/IFPS.htm> in a format that can be openly accessed by employers, graduate schools, family and friends, etc.
7. E-mail submissions to Dr. Rick Froman at: **rfroman@jbu.edu**. Include the following statement in your e-mail message: "I, [your name] give permission to have the attached manuscript considered for publication in IFPS. I give permission to the journal (IFPS) to publish my work and sell it to university students at cost. I understand that I will retain the copyright and the right to submit my manuscript to any other publication I desire."

Illuminating the Tunes: Associations of Specific Music Genres with General Colors

Jonathan P. Erickson

Expressions of music and color are both valuable ways of expressing beauty. Previous research has found that when songs were linked with mood, the color selections formed a spectral circle. This study investigates the consistency of peoples' association of specific music genres with six general colors, hypothesizing that faster paced clips will be associated with the color red and slower paced ones with blue. (Odbert, H.S., Karwoski, T.F. & Eckerson, A.B. 1942). A group of John Brown University undergraduates took an online survey that gave six color choices (green, red, yellow, orange, black, and blue) to three genre types (jazz, reggae, and techno). Jazz was the only genre that had a significant clear association (blue). The results show a greater need to weed out extraneous variables in color-music associative studies.

The creative outlets of the mind, music and art, are intangible values of expressive beauty. Most people would say that both demand a development of enjoying the abstract. However, both are connected by the unexplainable emotions that contribute to peoples' moods. Music and art express what words cannot; they convey ideas and concepts that cannot be verbalized. To connect them to each other paradoxically requires an intellectual stretch.

The idea of connecting music to color is not a new one. Several distinctions in this study need to be made. This project is not researching synesthesia, a mental disorder where a stimulus causes a sensation somewhere else (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/synesthesia>). Neither is this project exploring the common denominator of mood.

Previous research builds a foundation between music and shades of color. As quoted by Colla (2001), Gage referenced Newton's categorization of colors in the spectrum with the tones of the major scales. Additionally, educational psychology research points to the fact that children's greatest window of learning to sing in tune and intuition to colors occurs at the same time (Gordon 1997, Sharp 1979 as quoted in Colla 2001).

Other research indicates a strong relationship between music and color associations. In the study done by Odbert, Karwoski, and Eckerson (1942), the subjects that ascribed a certain mood to a song linked a mood to tones of color. When the moods were put in a circle, the songs that described them formed a spectral color-circle. Likewise, another study found that pleasure is enhanced when people see colors that remind them of the image the music conjures (Polzella, D. J. & Hassen, J.L. 1997). The color associations are consistent through various age groups and cohorts and are believed to be due to sensory processing rather than social conditioning (Cutietta, R.A. & Haggerty, K.J. 1987). Cowles found that when people would associate colors with music, they would note the rhythm, tempo, and changes in volume the most (1934).

Consistent with previous research findings, I predict people will have uniform answers in linking three clips of differing music genres to a single color: slow music will be associated with

Jonathan P. Erickson, Department of Psychology, John Brown University. Correspondence concerning this study should be addressed to Jonathan P. Erickson c/o Psychology Department, John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR 72761. E-mail may be sent to EricksonJ@jbu.edu.

blue, fast music with red (Karwoski & Odbert 1934).

METHOD

Participants

The researcher collected data from a random sample of 80 John Brown undergraduate students. The sampling was created by sending emails to a random selection of students who attend John Brown University. No reward was given to the participants.

Materials

The researcher used a 3 question [survey](#) to evaluate the consistency between the selections of music clips with certain colors. The first question asked the participant's gender, a characteristic that may affect the statistical results. The other two questions, which color represented the clip the closest, used a nominal scale. The researcher used Microsoft FrontPage to create the online survey. The researcher reached the participants by emailing them, in which he gave his name. In the email, he petitioned them to take the study and described the nature of the study. The email contained a link the students could click that would lead them to the online survey which was on John Brown's website.

Procedure

The study used a chi-square analysis to investigate the consistency of participants' answers. The study is considered to be an ex facto study since the researcher did not manipulate the variables. The researcher used random sampling to obtain his sample of 80 John Brown undergraduate students. Clicking on the link in the email meant that students were agreeing to take the survey with 3 music clips. At the beginning of the survey, the students were informed on the nature of the study, their right to confidentiality and anonymity, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. Once the participants clicked the "submit" button, the instructor received the results anonymously and then gave them to the researcher in a Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet.

RESULTS

The researcher analyzed the data using a chi-square goodness-of-fit. The results were significant, $\chi^2(2, N=58) = 36.67, p < .01$. Blue was found to be the most dominant response to jazz (24 out of 58), while reggae and techno were inconclusive (see Chart 1). Among the colors, black was chosen the least overall (8 out of 174). These results partially support the hypothesis; blue was distinctly chosen for jazz although reggae, being the slowest beat, was predicted to be associated with blue.

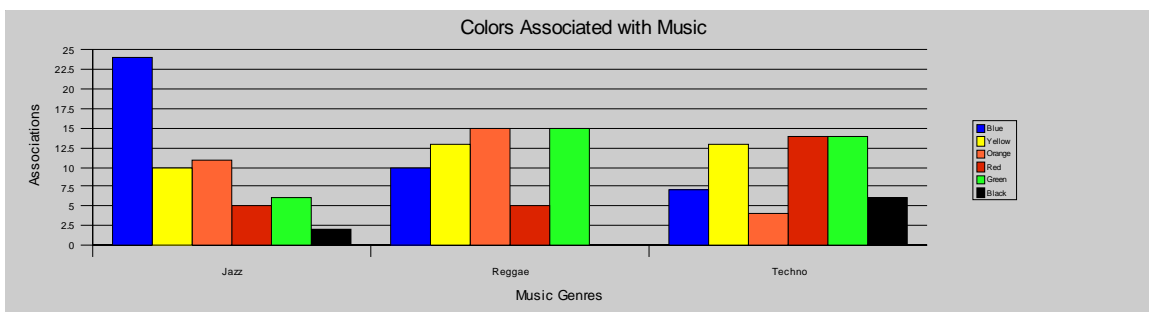


Chart 1. Total results of the color associations with jazz, reggae, and techno clips.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study did not support the part of the hypothesis that the color blue will be associated with slow music and the color red will be associated with fast music. This study did not confirm Karwoski & Odbert's results. Upon further scrutiny, Karwoski & Odbert used popular, well-known music clips, while this study attempted to use clips the general public would not be able to recognize. Indeed, Karwoski & Odbert admitted their sample's past experience with the clips could have brought on memories, which would have been an extraneous variable.

The findings did support the part of the hypothesis where one distinct color is representative of various music genres for jazz music. One possible explanation for this is a recent book which has been quite prevalent in this campus, *Blue like Jazz*, by Donald Miller. If several people in the random sample had read that book, they may have started associating jazz with the color blue. Another possible explanation is that people who do not know their music genres well may not be able to differentiate between the genre jazz and the genre blues. They may have thought that the first clip was of the blues genre and thus associated the color with the word/music genre. An extraneous variable that might have skewed the results is the circumstances the sample had experienced the different genres in throughout their lives. That is, one's culture, one's family of origin, and one's ethnicity may bias and need to be taken into consideration for future studies on such associations.

This study has implications on the painting of music halls. According to these results, it would be best to the paint the walls blue if jazz music is going to be played there frequently. Additionally, there are implications for the world of advertisement. These results would suggest that blue images would best suit jazzy music.

Possible suggestions for future research could include asking the sample if they saw a color, associated a color, or felt a color response. This would lean towards doing more research on synesthesia. Also, a greater sample would always bring higher power. Perhaps the most important thing to do in investigating associations like these are to persist at the topic; that way, a researcher could limit the colors that are most relevant to the music genre.

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Children's Perception of Discipline at the Boys' and Girls' Club

Katherine Grimes

The purpose of this study was to examine how children perceive discipline and misbehavior at the Boys and Girls Club in Siloam Springs, AR. Previous research shows that children are capable of judging the fairness of discipline and can make attributions of behavior and judge punishment accordingly. Thirty-four students ages 6-13 took a survey that was supposed to assess whether they attributed misbehavior to external or internal sources and why child felt they were given time-out. Children were also asked to give what they thought was the appropriate amount of time-out to offenders. Several Mann-Whitney U tests found no significant results. Several reasons for these results are discussed.

Anyone working with children has had to deal with the issue of discipline, specifically punishment. Over the years much debate has been occurred over the proper way to discipline children, whether it is time-out, spanking, or revoking privileges. How should discipline be administered? How much force or time should be used? At what one point is punishment too much? When is it not enough? How does the situation affect the fairness of the punishment? Adults frequently agree to disagree about the answers to these questions. In fact, everyone has their own opinion, including children.

Several studies have been done that ask children particular questions regarding discipline and punishment. Miller and McCann wondered if the consequences for the victim affected proposed punishment for the perpetrator. In a series of studies done on 2nd, 4th and 6th grades, they found if injustices had harsh consequences for the victim, then the children were more likely to give out a harsher punishment for the perpetrator (Miller & McCann, 1979). This study suggests that children can understand the difference between minor rule infractions with little consequence and major rule infractions that cause other harm and can give out punishment accordingly.

Another study found that students considered violent acts more deserving of corporal punishment; however, students felt that alternative methods, such as in-school suspension or counseling, were more appropriate form of discipline (Hills, 1998). This demonstrates that children are able to decide if the punishment fits the crime. It also demonstrates that children can and do have opinions about discipline and when it is used appropriately.

This same study found that seventy-eight percent of students said that a child would be mad at the person that spanked them (Hill, 1998). While this reaction is often typical from children who are being punished it is not desired. One way we can reduce the friction between punisher and perpetrator is by coming to an agreement as to why misbehavior occurred and what the fair punishment is. However, first we must determine what factors affect the perception of fairness with punishment.

Katherine Grimes, Department of Psychology, John Brown University. I would like to thank the Department of Psychology at John Brown University and Dr. Rick Froman for the support for this research. Correspondence concerning this article can be directed to Katherine Grimes, c/o Psychology Department, John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR 72761. Email the author at grimeskn@gmail.com.

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Perry found that children were more likely to punish them harshly if they are told that they are good children and they feel that misbehavior is internally motivated; however, this affect is diminished if the child can attribute the misbehavior to external circumstances (Perry, 1980). This study provides evidence that children's attribution of misbehavior is directly related to the harshness of punishment.

Based on this previous research, I hypothesize that children who attribute misbehavior to external circumstances will give less time-out to the perpetrator, than those who perceive the behavior to be motivated by internal characteristics. I also think it is reasonable to say children will punish violent behavior more harshly than non-violent, and that students who recognize the affects of misbehavior on other children will give more time-out to the offender than students who do not take into account the perceptions of other students.

METHOD

Participants

Informed consent forms (see Appendix A) were sent home with approximately 100 children at Boys and Girls Club in Siloam Springs, AR. All children in attendance over a four day period were given the form. The children were promised a reward for bringing the informed consent back. Thirty-four of the forms were returned which is about 30% return rate. According to the power analysis 50 students were needed to find a large effect. The students' ages ranged from 6-13 years of age with 7 females and 27 males. Each child that completed the survey received another incentive in the form of a club buck.

Materials

A self-developed survey (see Appendix B) was given to each child with the intention of measuring the child's attribution of misbehavior, the purpose of discipline, and the appropriate amount of time-out for different misbehaviors. The survey was made of multiple choice and fill in the blank questions. The participants were asked to read nine statements about a fictional situation followed by three questions each. The questions following each statement were nearly the same with very similar answer options on each question. Two of the questions were multiple choices, and one was open-ended. The order of the statements and questions was varied. There were three statements about physical violence, three about verbal abuse, and three about rule specific misbehavior.

Procedure

The survey was conducted in a small room at the Boys and Girls Club set up with two tables one along each wall. Six participants filled the survey out at a time. Talking was not allowed, but the room is joined to a large game room that was rather noisy.

The participants came in and were checked off a list to be sure that they have turned in their informed parental consent. Then they were given the survey. Once they completed the survey they were told to place it face down in a tray by the door and then they received their club buck, an incentive for participating.

RESULTS

Nine Man-Whitney U tests were done comparing the children who attribute misbehavior to external circumstances and children who attribute behavior to internal

characteristics. No significant results were found in 7 of the 9 tests concerning the amount of time-out given. The first significant result found that participants who thought a student hit another child because the student was choosing to be rebelliously disobedient gave more time-out than those who thought the student was provoked ($p=0.001$). Participants also gave more time-out to a student who pushes another student out of spite than one who was provoked ($p=0.01$). No significant result was found when comparing the amount of time-out given for violent and non-violent behavior ($p>0.05$). Finally, no significant results were found when comparing the amount of time-out given by participants who take into account the perceptions of other students and those who do not.

DISCUSSION

One hypothesis tested in this study was that children who attribute misbehavior to external circumstances would give less time-out to the perpetrator, than those who perceive the behavior to be motivated by internal characteristics. This hypothesis was not supported by the research. In 7 out of 9 cases, children gave the same amount of time-out regardless of the attribution of the misbehavior. Furthermore, the hypotheses that children will punish violent behavior more harshly, than non-violent behavior, and that students who recognize the affects of misbehavior on other children will give more time-out to the offender than students who do not take into account the perceptions of other students also were not supported by the research.

There are several possible reasons why significant results were not obtained. To find a large effect the power analysis indicated that there would need to be at least 50 participants. Since this study only had 34 students it is possible that the effect is present but not detected. In addition, it is important to note that the sample size had a wide variety in ages and was predominately male. This sample was not necessarily indicative of the entire population.

Another possible reason significant results were not obtained could be the survey did not actually measure the variables present in this study. Any future research should include intensive modification of the survey and method. Since the students took the survey with help and in a room with other students, their answer might not reflect their actual attitudes toward the subject. Many of the students seemed in a hurry to finish the survey and return to normal activities.

Finally, it is possible that there is indeed no effect in the population. However, previous research presented earlier suggests otherwise. Studies such as that of Miller and McCann (1979) and Perry (1980) have found that children do have insights into the purpose and type of appropriate discipline practices. Therefore, it is more likely that this particular study did not effectively measure the variable presented.

Even though significant results were not found, future research needs to be done in this area. Future research could include reexamining these variable as well as looking at the affects of rewards and incentives on behavior. In addition, examining age and gender differences would be appropriate. Research such as this would be very beneficial to agencies like the Boys and Girls Club who seek to teach and discipline children fairly while maintaining a fun, positive environment.

In conclusion, while the study did not yield significant results it does open the door for improved future research that would be very beneficial to children and those caring for them. By understanding how children perceive misbehavior, adults can communicate rules

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and punishment efficiently and with the least amount of stress.

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APPENDIX A

Dear Parents/Guardians,

My name is Katherine Grimes, and I am a student in the Psychology department at John Brown University. I will be conducting a research project designed to measure children's perception of rule enforcement at the Boys and Girls Club.

The survey will take place at the club during normal after school hours. The students will be asked to fill-out a survey that will take about five minutes to complete. The survey will consist of multiple choice questions regarding fictional discipline situations. No personal information except age and gender will be collected. The students' answer will be confidential and there will be no way of tracing any answers back to a particular student. Students may quit the survey process at anytime if they want; however, each student that completes the survey will earn a club buck.

If you want your child to participate in this project, please sign and return this form with your student as soon as possible. By allowing your child to participate you are helping us make the Boys and Girls Club a better place for kids.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study you may contact me by email at GrimesKN@jbu.edu. If you have questions regarding John Brown University research policy you may contact Dr. Rick Froman by email at RFroman@jbu.edu or by phone at (479) 524-7295 or Dr. David Johnson by email at IRB@jbu.edu or by phone at (479) 524-7164.

Thank you,
Katherine Grimes

My child, _____, has my permission to participate in the research project regarding discipline at the Boys and Girls Club. I have read the above letter and understand that my child needs the permission of a parent or legal guardian to participate. I understand that my child's answers will be confidential and that he or she can withdraw from the study at any time.

Parent or Legal Guardian

Date

Student signature

Date

APPENDIX B

Read each statement and answer the three questions after it. Circle or write the best answer for each question. Remember there are no wrong answers so just do your best. If you do not know a word you may ask me. When you are done put it in the tray by the door.

1. You break the rules by biting someone.

How many minutes of time-out do you think you should get? _____

Why did you bite someone?

- a. Because they pinched you first.
- b. You did not know that biting was wrong.
- c. You were mad and did not care if you got in trouble.

Why would the staff put you in time-out?

- a. The staff is always mean to you.
- b. You need to learn that biting is wrong.
- c. The staff wants to make sure you do not bite anyone else

2. Tom breaks the rules by yelling at the staff.

Why did Tom yell?

- a. Tom does not care if he gets time-out.
- b. Tom's friend yelled first.
- c. Tom did not know he was yelling.

How many minutes of time-out do you think Tom should get? _____

Why would the staff put Tom in time-out?

- a. Tom was bothering people by yelling.
- b. The staff thinks Tom is a bad kid because he yells.
- c. Tom needs to learn that yelling at people is not good.

3. June hits another child.

How many minutes of time-out do you think June should get? _____

Why did June hit someone?

- a. She did not mean to.
- b. She was angry and wanted to hurt them.
- c. Someone else hit June first.

Why would the staff give June time out?

- a. The staff does not like June.

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- b. June needs to learn that hitting is wrong.
- c. June is hurting other people.

4. Kim breaks the rules by calling a little girl stupid.

Why would the staff give Kim time-out?

- a. Kim is hurting other people's feelings.
- b. The staff is in a bad mood.
- c. Kim needs to learn that calling people names is mean.

How many minutes of time-out do you think Kim should get? _____

Why did Kim call the little girl stupid?

- a. Kim likes getting in trouble.
- b. Someone called Kim a mean name first.
- c. It was an accident.

5. You break the rules by running in the club.

How many minutes of time-out do you think you should get? _____

Why did you run?

- a. You did not know that running was wrong.
- b. You wanted to run even if you knew it was wrong.
- c. Someone else was chasing you.

Why would the staff give you time-out?

- a. You need to learn that if you run you will get in trouble.
- b. You might run into someone.
- c. The staff was bothered by your running.

6. Jim breaks the rules by throwing a pencil across the room.

Why did Jim throw the pencil?

- a. He did not mean to.
- b. Jim does not like the rules.
- c. Someone threw it at him first.

Why would the staff give Jim time-out?

- a. Jim could hurt someone else.
- b. The staff was mad at Jim.
- c. Jim needs to learn that throwing pencils is dangerous.

How many minutes of time-out do you think Jim should get? _____

7. Sally breaks the rules by talking when she should be quiet.

Why does she keep talking?

- a. She does not care if she gets in trouble
- b. Other people keep talking to her first
- c. She does not know the rule.

How many minutes of time-out do you think Sally should get? _____

Why would the staff give her time-out?

- a. Sally needs to learn to be quiet
- b. Sally keeps bothering other people with her talking
- c. The staff is always mean to Sally

8. You break the rules by making fun of someone else.

How many minutes of time-out do you think you should get? _____

Why would the staff give you time-out?

- a. You were hurting the other person's feelings.
- b. The staff thinks you are a bad kid.
- c. You need to learn that making fun of others is mean.

Why were you making fun of someone else?

- a. You think this rules are wrong.
- b. The other person was calling you names.
- c. You were not trying to be mean.

9. Jake breaks the rules by pushing someone out of line.

How many minutes of time-out do you think Jake should get? _____

Why did Jake push someone out of line?

- a. It was an accident.
- b. Jake was mad and did not care if he got in trouble.
- c. Jake was pushed by someone else.

Why would the staff give Jake time-out?

- a. The staff is mean.
- b. Jake needs to learn that pushing is wrong.
- c. Jake was bothering other people.

Great Job! You finished. Now tell me:

How old are you? _____

Are you a girl or a boy? _____

Stress and Academics: How Demanding Majors Increase Student Stress

Allison Kunkel

This study compared the stress levels of students attempting to receive a Bachelor of Science Degree to a Bachelor of Arts Degree. A random sample of twenty-seven undergraduate students completed a survey, which assessed stress related to their major. The researcher expected those who were attempting a Bachelor of Science degree to have a much higher stress level than those attempting a Bachelor of Arts degree. Participants completed a 17-item questionnaire designed to measure participants' stress level. The stress level of Bachelor of Science students was then compared to Bachelor of Arts students. A t-test showed that results were not significant, therefore the hypothesis was not supported. The results might be due to an unrepresentative sample, as the return rate for the survey administered was very small.

Stress has been a main ingredient in the college lifestyle for some time now. Students entering college have to deal with new friendships, money woes, and being away from their parents. Academics have been shown to play a central role in a student's stress.

There are several studies that point to this. A study by Sax found that there is a recently discovered, troubling trend in college student health; the reported increase in student stress nationwide (1997). Stressors affecting students can be categorized as "academic, financial, time or health related, and self-imposed" (Goodman, 1993; LeRoy, 1988). One of the greatest academic stressors is the student's perception of the extensive knowledge base required and the opinion of an inadequate time to develop it (Carveth, Gesse, & Moss, 1996). Most students experience academic stress at predictable times each semester. Typically, the greatest sources of academic stress occur when taking or studying for exams, pressure for good grades from self and others, and the large amount of content to master in a small amount of time (Abouserie, 1994; Archer & Lamnin, 1985; Britton & Tesser, 1991; Kohn & Frazer, 1986).

Why are the causes of and increase of stress such a big deal? One reason is that stress can have a significant on how healthy students are. A study by Bonica and Daniel round that the way in which an individual copes with stress relates to mental and physical well-being. If a student expects to succeed in the college academic environment, they must be able to successfully cope with stress (2003). Another similar study related to health and stress by Macgeorge, Samter, and Gillihan found that academic stress is associated with a variety of negative health outcomes, including depression and physical illness (2005).

But how much impact does the major a student chooses have on their stress amount throughout their college years? Although there is not much specific research about what majors cause the most stress, research pointing to academics causing significant stress in college affirms the fact that larger workloads, longer hours, and difficult subject matter causes the most stress in students

The diverse majors at JBU differ in how sizeable their course-load is and the amount of

Allison Kunkel, Department of Psychology, John Brown University. I would like to thank the Department of Psychology at John Brown University for the support for this research. I am grateful to Dr. Froman for his guidance and statistical advice. Correspondence concerning this article can be directed to Allison Kunkel, c/o Psychology Department, John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR 72761. Email the author at kunkela@jbu.edu.

homework they receive. For example, most education majors at JBU have to take at least 18 hours per semester to finish in 4 years whereas a psychology major usually has to take only the standard 15. Pre-medication majors receive a significantly larger amount of homework weekly than a Family and Human Service Major. Biology and Pre-Medication students have also often complained of tests being considerably more difficult in their majors than in their minors, which are sometimes the less demanding fields of study. Since past studies have found that course-load and the amount of time given to learn material affects student stress, it can be deduced that different majors will have different amounts of stress depending on these factors.

Consistent with previous research on academics, the researcher expects to find a correlation between majors and differing amounts of stress, specifically, that students attempting to obtain a Bachelor of Science degree will have more stress than those attempting to obtain a Bachelor of Arts Degree will.

METHOD

Participants

The researcher collected data from 150 undergraduate students at John Brown University, a small Christian liberal arts college in the South. The 27 participants comprise all those students who decided to take part in the study. The participants did not receive any inducement for being in the study.

Materials

The study utilized a single 17-question online [survey](#) to assess stress related to major based off the Perceived Stress Scale developed by Cohen and Mermeistein (as cited in Calderon et al. 2001) The first 14 questions evaluated perceived stress through a 5-point Likert scale. Participants rated how accurately the statement reflected them from “never” to “very often”. The survey also contained ratio questions where the participant listed classes from their last semester as well as their corresponding grades and an interval question where student’s ranked activities based on stress level. Participants offered their class standing, course load, and major in the last three questions. To construct the online survey, the researcher used Microsoft FrontPage 2003, a computer program

Procedure

The present study used a correlation approach comparing the relationship between two variables (stress and major). Then, the researcher used a t-test to find if there was a difference between stress levels. Because the researcher did not manipulate the variables themselves, the study is considered an ex post facto study. To recruit participants, the researcher contacted 150 undergraduates by email through a random sample of students at John Brown University. The participants “agreed” to the study by clicking on a link to the online survey and proceeding to take the 17-question survey and submit the results. At the beginning of the survey, the researcher informed the participants about the nature of the research, the anonymity of their results, and their right to withdrawal from the study at any point. When the participants clicked the “submit” button on the survey, the results were transferred to the instructor anonymously.

RESULTS

The researcher analyzed the data using a two-sample t-test assuming equal variances, and no significant result was found, $t(25) = -1.6$, $p = .06$. This result does not support the hypothesis that a student obtaining a Bachelor of Science degree will have more stress than a student obtaining a

Stress and Academics

Bachelor of Arts degree will. The mean scores of the two groups were close with the mean stress level for a Bachelor of Science being ($M=40.5$, $s=20.4$) and the mean stress score for a Bachelor of Arts being ($M=43.2$, $s=17.4$).

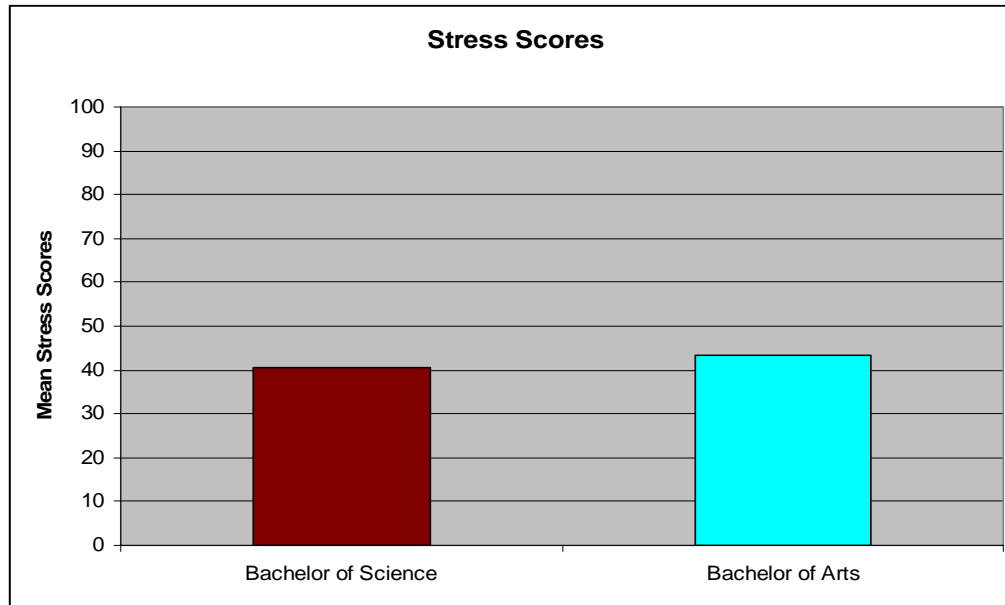


Figure 1. A chart of average stress scores of Bachelor of Science students and Bachelor of Arts students.

DISCUSSION

The hypothesis that students working to obtain a Bachelor of Science degree will have more stress than those working to obtain a Bachelor of Arts degree was not supported by this research. There are several possible reasons why these results garnered this conclusion.

It is possible that the stated hypothesis is not true and that the type of degree a person is working to obtain does not affect their stress level. However, other limitations should be considered before ruling out the validity of the hypothesis.

For example, the study is limited because of the small sample size that was obtained. Of the results, only 27 participants could be used, which is not a very large size for a significant t-test. A noticeably significant limitation is that the study was performed at a small, Christian university. Thus, the results are descriptive of the John Brown University population, but may not be descriptive of other populations. Also, there may be other factors that play a role in stress other than the type of degree a person is striving to obtain. Factors such as personality type or coping mechanisms may have affected a person's level of stress. Finally, both Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts each have difficult and easy majors within their overall umbrella so the results are much more balanced than originally thought.

The survey was also limited by the specific time of the year that it was administered. Students received the survey towards the end of the year when they are very busy. If the survey had been administered at a different time, perhaps there would have been more replies, therefore creating a more significant result.

A notable observation from the results showed that students with higher grades returned the survey. Therefore, the stress results are not as varied as originally thought. It is also worth noting that the means were very close together.

Future studies should encompass more specifics about the major. The survey should take into account specific majors, not just Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science. The survey should also be administered at several times throughout the semester to gauge the different levels of stress at different times. This supports previous research conducted by Abouserie (1994), Archer & Lamnin (1985), Britton & Tesser (1991), and Kohn & Frazer (1986), which says that student's stress levels vary at different time in the year. Perhaps a student attempting a Bachelor of Science degree would have more stress at an earlier time in the year and vice versa.

In conclusion, although the results of this study were inconclusive, this study greatly contributes to the advancement of research in this highly uncharted aspect of stress research. It raises questions about the effects of various majors on student's lives and well being. Future studies in this area could contribute to information about student's health habits and call for a reworking of the system in order to make college majors equivalent in their workloads attempt to understand, predict and support the success of this country's future?

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Correlation between the Incorporation of Faith from Parent to Child and Child's Continued Faith

Jill S. Williams

The following article is aimed at those who care about the spiritual development of children. Parents are known to have a lasting and significant impact on their children's lives in many ways. Previous research offers conflicting results on the lasting impact parents have in their children's faith, some of which will be discussed in this paper. In this study, surveys were administered to a large, random sample of undergraduate students to collect results addressing this topic. A strong positive correlation between parental incorporation of faith and child's continued faith leads way to discussion on a parent's role as spiritual guide and, according to the research, effective ways to be such.

Children are among the most easily influenced people on earth. However, once children reach their teen years they can be among the most independent and headstrong people on earth. Do the influences parents have on their children stick with them or will children stray from their parents' direction once they can form their own opinions? Are parents even making an attempt to guide their children- especially in the way of religious beliefs and practices? America is a do-what-is-right-for-you culture which has caused many American parents to apply this approach in molding their children's spiritual beliefs and worldview. They simply don't, in order to let the child form their own beliefs. So what is the correlation between the incorporation of beliefs of parents in their children's lives and the continued strength of belief in the children?

When it comes to parenting, David C. Dollahite concludes that because each child is different and there are so many situational factors, personal and spiritually rooted parenting is most influential (1998). It is also notable that some studies suggest that not only do parents affect their children's beliefs but that children affect their parent's spirituality also (Pinquart & Silbereisen, 2004). This is the concept behind the intergenerational programs churches are finding to be effective. An important statistic for parents to know is what A Study of Generations found, reporting that "religious factors were far more influential in shaping a person's life than psychological and sociological factors" (Strommen & Hardel, 2000). Parents, then, should be aware of how they present their faith (if they present it at all). Research shows that when parents frequently talk about their faith with their children, the children's personal faith commitment and church involvement as adults usually more than doubled what those whose parents do not often express their faith exhibit (Strommen and Hardel, 2000).

This is why it is hypothesized that when parents take an active and personal role in integrating their faith with their children there will be a lasting effect. There should be a positive correlation between the incorporation of beliefs by parents in their children's lives and the continued strength of belief in the children.

METHOD

Participants

Data was collected from undergraduate students at the John Brown University. To select the students to participate in the study, a random sample of 80 JBU students and their

email addresses were gathered. Thirty-seven responded. The participants did not receive any inducement for being in the study.

Materials

The study used a 30 question online [survey](#) to assess the incorporation of beliefs by parents to children and the grown child's continued strength in belief. The first few and last few questions assessed the incorporation of beliefs by asking how often parents did things such as pray, discuss spiritual issues, or attend church with their children. The remaining questions evaluate the participants' current beliefs simply by asking how strongly they agree with a spiritually based statement. Participants rated how accurately the statement matched their beliefs on a scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". To construct the online survey, the computer program Microsoft FrontPage was used. The students were emailed the survey, asked to take part in a study, and were told the nature of the study. Students were able click on the link that took them to the online survey on the JBU's website.

Procedure

The study was correlational. The correlation was between incorporation of faith and continued strength of faith. A random sample of 80 John Brown University students was contacted via email to complete a survey. The 37 responding participants completed the 30 question survey and submitted their results. Before the survey, participants were informed about the nature of the research, the anonymity of their responses, and their right to quit the study at any point. The participants submitted their completed surveys, the results of which were then analyzed in a Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet.

RESULTS

After correlating the data it was found that $r(39)=.729$, $p.001$. A scatter plot was created to see this effect (see figure 1). This means that there was a significant correlation between incorporation of belief and strength of belief. This supports the hypothesis that there will be a positive correlation between parents incorporating their spiritual beliefs into their child's life and the grown children's strong strength of belief. There was also a strong correlation (1.01) between the specific questions "I thank God when things go my way" and "Education and faith are not separate in my life". However there were not many other specific question correlations that were significant.

Parent to Child Faith

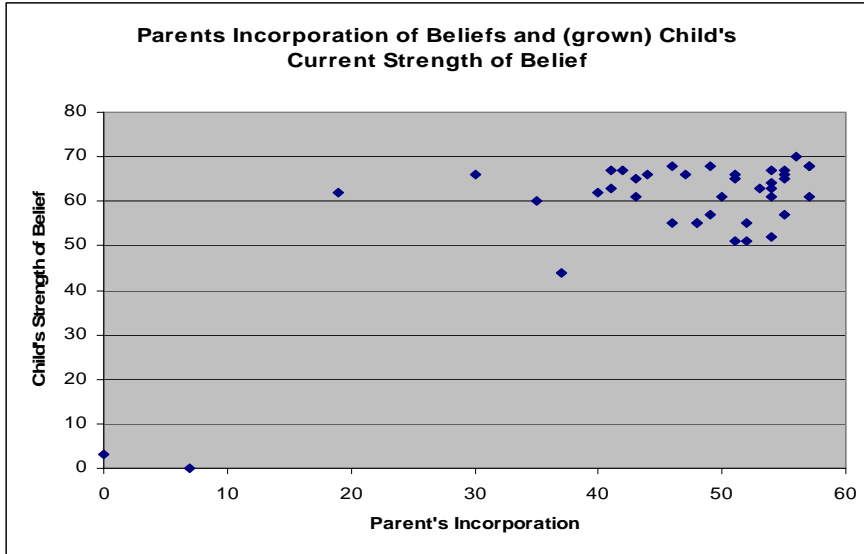


Figure 1.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study support the hypothesis, as previous research indicated it would. However, there were some limitations. One limitation was that the population surveyed came from John Brown University (a small Christian college) where many of the participants share similar spiritual beliefs and come from similar religious upbringings. A sample from the University of Arkansas (a secular and more representative school) was desired but unable to obtain. Therefore the results may not be able to be used for making generalizations. Still, this study will be a good foundation for further research.

Furthermore, there are interesting findings in this research that should be analyzed. For instance the highest correlation was between thanking God when things go one's way and the integration of faith and learning in one's life. This shows that incorporating faith into all parts of one's life increases recognition and acknowledgement of God in everyday life. This is the principle behind parents incorporating their own beliefs into the lives of their children. The Barna Group has found that, "some parents have learned that seeing themselves as their children's personal spiritual coach helps them to view common experiences and everyday circumstances as the training grounds on which to foster spiritual development" (Barna, 2003).

Previous research indicates a study in which ten characteristics of committed Christian youth were assessed and compared with whether or not their parent's often expressed faith. The occurrence of characteristics usually doubled in percentage when parents' faith was often expressed (Strommen & Hardel, 2000). In many ways, this research supports that. Many attitudes and behaviors of commitment correlated positively with parents talking openly about faith.

However, one interesting finding is that there was no correlation between parents talking openly about their faith and the (grown) child's faith being easily shaken. This means that even if a parent talks openly about their own beliefs they must actively living out those beliefs or those convictions are not grounded in their children. Strommen and Hardel would not be surprised at this finding. They quote Margaret Krych as saying, "Children need to see...not only your words but also your attitudes, your behavior, your participation in worship, your enthusiasm in witnessing" (Strommen & Hardel, 2000). Children easily sense when something is insincere.

While there are many correlations to look at in this small study, the hope is that future studies can replicate and expand on this. With a more representative sample, researchers can judge to see if these findings remain true. Not only that, but if parental impact continues to show itself as a driving force in a child's spiritual life, it would be interesting to find whether or not parents view themselves as that spiritual guide.

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The Role of Socioeconomic Factors in Abortion Attitudes

Carrie Seay

The issue of abortion is typically perceived as a woman's conflict, this present study explored the possible relationship various socioeconomic factors and abortion opinions. Research suggests a relationship between the variables gender, race, religious affiliation and economic status and abortion attitudes. Students from John Brown University were selected at random to participate in a survey and a two tailed t-test preformed on the results. Results and the implications for previous research will be discussed.

The issue of abortion both the legality and morality has been perceived as a religious American woman's conflict. This is not as black and white as it is sometimes addressed as there are so many different circumstances concerned in the issue. Susan Walzer (1994) in her study on gender roles in abortion opinions proposed an additive index of abortion attitudes in which she presents six conditions and asks under which the respondents would think the patient should be able to obtain a legal abortion. This scale allows for conditional responses and allows different degrees of abortion opinions other than pro-life or pro-choice as the questions are usually presented. Religion, another variable in this study is commonly found to be the strongest correlate in abortion attitudes. Similarly to Walzer's break down of abortion issues, the diversity in religious affiliation and abortion opinions needs to be more defined, especially in this study involving predominantly professing Christians. As respondents will all hold similar general religious beliefs, breaking the questions down into a scale such as denominational affiliation will give us a better variation and a better understanding of specific religious beliefs on abortion attitudes. Also as we expect this strong correlation between religious affiliation and abortion, we will explore other socioeconomic variables, how might the different race and ethnic backgrounds interact with both religious affiliation and abortion attitudes?

Previous research provides important insight into the possible relationships concerning gender, race, religious affiliation, economic status and abortion attitudes. Several empirical studies report that religious participation is the strongest predictors of abortion attitudes. Jennifer A. Hess and Justin D. Rueb (2005) in their research about abortion attitudes and religious affiliation among college students found the strongest differentiation between those who reported no religion those who reported being Protestant. Also as the degree of religious involvement increased, the support of abortion decreased. However, this study did not control for the different degrees of abortion opinion like Walzer's (1994) study on gender roles. She also found a negative correlation between protestant religious participation and support of abortion, but explored deeper the gender and race roles. She did not see a significant difference between men and women's abortion attitudes but noted that whereas race played a role in women's opinion's it did not in men's.

Correspondence concerning this article can be directed to Carrie Seay, P.O. Box 2945, 2000 West University Street, Siloam Springs, Arkansas 72761. Email the author at SeayC@jbu.edu.

This research project was conducted as part of a course requirement for the 2006 Research Methods course in the Psychology Department at John Brown University, Siloam Springs, Arkansas.

Other research has specifically analyzed the role that these differences variables might play in abortion opinions. There is not specific research done for each racial division represented here at John Brown but it is commonly seen that Caucasian American's tend to be the least supportive of abortion and particularly as seen in Walzer's research much less than the African American population. Consistent with previous research findings, the researcher expects that participants who have a higher level of religious participation will decrease in their support of abortion in the different conditions presented in the questionnaire. Also the Caucasian population is expected to be less supportive than other racial sects on campus. The variables such as gender and age are relatively unexplored in similar studies to this one and in different types of research usually found to be insignificant factors. These variables will be researched subordinately but hopefully will provide some interesting insight.

METHOD

Participants

To select the students to participate in the study, a random sample of 80 people who was generated from the email addresses of people enrolled as undergraduates of John Brown University, a small Christian liberal arts college in the South.

Materials

The study utilized a single thirteen-question online [survey](#) to assess the relationship between abortion opinions and socioeconomic factors. The first nine questions evaluate abortion opinions on a 5-point Likert scale. Participants rated how accurately each statement reflected them from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". The next four questions asked for the participant's age, gender, cultural background and religious affiliation. To construct the online survey, the researcher used Microsoft FrontPage 2003, a computer program. In order to reach the participants in the sample, the researcher emailed the students, giving her name, asking them to take part in a study, and the nature of the study. Students had the option of following a link within the email that took them to the survey placed online through the school's website.

Procedure

The present study used a correlation approach comparing the relationship between two variables (socioeconomic factors and abortion attitudes). Because the researcher did not manipulate the variables themselves, the study is considered an ex post facto study. To recruit participants, the researcher contacted 80 people by email through a random sample of people either employed by or attending John Brown University. The participants "agreed" to the study by clicking on a link to the online survey and proceeding to take the eleven question survey and submit the results. At the beginning of the survey, the researcher informed the participants about the nature of the research, the anonymity of their results, and their right to withdrawal from the study at any point. When the participants clicked the "submit" button on the survey, the results were transferred to the instructor anonymously and then given to the student in a Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet.

RESULTS

The researcher analyzed the correlation between the reported impact of religion on the participants' worldview and the belief that abortion is morally wrong. A significant positive correlation was found, $r(34)=.42$. Also a significant Pearson r correlation was found between the

Socioeconomic Factors in Abortion Attitudes

belief that abortion is morally wrong and the level of passion felt about this issue, $p r(34)=.39$. No significant differences were found between the different gender's responses. A two tailed t test was preformed to analyze the difference between Hispanic and Caucasian participants' responses. Significant differences were found between their responses about the level of passion felt about the issue, $p=.01$ and between their opinions about freedom of choice in this issue, $p=.01$.

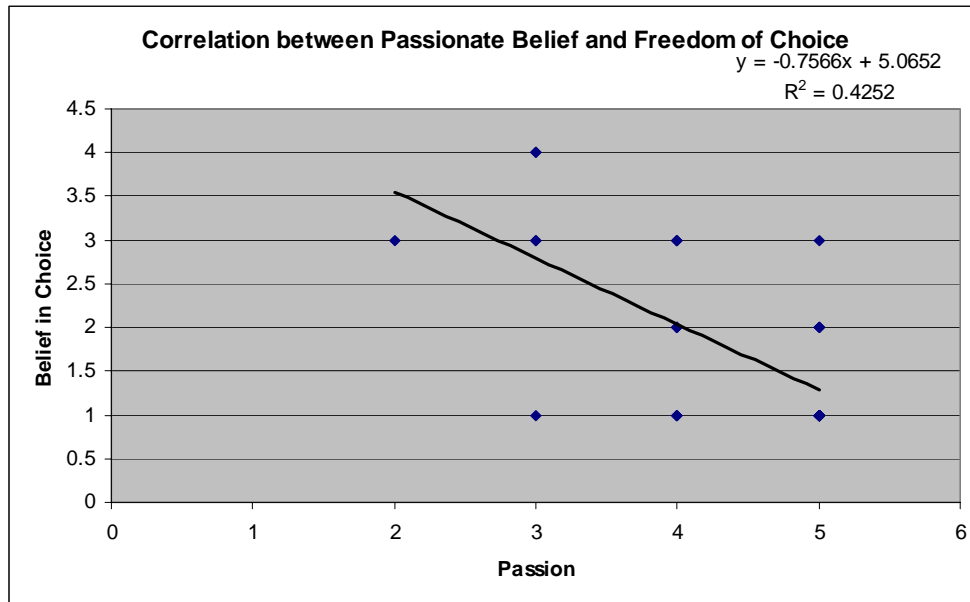


Figure 1. Negative correlation between Passionate Belief and Freedom of Choice

DISCUSSION

Our research supports our main hypothesis that support for abortion would be negative correlated with religious affiliation. While there was a significant correlation found, our sample did not provide much variation amongst strength of religious affiliation as in Hess and Reub's study. This however is reflective of our population as a Christian university. What may have been more particular to our research is that we analyzed denominational affiliation as well as the general religious variable. This however did not prove to be a significant determinant in abortion attitudes and surprisingly even among those participants who reported a denominational affiliation of "none".

An interesting result in this study was that of the strength to which participants reported abortion as "morally wrong" and the level of passion that they felt for the issue. While in media and such it is probably equally as common to see pro-choice zealots as well as pro-life, in this study those who reported a passionate opinion were significantly correlated with those who opposed abortion as morally wrong. This may suggest that students in our population who do support abortion may feel some social pressure to remain apathetic or discreet on the issue, this can not be inferred because of the small number of participants reporting support for abortion.

The results of this study did not support the hypothesis that females would be more supportive of abortion than males. This is in line with previous research that has also not found this to be a significant factor. While Walzer's study (1994) found race proved to be a significant determinant for women and not men, our population did not provide enough racial diversity within the gender's to analyze.

However, ethnicity did prove to be the most significant factor in determining abortion attitudes in our sample. The population of John Brown University according to the 2005 enrollment statistics there are more international students than African Americans or Hispanics. It is likely that those participants who reported an ethnicity of Hispanic are international students, which would attribute cultural differences to most of the variation amongst opinions. This would provide logic for why Hispanics reported feeling significantly less passionate about their abortion opinion, and why they are more supportive of the concept of freedom of choice in the issue. Abortion is prohibited across much of Latin America, and the debate is primarily seen as a national issue here in America. While these seem to be logical explanations for the significant differences between Hispanics and Caucasians abortion attitudes the survey did not ask for specify whether the participant was a U.S. citizen or not, therefore these assumptions can not be inferred.

While some implications can be made about our data they are not shocking. Christians are predominately conservative and conservatives predominately pro-life. This can be expected, but what are the aspects of being a Christian that make us oppose abortion, and what are the aspects of abortion that Christians are opposed to? While most Christians would probably like to suggest the sanctity of life, this study suggests there are at least some other minor factors. To what degree is this a cultural issue and to what degree does our politics invade our culture and even our religion. These are questions in which are present study do not go deep enough to explore but do provide some significant results that could be an interesting area of more specified research.

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The Psychological Traits Associated with Retention of Foster Parents

Kevin R. Coleman

This study explores the possible relationship between foster parents' psychological functioning and retention rates of children in their homes. Research suggests that parents with certain psychological traits create a home environment that allows them to maintain foster children in their home for longer periods of time. A random sample of 20 foster parents was taken from a list of 65 current foster parents and surveyed to assess their social desirability and the length of time they have maintained foster children in their home. The researcher expected to find that foster parents with higher levels of social functioning retain foster children in their homes longer. Possibly attributed to the small sample size, the results of the t-test were not significant.

The growing number of foster children is becoming an increasing concern of social service agencies all over the world. As the number of foster children continues to increase, there has been a decline in the number of foster parents. In addition to the lack of foster homes available, current foster parents are closing their homes because of the demand and stress placed on them by social service agencies and poorly behaved children. By examining the traits and personalities of successful foster parents, social service agencies can better understand their target audience when recruiting foster parents and raise retention rates by equipping current parents with training to deal with the demands of the children in their homes.

Kathryn Rhodes, John Orme, Mary Ellen Cox, and Cheryl Buehler (2003) examined psychosocial functioning of foster parents and retention in the context of resource theory. Resource theory was derived from social exchange theory and defined resources as “anything one family member can offer another family member to help them satisfy needs or obtain goals” (Rhodes, Orme, Cox, & Buehler, 2003). The study found that although families reacted positively toward the chance to help foster children in need of a home, they were more likely to help if they had higher income rates, worked in helping professions, and had time to put into foster parenting. Like many parents, these foster parents suffer from psychosocial and familial problems such as limited parenting skills and marital issues (Rhodes, Orme, Cox, & Buehler, 2003).

Irena Sobotkova's study of the most crucial factors in creating a successful foster home, found that the most successful homes had exceptional foster parents (Sobotkova, 2000). This proves that there is a need - not just for foster parents – but for loving and caring homes that can create stability for the children so that they can thrive. Sobotkova found that there was a correlation between the strength and cohesion of the family unit and the success of the children in the home (2000). Another study examined the level of behavior problems, academic skill delays, and problems in school among school-aged children in foster care, and related it to the

My name is Kevin R. Coleman and I am a student at John Brown University in the Department of Psychology in Siloam Springs, AR. I can be reached by email at Colemank@jbu.edu . I would like to thank the Department of Health and Human Services of Arkansas for their help and support throughout this project and Dr. Froman for his statistical knowledge.

children in poor placements (Zima, 2000). Foster children who remained in homes for long quality of their placements. Bonnie Zima found that there were sometimes more problems for periods of time were more likely to have lower levels of academic scores and were also more likely to be expelled or suspended from school (2000).

A study performed by James Sigrid showed that the longer a child remained in a home, the less likely they were to disrupt their placement and need to be moved from the home (Sigrid, 2004). This shows that by increasing retention rates among current foster parents, not only will there be fewer disrupted placements, but also more homes for new foster children to go to. Sigrid's study also supports the researcher's presupposition that foster children thrive in a stable and secure environment with which they can identify and receive loving support.

Inevitably, the psychosocial functioning of foster parents plays an important role in their ability to deal with the challenges that can come from the disruption of their family structure when they take children into care. Increasing the parent's awareness of the challenges of taking on foster children can help reduce the amount of foster parents who decide to discontinue care and also help prepare incoming foster parents for the challenges they will face. Based on previous research we can see that a parent's ability to function with foster children in the home is due largely to their ability to function socially. Therefore, the researcher expects that the foster parent participants with higher levels of psychosocial functioning will tend to retain the foster children in their home for longer periods of time.

METHOD

Participants

The researcher collected data from a sample 25 foster parents randomly selected from a list of foster parents in Arkansas' Area 1 Unit comprised of Benton, Madison, Carroll, and Washington Counties. The participants range in age from 25-55 and were either married or single. To select the participants for the study, 25 names were randomly drawn from a pile made up of all 65 of the foster homes in Arkansas. The participants were not given any compensation for their participation in the survey.

Materials

The study utilized a telephone interview based on 12 questions of which 10 were taken from the Social Desirability Scale. The scale is made up of 10 True/False questions that measure personal attitudes and reactions toward others. The 2 remaining questions pertained to the amount of time they have maintained the same children in their home. Participants responded according to whether or not they felt like the statement truly reflected their personality. Each interview lasted approximately 10 minutes and was given to one of the parents of each foster home.

Procedure

The present study used a correlation approach comparing the foster parent's social functioning and the amount of time they had maintained the same children in their home. The researcher did not manipulate the variables; therefore it is considered an ex post facto study. The participants were contacted by telephone and asked if they would like to participate in the questionnaire. Upon receiving consent, the participants were informed about the anonymity of their answers, and were told that they could refuse to answer and quit at any point during the

Traits of Foster Parents

interview. The researcher recorded each participant's answers on a survey as they answered the questions.

RESULTS

A two-tailed t-test for independent samples was used to examine the relationship between social desirability and retention rates $t(18) = 1.85, p = .079$. The results did not support the hypothesis that foster parents with higher social functioning have higher retention rates of children in their homes finding that there was not a significant correlation between the two variables. The means of the two groups were closely related and further demonstrated that there wasn't a correlation between the two variables.

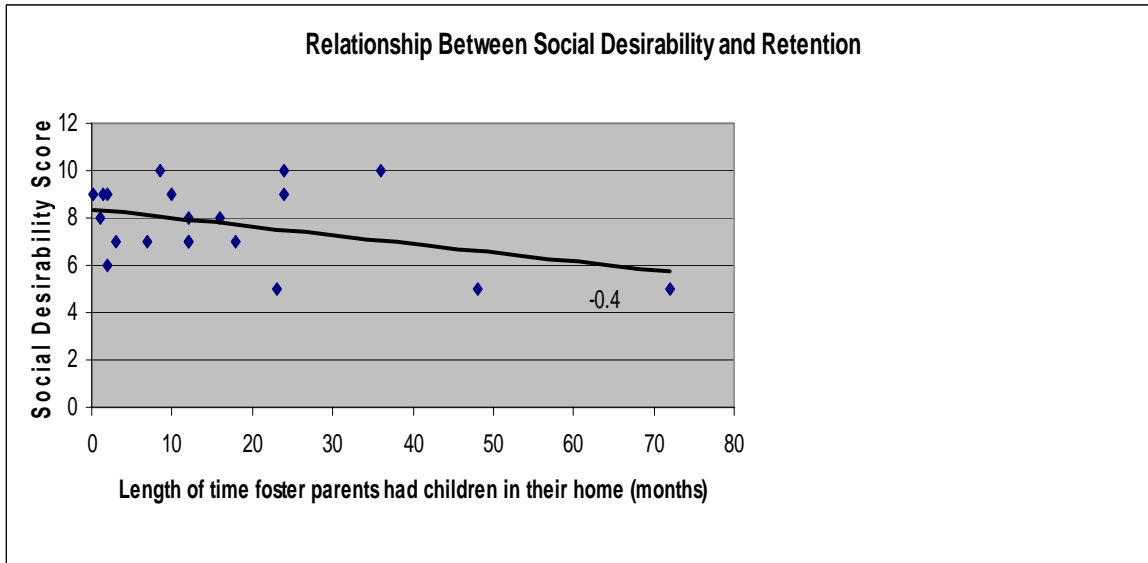


Figure 1.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study did not support the hypothesis that foster parents with higher social functioning will have higher retention rates of children in their homes. Although past research suggests that higher levels of social functioning for foster parents might enhance the life of the children in their home, the present study didn't find a correlation between social functioning and length of time spent in the foster home. However, the previous researched focused on characteristics of the foster home environment that made it more successful, and this study focused specifically on the parent's level of social functioning. The difference in the focus of this study might account for the lack of correlation in the study.

Another possible explanation for the lack of significance found in the results might be due to the small sample size. Only 20 foster parents participated in the study. A larger sample size may have found significant results. A last possible explanation for the insignificant results was the survey was administered over the telephone which could have influenced the responses of the foster parents. Also, there could have been some researcher bias as the participants were aware that the researcher was affiliated with the Department of Health and Human Services and may have been more inclined to answer in a way that made them look more or less socially desirable.

The first recommendation for further research is to replicate the current study with a larger sample size. A second recommendation is for the survey to be administered through a e-mail using a pseudo e-mail address that would not signify any affiliation with the Department of Health and Human services in order to remove any potential bias in the participant's response. In addition, future studies might want to analyze the relationship between length of time that a foster parent has been open as a foster home and the psychosocial functioning of the foster children in their home.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

1. How many children do you have in your home right now?
2. How long have you had them in your home?

Social Desirability Scale (T/F Response)

1. I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble.
2. I have never intensely disliked anyone.
3. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.
4. I would never think of letting someone else be punished for my wrong doings.
5. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.
6. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.
7. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.
8. When I don't know something I don't at all mind admitting it.
9. I can remember "playing sick" to get out of something.
10. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.