

COVER PAGE

Markeda L. Newell, Ph.D.
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Mailing Address:
2400 E. Hartford Avenue
Enderis Hall Room 789
Milwaukee, WI 53201

Email: newell@uwm.edu
Office Phone: (414) 229-5845
Fax: (414) 229-4939

Newell Research Agenda

Research Interests

I am interested in using computer-simulation to evaluate how pre-service school psychologists deliver problem-solving consultation in a multiracial context. This line of research has significant implications for school psychology because little is known about how school psychologists implement consultation (Kratochwill & Van Someren, 1995) and even less is known about how school psychologists engage racial diversity during the consultation process. Examining the role of culture in school-based consultation is one of the fastest growing areas of research in the field (see Ingraham, 2000); however, more research is needed. For these reasons, the focus of my research agenda is not only on how pre-service school psychologists implement the problem-solving consultation model, but also on how racial diversity influences decision-making during the consultation process. Given this focus, computer-simulation is an ideal tool that can be used to capture an in-depth, stage-by-stage analysis of the problem-solving process in a multiracial context.

Course of Action. My course of action over the next 3-5 years is to use computer-simulated modules to evaluate pre-service school psychologists in the use of problem-solving consultation in a multiracial context. Therefore, I have the following research questions:

- 1) How do the participants practically apply the problem-solving consultation model?

Specifically:

- a. How do pre-service school psychologists problem-solve with teachers to identify a problem?
- b. How do pre-service school psychologists determine what data to collect and how that data is interpreted?

- c. How do pre-service school psychologists select or design an intervention to address the target problem?
- 2) In what ways do the pre-service school psychologists address racial differences through the problem-solving consultation process?
 - a. Do the pre-service school psychologists inquire about any racial or cultural differences during the consultation process?
 - b. Do the pre-service school psychologists request ecological data (e.g., data about behavior in other settings, strengths, and parent perspective)?
 - c. Do the pre-service school psychologists make intervention decisions in consideration of diversity (e.g., interventions effective with target population)?

Previous Effort in this Area

One of my earliest interests was in the use of computer-simulation to serve diverse populations. As a research associate at Indiana University-Bloomington, I worked on a research project to design a 3D computer program to teach academic content and diversity issues to children. While I worked on this project, I was an author on an article focused on design ethnography in which we discussed how to develop the 3D computer program for that purpose. As a doctoral student, my master's thesis was a mixed-methods analysis (i.e., meta-analysis and discourse analysis) of intervention research for aggression with a focus on the effectiveness of these interventions with African American samples. For my dissertation research, I designed a computer-simulation to evaluate problem-solving consultation in a multiracial context. I currently have two manuscripts under review based on my dissertation research. I also was recently awarded a grant from UW-Milwaukee Institute for Excellence in Urban Education in the amount of \$14,000 to further my research on computer-simulation.

References

- Kratochwill, T. R. & Van Someren, K. R. (1995). Barriers to treatment success in behavioral consultation: Current limitations and future directions. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 6*(2), 125-143.
- Ingraham, C. L. (2000). Consultation through a multicultural lens: Multicultural and cross-cultural consultation in schools. *School Psychology Review, 29*(3), 320-343.

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to use computer-simulated modules to evaluate pre-service school psychologists in the use of problem-solving consultation in a multiracial context. Specifically, the focus of this study is on how pre-service school psychologists implement the problem-solving consultation model as well as how racial diversity influences decision-making during the consultation process. Given this focus, computer-simulation is an ideal tool that can be used to capture an in-depth, stage-by-stage analysis of the problem-solving process in a multiracial context. A computer-simulated school environment will be created to evaluate how pre-service school psychologists engage in problem-solving consultation. Participants will be presented with three consultation referrals to complete in the computer-simulation. All of the teachers and students will be computer generated to interact with the pre-service school psychologists in the simulation module. Collective case study methodology will be used to collect and analyze the data. Implications for training in problem-solving consultation as well as addressing racial diversity will be discussed.

Newell Collaborative Multi-Site Research Proposal

Research Questions

The evaluation of the implementation of problem-solving consultation is a complex undertaking because it is a multi-stage process involving multiple individuals working in concert. This becomes a more difficult process when trying to also determine how racial diversity is addressed during the consultation process. In light of these considerations, computer-simulation is an innovative tool that can be used to gain an in-depth perspective on what questions are asked, what data is collected, and how interventions are selected during consultation in a multiracial context. Finally, individual interviews will allow the participants to reflect on their actions during the consultation process. To address these issues, I have put forth following research questions:

- 1) How do the participants practically apply the problem-solving consultation model?

Specifically:

- a. How do pre-service school psychologists problem-solve with teachers to identify a problem?
 - b. How do pre-service school psychologists determine what data to collect and how that data is interpreted?
 - c. How do pre-service school psychologists select or design an intervention to address the target problem?
- 2) In what ways do the pre-service school psychologists address racial differences through the problem-solving consultation process?
 - a. Do the pre-service school psychologists inquire about any racial or cultural differences during the consultation process?

- b. Do the pre-service school psychologists request ecological data (e.g., data about behavior in other settings, strengths, and parent perspective)?
- c. Do the pre-service school psychologists make intervention decisions in consideration of diversity (e.g., interventions effective with target population)?

Participants and Setting

Participants will include school psychology students who are currently enrolled in graduate training programs and have already completed at least one course in problem-solving consultation. Given that a computer-simulation program will be used to engage in the consultation process, the participants can use a personal computer or university-based computer to participate in the research project. Thus, participants will have the flexibility to work from home or school to complete the research project. Upon completion of the computer-simulation portion of the project, each participant will be interviewed regarding the decisions they made during the simulated consultation process.

Number of Participants

I would like to have participants from a range of university training programs who are pursuing a specialist (EdS) or doctoral (PhD) degree in school psychology. Ideally, I would recruit participants from at least 4 university training programs that represent diversity in the field of school psychology. Given that the study is a qualitative design, I would like to recruit at least 20-30 participants across the 4 sites.

Estimated Budget

Due to the scale of the project, course buyouts would be required. Furthermore, at least 4 graduate assistants would be required to successfully complete this research project (one per site). In addition to the graduate assistants, the project would also require at least 5 student

hourly workers to support the graduate assistants. Travel to the sites would also be required to train and interview participants. Travel to conferences to present the findings would also be required. To encourage participation, each participant will be paid a stipend of \$50 to complete the simulation modules and interview. Based on these items, the estimated budget is \$110,000.

Advantages and Challenges of Multi-Site Research Program

There are several advantages to engaging in this collaborative multi-site research agenda. First, having participants from a range of school psychology training programs as well as degree areas can provide important insight into how pre-service school psychologists are trained in and implement problem-solving consultation. Furthermore, using multiple sites can provide diversity in perspectives on problem-solving consultation as well as the role of race during the consultation process. The ultimate goal of this research agenda is to incorporate the simulation modules as part of consultation training in university programs; therefore, this study will be a significant step toward validating the use of the simulation.

There are also some challenges to a multi-site research program. First, with participants spread across multiple sites, it can be difficult to easily access participants and provide support, if needed. Secondly, this project would require some coordination with training programs; therefore, there would need to be some buy-in on the part of training directors and/or instructors who teach consultation. Finally, consultation may be taught at different times across training programs, so it may be difficult to have all participants begin the project at the same time.