

Undergraduate Research Conference

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College of Applied Arts

SHANE DOYLE & JACOB PENA

Agricultural Sciences

Determining Food Safety Knowledge and Consumer Preferences on Meat and Seafood Products

Abstract:

The American consumer on average allocates 13% of their expenditures toward food which involves the agricultural industry as an integral part of the U.S. economy. The prevention of foodborne illness outbreaks is important but little has been done to educate the public on foodborne illnesses. There is a need for research regarding the extent food safety plays in consumers' decisions when purchasing food. Consumer preference knowledge will be necessary for understanding how a change in the food safety environment will impact their buying power. The design of our study is in the form of focus groups held in Houston, San Marcos, and Dallas Texas where we collected data from 33 participants on the factors they consider when purchasing meat and seafood products. We held these focus groups to address the consumers lack of knowledge about increasing food recalls and the government policies regarding food safety. Some of the trends we found were that a resounding number of people preferred not to shop at Walmart for meat and seafood products due to the lack of confidence in the store's food products. This lack of confidence comes from the consumer wanting a product with certain qualities such as smell, color and percent fat. Another major finding we had was that consumers buy meat products more often than seafood products. One other major finding that we had was that consumers would rather shop at HEB or a product-specific market than anywhere else because they trust their quality.

ANJA SENN & BRITTNEY HEIBEL

Agricultural Sciences

Consumer Knowledge of Food Safety Policy and Factors Affecting Their Produce and Dairy Purchases in Texas

Abstract:

The food and agricultural industry contributes more than a trillion dollars to the U.S. GDP annually. However, foodborne illness affects about 48 million Americans every year to the tune of 51 billion dollars in economic losses. Government organizations have responded to this issue by implementing various food safety policies, but little is known about how consumers actually perceive this information. This research gauges consumers' perceptions of existing food safety practices and explores how these perceptions might affect their purchasing behaviors of produce and dairy. Through a series of focus groups, data was collected from 33 participants in the Dallas, Houston, and San Marcos areas. Participants were asked to discuss which factors they consider most important when purchasing produce and dairy, how much they know about current food safety policy, and how knowledge of food safety affects their purchases. The main considerations when purchasing produce included freshness (27%), price (24%), and cleanliness (18%). Dairy purchases

were most affected by brand loyalty. While 100% of respondents said they were aware of food recalls, only 12% were familiar with current food safety policy and labeling. Furthermore, only 9% expressed that a recall would affect their long-term purchase preferences. This data suggests that government efforts to reach consumers with food safety information have done little to educate shoppers or influence their buying habits. This data will be useful in the design of an economic experiment to further test consumers' willingness to pay for certified safe food products.

TRAVIS LUZANIA, DR. FRIEDMAN BIEDIGER, MS. HANNAH THORNTON, MR. FRED PEREZ, & KELSEY WALLING

College of Applied Arts-Family and Consumer Sciences

Barriers and Facilitators of Campus Food Pantry Use Among Military-Connected Students

Abstract:

Background: Food insecurity is a significant issue facing many college students as they further their education, including Military-connected students. Specifically, military-connected students face unique hurdles not encountered by traditional college students, limiting their ability to provide for themselves and their families. Transitioning military, those on disability, and those with families are often most vulnerable to food insecurity. The purpose of this study is to identify what factors drive these individuals to seek anonymous aid sources and how to better meet their needs.

Methods: This qualitative study utilized two phases of data collection, however no participants have been moved into the second phase; in-depth interviews. Study participants were recruited through an anonymous food locker service supported by Bobcat Bounty and the Veteran's Academic Success Center at Texas State University. The first phase included a paper survey left in the food locker for completion by military-connected students voluntarily. The survey assessed demographics, barriers to access, and additional aid still required.

Results: Preliminary data demonstrate the food locker fills a gap in healthful eating caused by lack of adequate funds to support food security. Participant utilization of financial aid and military education benefits in addition to part-time employment is high. Most participants also indicated a desire for educational resources on additional aid sources and healthful recipes.

Conclusion: This study identifies barriers and facilitators to food security among military-connected students and ways through which campus programs can promote food security within this population.

JOURNEY CARNAHAN, COURTNEY N. MEYERS, ETHAN M. FRY, GEORGE G. GARZA, ANGELA M. JONES, & SEAN P. ROCHE

Criminal Justice

Perceptions of Crime and Safety at a Large Southwestern University

Abstract:

Fear of crime has a profound effect on many different forms of behavior. These include defensive behaviors, such as acquiring a firearm or moving to a gated community, as well as constrained behaviors, such as avoiding going out to restaurants, or participating in social activities. Public perceptions of crime, particularly by younger and Latinx/Hispanic individuals, merits additional research. Using original survey data from a random sample of students, faculty, and staff at a large university in the American Southwest, this study investigates civilians' perceptions of crime and safety on campus.

ILIANA FIGUEROA, D’MORNAQUAH B. FONTENOT, HANNAH A. JOY, ERICK ZAMORA, SEAN. P ROCHE, & ANGELA M. JONES

Criminal Justice

Perceptions of University Police at a Large Southwestern University

Abstract:

A consistent finding in research on Americans' attitudes toward police is respondents' race plays an important role in whether they like and/or trust the police. However, these racial gaps have primarily been situated in a dichotomy of African-American versus White American views on police. An important but understudied area is how other racial and ethnic groups, especially Latinx/Hispanic people, view the police. Using original survey data from a random sample of students, faculty, and staff at a large university in the American Southwest, this study investigates civilians' perceptions of police procedural justice.

GRACIE ZENNER

Criminal Justice

Investigating the Public's Posthumous Mourning and Praise of Self-Admitted Violent Criminal XXXTentacion

Abstract:

Jahseh Onfroy, known to the public as XXXTentacion, was a hip-hop artist who was killed in a drive-by shooting in June of 2018. Before his death, he had been accused of assaulting his pregnant ex-girlfriend, along with many other heinous acts, some of which he admitted to. Despite his past, his followers and fans still praised him after his death, seemingly ignoring the violent life he led. Through my research, I have discovered that some scholarly research on XXX and his posthumous legacy has been done, although most of it is in podcast form, and the rest lack specifically what this poster is about: why have people praised him, and why have they denied all allegations placed on him before his death? This research is largely based on social media and online forum posts, as this is where most individuals would present their appreciation and support of the late rapper. Additionally, I will display information the police department that had arrested him for these crimes has supplied to the public. Finally, this poster examines his music and lyrics, to try to understand the type of people who listened to him and what could have caused them to ignore his violence.

NINA THOMPSON

Family and Consumer Sciences

How Mental Health is Reflected in the Lyrics of Today's Top Pop Songs

Abstract:

Mental health plays such a large role in the lives of young adults and has become more of an accepted topic of discussion today. Music and social media are top facilitators of this discussion; however, the focus of this poster will be placed on the former. With that in mind, I will be observing how this topic is reflected in the lyrics of today's popular music. Much of the research involving the topic of music and mental health regards music as a form of therapy. Many sources discuss how music is used in the recovery of mental health for both adults and adolescents. Although these sources prove music to be an effective therapy tool, they don't necessarily cross paths with my area

of research. My poster will answer the question: how is the topic of mental health portrayed in today's popular music? Based on research on the mental health of adolescents, as they make up much of the audience for popular music, I will answer my research questions by analyzing the lyrics in popular songs. The songs and lyrics will be chosen by examining the 3 songs out of the top 25 songs on the current Billboard Hot 100 chart.

SAMANTHA AGUILAR, TORIA FLYNN, & DR. PRISCILLA GOBLE

Human Development and Family Sciences

Self-efficacy as a Moderator for Academic Outcomes in Low SES Adolescents

Abstract:

Previous research has shown that adolescents who experience poverty during childhood, have lower academic outcomes (i.e., GPA) compared to their more affluent peers (Coleman et al. 1966). Self-efficacy, defined as an individual's beliefs about their capabilities to execute, perform, and accomplish a desired task (Bandura, 1997), has been positively associated with academic achievement (Motlagh et al. 2011). Despite the association between self-efficacy and academic outcomes, few studies examine the impact of self-efficacy in the relation between socioeconomic status (SES) and adolescent academic outcomes (Jurecska et al. 2012). Given that adolescents from low SES families are at increased risk for poor academic outcomes, self-efficacy may be particularly important for this population. The proposed study explored if self-efficacy (i.e., academic and general) reduced the negative effect of low SES on GPA utilizing 721 predominately White adolescents (85%) from the NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development (SECCYD). Consistent with prior research, regression analyses confirmed a significant relation between low SES (0=never poor; 1= ever poor) and GPA ($\beta = -.36, p < .001$). The current findings also confirm significant main effects of academic and general self-efficacy on GPA ($\beta = .33$ and $\beta = .20, p < .001$ respectively). However, when examining the interaction between SES and self-efficacy on GPA, self-efficacy did not moderate the relation between SES and GPA. Although self-efficacy is related to GPA, it doesn't serve as a buffer for the negative effect of low SES on adolescents' academic achievement. Implications of these findings will be discussed.

SARAH HICKMAN & MYRANDA RODRIGUEZ

Human Development and Family Sciences

Preschool Teacher Child Interactions and Peer Play with Minority Children

Abstract:

Positive interactions with peers during play can lead to the development of problem-solving skills, cooperation with others, and more (Godwin, 2005). Warm and supportive preschool teachers can promote positive peer interactions (Buhs, Rudasill, Kalutskaya, & Griese, 2015). While some research has been done linking the quality of the teacher-child relationship (i.e., closeness and conflict) to measures of peer play (i.e., play interaction, play disruption, and play disconnection), it has been conducted in majority White samples (e.g. Griggs, Gagnon, Huelsman, Kidder-Ashle, & Ballard, 2009). Utilizing data collected in Central Texas, the current study aims to add to this body of literature by assessing these relations in a majority ethnic minority sample of 175 children (M = 55 months, 47% female) and their teachers. Children in the current sample are from primarily low socioeconomic status (70%) and Hispanic families (68%). We hypothesized that close relationships with teachers would be associated with higher peer play interaction, as well as lower play disruption and play disconnection. We also hypothesized that conflictual teacher child relationships would have

a connection with higher play disruption and disconnection, while being negatively correlated with play interaction. Results confirm these hypotheses. Implications for teacher child relationships in preschool will be discussed.

JOSE VALADEZ, JR.

School of Criminal Justice

A Rocky Relationship: Rap Music's History with the Criminal Justice System

Abstract:

This poster will display an analysis of the turbulent connection rap artists, and their lyrics, have developed with the criminal justice system. Tensions between African Americans and the authorities have historically been on edge. These conflicts were highlighted during the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s and were made aware during the War on Drugs campaign that affected impoverished African Americans during the 1980s. Friction between the two groups reached its zenith following the Rodney Reed incident. Rap artists have used their medium to express their displeasure with the criminal justice system. N.W.A infamously released the song “F*ck Tha Police” on their debut album Straight Outta Compton (1988). The lyrics caught the ire of law enforcement officials, as they feared it might influence the public to rebel against the authorities. Recently, artists – such as Kendrick Lamar – have interspersed details within their lyrics about African Americans’ experiences with the law.

Available resources have detailed the social and political climate present in the 1980s and the meteoric rise of gangsta rap during that era. Further search needs to be done to see if any literature exists on other artists of this era. Lyrics from these artists will be examined to develop an understanding of the artists’ perception of law enforcement. This research will answer the question, “Why does rap harbor disdain towards the criminal justice system?”

This poster will reveal that the history of this tense relationship stems from the injustice experienced by African Americans at the hands of the authorities.

KATRINA FITZPATRICK

School of Social Work

Workplace Interventions for Adults with High-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder

Abstract:

This poster will provide an overview of the needs and potential interventions specific to employment issues among adults with high-functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Although the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides workplace protections for individuals with physical disabilities, the challenges related to ASD are social-behavioral in nature and may not similarly be protected; this results in a disproportionately high rate of unemployment in the ASD population (Hensel, 2017; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019), and average hourly wages that are about half that of those in the general population (Lee, Chun, Hama, & Carter, 2018). Studies show that strengths-based trainings emphasizing employment-readiness skills lead to higher success rates of employment among young adults with ASD (Schall et al., 2012). An ecosystems-based approach including employers, family members, and individuals with ASD was also studied (Nicholas, Mitchell, Dudley, Clarke, & Zulla, 2017). Social workers recognize the right of a client with ASD to live independently to the extent of their skills and abilities (NASW, 2017, 1.02, Self-Determination). The values of service and social justice as explained in the Code of Ethics (NASW, 2017) are

relevant, as people with ASD are a vulnerable population at high risk of unemployment, discrimination, and limited workplace protections.