

Gina Coffee, PhD, NCSP  
Assistant Professor

Loyola University Chicago  
School of Education  
Water Tower Campus  
820 N. Michigan Ave., #1146  
Chicago, IL 60611

[gcoffee@luc.edu](mailto:gcoffee@luc.edu)

Phone (312) 915-6854

Fax (312) 915-6660

**2009 School Psychology Research Collaboration Conference**  
Personal Research Agenda

Gina Coffee, PhD, NCSP  
Loyola University Chicago

*Overview*

As an early career scholar, I am interested in critically evaluating, and promoting the use of, evidence-based prevention and intervention programs that address school-related issues children may encounter during the course of their academic careers. One specific area of interest is school-based problem-solving consultation, as I believe consultation plays an important role in the transport, evaluation, and promotion of evidence-based prevention and intervention programs. In particular, I am interested in examining the role of prevention in school-based problem-solving consultation – that is, the extent to which teachers generalize the problem-solving and evidence-based intervention skills learned during school-based problem-solving consultation to students other than the target student.

*Previous Scholarly Efforts*

I previously conducted a replication and expansion of Hazzard, Bergan, and Kratochwill's (1977) and Riley-Tillman and Eckert's (2001) studies and explored the extent to which teachers apply the skills developed during problem-solving school-based consultation to prevent the occurrence of similar problems in the classroom, or the exacerbation of current problems. Through a multiple baseline design across teacher-participants design, I collected data measuring teacher praise and student engagement during instruction across four conditions: baseline, intervention implementation, generalization prompt, and generalization training. Although it did not appear that generalization occurred as a result of any condition, conclusions were limited due to issues of student selection and inadequate treatment integrity. The

manuscript has been submitted for consideration to the *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*.

#### *Specific Questions to be Addressed*

I plan to address issues of student selection and treatment integrity and replicate the aforementioned study. The primary questions will be as follows:

1. To what degree does generalization of consultation-related skills to students other than the target student occur naturally (during baseline and/or intervention implementation)?
2. To what degree does generalization of consultation-related skills to students other than the target student occur following a generalization prompt?
3. To what degree does generalization of consultation-related skills to students other than the target student occur following generalization training?

#### *Specific Practice Implications*

Given that few studies directly investigating generalization and the preventive outcome of consultation exist, studies such as the proposed project are in need and are likely to have short-term and long-term impacts on the study and practice of school psychology. The short-term impact is to pioneer methods for exploring/combining treatment integrity, acceptability, and generalization within a single-case design structure. Long-term, this study might bring more research and practice rigor to the long-held (but rarely tested) assumption that consultation is more effective than direct intervention because it enhances the consultee's capacity to deal with similar/related problems in the future/with other students (i.e., generalization over time, students, and related problem types).

References

- Hazzard, J. C., Bergan, J. R., & Kratochwill, T. R. (1977). *The effects of behavioral consultation on teacher application and transfer of behavior management principles*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Arizona State University.
- Riley-Tillman, T. C., & Eckert, T. L. (2001). Generalization programming and school based consultation: An examination of consultees' generalization of consultation related skills. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 12*, 217-241.

**2009 School Psychology Research Collaboration Conference**  
Abstract

Gina Coffee, PhD, NCSP  
Loyola University Chicago

This proposed research project is an extension of a study I conducted that examined the extent to which teachers generalize skills acquired during school-based problem-solving consultation from consultation target students to other students. Unfortunately, issues of student selection and inadequate treatment integrity prevented me from drawing valid conclusions regarding teachers' generalization of interventions. Therefore, this study will address the aforementioned limitations of my previous study and extend across multiple sites.

At each site, four to eight elementary teachers and nominated students (4-6 per teacher) will participate in this study. In each classroom, one student will be randomly assigned as the consultation target student, one as the generalization target student, and the remaining as nontarget students. Within a multiple baseline across teacher-participants design, researchers will collect data measuring treatment integrity, the consultation process, student outcomes, and teacher intervention behaviors across four conditions: baseline, intervention implementation, generalization prompt, and generalization training.

**2009 School Psychology Research Collaboration Conference**  
Research Proposal

Gina Coffee, PhD, NCSP  
Loyola University Chicago

*Issue/Questions To Be Addressed*

The purpose of the proposed research project is to examine the role of prevention in school-based problem-solving consultation. Specifically, through a replication and expansion of Hazzard et al.'s (1977) and Riley-Tillman and Eckert's (2001) studies, I plan to collaborate with other researchers to investigate consultees' generalization of consultation-related skills to other students. That is, by measuring and recording each teacher's intervention behavior toward a consultation target student, a generalization target student, and a nontarget student, we will explore the extent to which teachers apply the skills developed during problem-solving school-based consultation to prevent the occurrence of similar problems in the classroom, or reduce the impact of current problems, with other students. I hypothesize that teachers will generalize the intervention used with the consultation target students to the generalization target students and the nontarget students to a greater degree during a generalization training condition than during an intervention implementation or generalization prompt condition.

As presented in my personal research agenda, the primary questions of this research project will be as follows:

1. To what degree does generalization of consultation-related skills to students other than the target student occur naturally (during baseline and/or intervention implementation)?
2. To what degree does generalization of consultation-related skills to students other than the target student occur following a generalization prompt?

3. To what degree does generalization of consultation-related skills to students other than the target student occur following generalization training?

### *Context & Participants*

At each site, four to eight elementary teachers and nominated students (4-6 per teacher) will participate in this study. In each classroom, one student will be randomly assigned as the consultation target student, one as the generalization target student, and the remaining as nontarget students. Within a multiple baseline across teacher-participants design, we will collect data measuring treatment integrity, the consultation process, student outcomes, and teacher intervention behaviors across four conditions: baseline, intervention implementation, generalization prompt, and generalization training.

### *Estimated Budget Per Site*

<b>Category</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Stipends	\$10,800	\$12/hr*10 hrs*15 wks*6 student stipends
	\$800	8 teacher stipends upon completion of study at \$100 each
Supplies	\$100	Paper and postage
Equipment	\$805	Thumb drives for storage and recording equipment = \$100 6 digital voice recorders at \$100 each 6 headphones at \$10 each 3 headphone splitters at \$15 each
Data Processing	\$100	Compilation of data
Travel	\$150	Mileage reimbursement for travel to sites
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12,755</b>	

### *Advantages & Challenges*

The primary advantage of using a collaborative multi-site research program to answer these research questions is replication with diverse samples. External validity with single-case studies is established by replication, and a multi-site program could help facilitate its occurrence.

A multi-site research program will also facilitate collaboration with experts in the field to ultimately inform this, and future, research and funding opportunities. Conversely, the primary challenge of a multi-site research program will likely be communication and integrity. Given the complex nature of intervention studies, it will be imperative to establish ways to communicate effectively and consistently between researchers and ensure the integrity with which the project is carried out.

## References

- Hazzard, J. C., Bergan, J. R., & Kratochwill, T. R. (1977). *The effects of behavioral consultation on teacher application and transfer of behavior management principles*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Arizona State University.
- Riley-Tillman, T. C., & Eckert, T. L. (2001). Generalization programming and school based consultation: An examination of consultees' generalization of consultation related skills. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 12*, 217-241.