Efficacy of Targeted Recruitment Strategies on Students’ Knowledge of and Interest in School Psychology

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By
Amanda Fritz
Dayton, Ohio
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Efficacy of Targeted Recruitment Strategies on Students’ Knowledge of and Interest in School Psychology

Name: Fritz, Amanda

Approved by:

_____________________________
Susan Davies, Ed.D.
Advisory Committee Chair
Associate Professor
Department of Counselor Education & Human Services

_____________________________
Elana Bernstein, Ph.D.
Committee Member
Clinical Faculty
Department of Counselor Education & Human Services

_____________________________
Bobbie Fiori, Ed.S.
Committee Member
Adjunct Faculty
Department of Counselor Education & Human Services
ABSTRACT

EFFICACY OF TARGETED RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES ON STUDENTS’ KNOWLEDGE OF AND INTEREST IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

Name: Fritz, Amanda
University of Dayton

Advisor: Dr. Susan Davies

The purpose of the present study was to examine the efficacy of a recruitment presentation conducted during School Psychology Awareness Week on increasing undergraduate students’ knowledge of and interest in the field of school psychology. A program evaluation design was utilized to determine if targeted strategies were an effective means of recruitment for the School Psychology program at the University of Dayton. Eight Ohio universities were selected and agreed to participate in the study, yielding a total of 192 participants. Participants were given a pre-School Psychology Awareness Inventory (SPAI) to assess their knowledge of and interest in the field of school psychology, among other areas. Participants were then shown a PowerPoint presentation on school psychology and provided with informational brochures on the University of Dayton’s program, along with the contact information of the researcher, her
thesis partner, and the University of Dayton’s program coordinator, Dr. Susan Davies. Immediately following these targeted recruitment strategies, participants were administered the post-SPAI to re-assess their knowledge of and interest in the field of school psychology. Results demonstrated that both knowledge and interest increased significantly between pre-SPAI and post-SPAI, indicating the targeted recruitment strategies were effective in increasing awareness of and interest in the field of school psychology. Implications for future recruitment of students in school psychology are discussed.
I’d like to dedicate this work to my late Papa, Max Lippert. Though you are no longer with me physically, I know you are still looking down on me. You always believed in me and pushed me to achieve my goals. Without you, I may not be standing where I am today. For all of this and more, I dedicate my thesis project to you.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

School psychology is a field that emphasizes students’ academic, emotional, behavioral, and social well-being. School psychologists work in collaboration with parents, teachers, and administrators to promote the success of students at all levels. It is critical that there is a sufficient number of school psychologists in practice in order to meet student needs. Approximately 25,000 school psychologists are currently in practice in the United States and the demand for school psychologists remains high (American Psychological Association, 2012).

Curtis, Hunley, and Brier (2004) used university graduation rates along with retirement and attrition rates to determine the current and future need for school psychologists. It was found that the shortage of school psychologists would continue through 2020. In a more recent study, Curtis, Lopez, Castillo, Batsche, Minch, and Smith (2008) confirmed this projection in finding that nearly 50% of current practicing school psychologists were fifty years of age or older. This suggests a high percentage of practicing school psychologists will retire in upcoming years.

In order for training programs to gain highly qualified applicants, individuals must be aware of the field of school psychology. A study by Gilman and Handwerk (2001) found that undergraduate psychology students knew more about the field of school psychology than did undergraduate education majors. More recently, Crislip’s
unpublished thesis found that students perceived their knowledge of school psychology as higher than it actually was. Thus, to inform individuals about the field in hopes of gaining applicants and students, school psychology programs must have an effective recruitment process.

A convenient and consistent time to inform individuals about the field of school psychology is during NASP’s School Psychology Awareness Week (SPAW). This week provides an opportunity for school psychology programs to educate an array of individuals about the field in hopes of recruiting them into their program. Methods such as this may ultimately increase the number of school psychologists in the United States (Davis, 2004).

In past years, the school psychology program at the University of Dayton (UD) has used NASP’s SPAW as a time when school psychologist trainees present to undergraduates at UD (Dr. Susan Davies, personal communication, August 23, 2012). However, the week was not necessarily used as a time for recruitment, but as a time for the trainees to talk about their passion for school psychology.

The present study evaluated the efficacy of targeted information sessions presented during SPAW. It was expected that utilizing more targeted and wide-spread recruitment strategies during SPAW would increase undergraduate students’ knowledge about the field of school psychology, thus making them more likely to apply to UD’s training program.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

School psychology is a field that has evolved considerably over the years. The field is important to the educational system because school psychologists play a crucial role in the lives of many students. Given their important role in schools, it is necessary to have a sufficient number of school psychologists in practice. To increase the number of practicing school psychologists, undergraduate students need to be aware of the field of school psychology. In general, the field of school psychology needs to become more exposed to the public (Davis, 2004). It is important for universities to adopt and utilize effective recruitment strategies that will not only inform individuals about the field, but also attract well-qualified students into their training programs.

This literature review begins with a general overview of the history of school psychology. Next, the need for recruitment in school psychology is examined. While it is crucial to recruit individuals into the field of school psychology, it is important that appropriate and effective recruitment strategies be employed. Next, studies addressing what individuals know about school psychology are evaluated. This will ultimately play a role in determining how to recruit individuals. Finally, school psychology awareness week, devoted to spreading awareness of the field, is introduced, followed by an examination of the University of Dayton’s recruitment process.
History of School Psychology

The history of school psychology dates back to the 1890s (Fagan & Wise, 2007). The progression of the field is marked by two different periods: the hybrid years and the thoroughbred years. The hybrid years occurred from 1890-1969 and the thoroughbred years occurred from 1970 to the present.

From 1890-1969 “school psychology” was a mix of different educational and psychology practices (Fagan & Wise, 2007). The term school psychologist did not appear in English literature until 1898, and it was not until 17 years later that the first individual, Arnold Gesell, was given the title school psychologist. Over a decade after Gesell was appointed as a school psychologist, the first school psychology training program started in New York in 1928 (Fagan & Wise, 2007). The first state association, Ohio School Psychology Association (OSPA), was founded in 1943. Just two years later, the American Psychological Association (APA) established Division 16, which was formed for the specialty of school psychology (NYASP, 2012). It was not until approximately 25 years later that the first national organization for school psychologists was developed. This organization was termed the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and its formation marked the end of the hybrid years.

From 1970 to the present, the field of school psychology expanded. The number of training programs increased along with the number of practicing school psychologists. Numerous state and national associations were established during this time and the field of school psychology was secured (NYASP, 2012).

Currently, there are over 200 training programs across the United States (NASP, 2008). In order for a program to be accredited it must provide evidence of following the
**NASP Standards for Training and Field Placement Programs in School Psychology.**

These standards are broken down into five main areas: (1) program context/structure; (2) domains of school psychology training and practice; (3) field experience/internship; (4) performance-based program assessment and accountability; and (5) program support/resources (NASP, 2000). After a program has been reviewed, NASP will decide to approve the program, give approval with conditions, or reject approval. As of February, 2012 NASP has granted full approval to 138 specialist-level programs and 58 doctoral programs. Approval with conditions has been granted to 26 specialist-level programs and six doctoral programs.

**Need for Recruitment**

There are many training programs, both specialist-level and doctoral, across the United States. Many of these programs have met NASP’s training requirements and are accredited by NASP. With many NASP accredited programs available, it is easy to assume that there are a sufficient amount of school psychologists available in the U.S. In reality, this is not the case. The U.S. is in current need of more school psychologists, and this need will continue into future years (Curtis, Hunley, Grier, 2004; Curtis et al., 2008).

In a study conducted by Curtis, Hunley, and Grier (2004) future projections were developed for the field of school psychology. The researchers found that there will be a great shortage of school psychologists through 2020. Curtis et al. (2004) anticipate a shortage of 3,310 practicing school psychologists between 2011 and 2015 continuing with a shortage of 2,860 between 2016 and 2020. This was determined by analyzing the number of school psychologists entering the workforce through graduation from universities and the number of school psychologists exiting the field through retirement.
and attrition. While the economic downfall was not taken into account in this study, it can still be assumed that this shortage is and will remain present as more recent studies support this notion. For example, Curtis, Lopez, Castillo, Batsche, Minch, and Smith (2008) found that nearly 50% of current practitioners were over the age of 50. Just two years later, Curtis, Castillo, and Gelley (2010) confirmed that the “graying” (i.e., aging) of the field is still present. They found that the mean age of school psychologists is 47.7 years, a 1.2% increase within the last five years (Curtis et al., 2008). This suggests that these individuals will be approaching retirement soon, leaving vacancies that can be filled by newly-trained practitioners.

NASP recommends that the ratio of students to school psychologists be 1,000 students to one school psychologist (Thomas, 2000). Charvat (2005) compiled a list of the approximate number of school psychologists in each of the 50 states, along with the District of Columbia. The list also includes the estimated ratio of students to school psychologists for each state. It was found that only seven of the states maintained the NASP suggested ratio of students to school psychologists (Charvat, 2005). This is not to suggest that the ratio is not improving. Curtis et al. (2008) surveyed 1,748 NASP regular members to collect data on the field of school psychology. They found that the ratio of students to school psychologist has improved in recent years. The desirable ratio (1:1000), as indicated by NASP, is increasing while undesired ratios are decreasing. The survey revealed that 40% of respondents were working in schools with the NASP suggested ratio. Charvat (2011) determined that during the 2009-2010 school year, 33 states had decreased their students-to-school psychologists ratio since the 2004-2005 school year.
In order to continue improving the ratio of students to school psychologists, more school psychologists need to be recruited into the field to meet the needs of the growing population. The United States Census Bureau has estimated that the population of the U.S. will increase to 392 million by 2050, an increase of 50 percent since the 1990s (Day, 2011). With the population expectancy projected to increase, the number of school psychologists would need to as well.

NASP (2006) suggests a number of factors that may be affecting the shortage of school psychologists. The first two pertain to the lack of funding: budget cuts to pupil services programs and lack of funding for programs designed to resolve the shortage (i.e., loan forgiveness programs, personnel preparation grants). NASP (2006) also suggests that there is a lack of existing training programs available to accommodate the demand for new professionals. Additionally, they suggest that personnel attrition due to retirement rates exceeding the number of new school psychology graduates eligible to work may be a key reason for the shortage. Restrictive roles (e.g. testing and assessment) and a limited supply of school psychologists willing to work in certain communities and with certain populations also contributes to the shortage of practicing school psychologists (NASP, 2006).

**Recruitment Strategies**

With ratios already greater than desired, the population expected to increase, and high retirement rates anticipated, there is a clear need for increased recruitment in school psychology. Currently, there is not a “model” recruitment model for school psychology graduate programs to follow. Much of the recent research has focused specifically on minority recruitment. Investigating effective recruitment strategies for minorities is
important; however, it is equally important to study general effective recruitment strategies. Ultimately, it is important for graduate programs to research and employ effective recruiting strategies to gain more qualified school psychologist trainees.

While there is currently minimal information about recruitment specific to school psychology, there exist studies about graduate school recruitment in general. When looking at recruitment strategies, it is first important for graduate programs to understand what undergraduate students know about the graduate school application process. A study by Sanders and Landrum (2012) focused on what undergraduate psychology majors know about the application process for graduate school. The authors administered an online survey to 134 senior-level psychology majors across the United States. The survey results suggest that students lack knowledge about the application process for graduate school. The authors assert that advisors of undergraduate students need to focus on the application process and what it entails. Sanders and Landrum (2012) suggest that undergraduate advisors assign undergraduate students the task of developing their personal statement, while also encouraging them to begin the application process to graduate schools. They further suggest bringing in graduate students who have gone through the application process to assist the undergraduate students with the process. This last piece of information will not only help undergraduate students become more familiar with the application process but also inform them on different graduate programs and areas of study.

A literature review was conducted by Lei and Chuang (2010) examining the factors that influence undergraduate students’ decisions to pursue graduate school along with different recruitment suggestions. The review revealed that many variables play a
role in a student’s decision to attend a graduate institution. Some of these variables were the same as when they decided which undergraduate institution to attend: reputation of the institution, program size and quality, campus resources, availability of financial aid, and more. However, there were additional variables to consider for individuals deciding on a graduate institution, including: GPA requirements, standardized admissions tests, educational and living expenses, and employment opportunities while in school.

After analyzing the findings from the literature review, Lei and Chuang (2010) offer recommendations on how to influence students’ decisions to attend a graduate institution. First, they suggest that faculty become more involved in the recruitment process through positive and friendly interactions with applicants. Secondly, they feel that administrators and program coordinators should take into account the different needs of graduate students. This may mean offering both part-time and full-time tracks as well as helping students to secure financial support (i.e., assistantships, scholarships, fellowships). As a third recommendation, Lei and Chuang suggest having undergraduate students visit different graduate institutions. This gives undergraduate students a time to experience the campus and interact with current graduate students and faculty. Lastly, they advise taking into account the additional needs of international students.

While it is beneficial to know how to recruit students into graduate programs in general, we must also identify ways to recruit individuals into a specific type of graduate program, specifically school psychology. Wandle and Brandt (2007) developed an online survey addressing current school psychology graduate students’ decisions to attend a specific university, and remain there. They utilized a three-part survey consisting of quantitative, qualitative, and demographic questions, and it was completed by 540
graduate students. The results indicated that location of the program was the most influential factor for attending a graduate program, followed by the program’s reputation. A surprising finding from the study was that 39% of non-minority students and 23% of minority students reported being unaware of their graduate university’s current recruitment efforts for their program. This does not mean those universities do not have a recruitment process. Rather, it may mean the universities are using a recruitment process that is ineffective or not well publicized to the undergraduate student body. To improve recruitment efforts, Wandle and Brandt (2007) suggest highlighting the reputation of the program along with how diversity is incorporated into the university’s training program as well as faculty’s research interests.

In a summative report, Davis, McIntosh, Phelps, and Kehle (2004) addressed the demand for more school psychologists. It is important that an adequate number of school psychologists be employed throughout the United States to ensure that K-12 students are receiving the best education possible. Davis et al. (2004) suggest that if the number of school psychologists does not increase, the profession will be forced to simply “test and place” students; school psychologists will not have the time to utilize their other skills and attributes to improve outcomes for youth. For these reasons, they suggest that the field of school psychology needs to be marketed more and made visual to the public, especially toward members of ethnic minority groups. They also propose offering as much financial support as possible to attract individuals who may have difficulty paying for such a degree.

Additionally, Gilman and Handwerk (2001) offered suggestions for recruitment strategies after conducting research on undergraduate students’ knowledge of school
psychology. They suggest providing informational brochures regarding school psychology to individuals who are likely to come in contact with undergraduate students (i.e., professors, counselors, career centers, etc.). The also propose having undergraduate students venture into the field and experience what a school psychologist does on a daily basis. Finally, Gilman and Handwerk suggest holding career seminars that address different fields in psychology, school psychology specifically, to discuss the varying functions and roles of school psychologists.

Ultimately, every university and recruitment process is unique. School psychology programs need to incorporate recruitment techniques that meet the standards and philosophy of their given program. Though every school psychology program may utilize different approaches, it is important that the approaches be effective in recruiting high quality future practitioners.

Knowledge of School Psychology

In order to recruit individuals into the field of school psychology, it is important to understand what they know about the field. There are many professional areas of psychology. That being the case, some areas are more well-known than others and some areas are frequently confused with others. Individuals need to know what the field of school psychology entails in order to determine if it is an area of interest.

A study by Davis et al. (2004) discusses the issue of school psychology being misunderstood in the school system. They found that some school personnel were not aware of a school psychologist’s role in the schools. Unfortunately, school psychologists are often mistaken for school counselors or clinical counselors. This suggests that the
field of school psychology needs to be promoted in many different settings to inform the public of its importance.

A study by Gilman and Handwerk (2001) examined undergraduate students’ knowledge of ten psychology disciplines. However, the study only focused on the results for school and clinical psychology. A total of 622 undergraduate students from five universities across the United States were surveyed. Of the 622 students, 195 were psychology majors, 85 were education majors, and 342 were classified as “other.” Gilman and Handwerk (2001) developed a survey that was utilized for the study. The instrument, Undergraduate Psychology Information Inventory (UPII), contained four sections. The first section examined students’ perceived knowledge of each discipline; the second section looked at the sources students used to learn about the field; the third section asked students if they were planning on applying to a graduate program in a given field; the fourth section asked students to select the roles that each discipline performed.

Gilman and Handwerk (2001) found that psychology majors reported having a better understanding of school psychology than did education majors. This suggests that psychology majors may be getting more exposure to information about school psychology than education majors. However, when asked to describe the roles of school psychologists in the fourth section, there were some inconsistencies with what the respondents actually knew about the field. This may indicate that respondents were reporting their knowledge of the field as higher than it really was. Respondents reported learning about the field through instructors and personal experiences (relational sources), suggesting that personal contacts may be an effective method of gathering information on the field of school psychology. A final relevant finding was that only 11 of the 622
respondents (1.77%) indicated that they were interested in pursuing a career in school psychology.

In a similar, more recent study, Crislip (2011) looked at whether the knowledge of school psychology as a field had an impact on an individual’s decision to pursue the field in graduate school. Crislip administered a modified version of the UPII, the Undergraduate Knowledge about the Field of School Psychology, to undergraduate students at varying universities throughout the state of West Virginia. Participants were predominantly Caucasian (82%) females (77%). The survey contained three sections. The first section looked at demographics and the second section looked at students’ current educational status and future educational goals. The final section contained true/false questions about the field of school psychology.

The results of Crislip’s survey revealed that students who knew more about the field of school psychology were more likely to pursue it as a career. This reiterates the importance of informing individuals of the field in order to increase their knowledge of school psychology. Another finding from the study is that 5th year seniors were more knowledgeable about the field than underclassmen. Crislip suggests that this may be the case because seniors are more likely to be looking into possible career paths upon graduating college.

A related study by Stark-Wroblewski, Wiggins, and Ryan (2006) examined undergraduate psychology students’ interest in and familiarity with different psychology specialty areas. Undergraduate students were selected via a sign-up sheet in the university’s psychology department, and 83 participants were used for the study. The survey consisted of a 5-point Likert type scale for questions pertaining to student’s
interest and familiarity with five psychology specialty areas: counseling psychology, clinical psychology, school psychology, forensic psychology, and criminal profiling. A section for students to report demographic information was also included in the survey.

The findings from this study revealed the students reported being less familiar and interested in school psychology than in counseling or clinical psychology. Students also rated their familiarity with school psychology as higher than their interest in the field. However, it should be noted that this study was self-report, so there was no measure assessing the students’ actual knowledge of the field. The results from the study also suggest that undergraduate psychology students are lacking sufficient information about professional careers in psychology. Stark-Wroblewski et al. (2006) suggest informing students about the different routes to school psychology, for example students who do not gain admission into or choose not to attend an APA-accredited program in clinical or counseling psychology can still become licensed as a health service provider through the school psychology route. Stark-Wroblewski et al. (2006) recommend that psychology programs provide more information to students about possible career paths in professional psychology. They also suggest future studies to assess students’ actual knowledge of professional psychology fields, as well as sources of the knowledge.

Haselhaun and Clopton (2008) conducted a study that may illustrate why undergraduate students may not be as informed or interested in the field of school psychology. Their study examined the representation of applied psychology areas in introductory psychology textbooks. Three advanced graduate students and two faculty members analyzed 32 full-length textbooks for coverage of four applied psychology
areas: clinical, counseling, industrial/organizational, and school psychology. The extent of coverage and the accuracy of coverage were reviewed for each area in each textbook. The study found that school psychology received coverage in the fewest textbooks. Also, the area of school psychology received the least coverage in terms of total words. Of all four areas of applied psychology, school psychology scored lowest for representation in the book, index, and glossary. The mean number of words (71.73) for school psychology was significantly lower than the means for clinical (309.33), counseling (139.78), and industrial/organizational (2324.08). As for accuracy, 22 of the 24 descriptions of school psychology were correct yielding a 91.7% accuracy rate. It should also be noted that school psychology was described as part of the field of educational psychology in ten of the 26 textbooks. The results of the study suggest that information is limited on applied areas of psychology in introductory textbooks, and this is especially the case for the area of school psychology. Haselhaun and Clopton (2008) propose this may be the reason why individuals in the Stark-Wroblewski et al. (2006) study reported lower levels of familiarity and interest in the field of school psychology; this could be due to the lack of descriptive information.

In another study, Graves and Wright (2007) examined factors that influence an individual’s decision to pursue a career in school psychology. They found the majority of respondents (92.2%) chose the field because they wanted to work with children. Additional factors that impacted their career choice included the public school schedule, income potential, and job stability. Graves and Wright emphasized that these desirable features of the job should be incorporated into recruitment strategies. On the other hand, respondents indicated that recruiting efforts by national organizations, such as NASP, did
not affect their decision to pursue a career in school psychology. For this, Graves and Wright propose having current school psychology graduate students utilize NASP’s PowerPoints on school psychology to present to undergraduate students. NASP’s “School Psychology Awareness Week” would be an ideal time to give such a presentation to undergraduate students.

**School Psychology Awareness Week**

School Psychology Awareness Week (SPAW) is a designated week in the school year when school psychologists across the country are asked to promote the field of school psychology (Sikorski, 2012). This week is also designed to recognize how hard school psychologists work to ensure student success. This week of recognition has occurred for over a decade, and has improved each year (K. Cowan, personal communication, May 25, 2012).

Every year, SPAW takes place during the second full week of November. NASP creates a general theme that guides the week’s activities. Examples of themes from years past are “Every Link Matters. Make a Connection.” and “Sowing the Seeds of Success.” NASP members have access to activities, posters, programs, and additional resources pertaining to SPAW and the overall theme (K. Cowan, personal communication, May 25, 2012). School psychologists are encouraged to utilize the available resources during SPAW and throughout the school year.

During SPAW 2011 many school psychologists in training across the U.S. celebrated the field (Sikorski, 2012). The University of Southern Florida (USF), for example, discussed the field of school psychology and Response to Intervention (RTI) in undergraduate classes at their institution. Graduate students at Humboldt State
University set up informational booths on campus and passed out informational brochures. Northeastern University’s graduate students held an appreciate luncheon for their faculty and the University of Southern Maine held a book drive for disadvantaged students in their community. Graduate students at New Mexico State University sent thank you cards to local school psychologists and Southern Illinois University students shared an informational PowerPoint with undergraduate psychology classes. SPAW is a time to celebrate the field of school psychology and these are just a few examples of how SPAW can be utilized to promote the field.

**The University of Dayton’s Recruitment Process**

The University of Dayton (UD) is a private Catholic university in Dayton, Ohio. The school psychology program at UD is accredited by NASP and offers hands on internship and practicum experiences throughout the program. Additionally the program at UD offers both a full-time and a part-time track. In past years, the school psychology program has used a general form of recruitment (Dr. Susan Davies, personal communication, August 23, 2012). They relied heavily on their accreditation listings with NASP and their listing in the *APA Guide to Graduate Studies in Psychology*. Other forms of recruitment utilized included the program’s website and verbally informing individuals about the program (word of mouth).

Additionally, since the 2006-2007 school year, UD graduate students have spoken to UD undergraduates about the profession of school psychology. This talk usually took place during NASP’s SPAW each year. When speaking to undergraduate students, no targeted strategy was used. Rather, a basic PowerPoint taken from NASP’s website was utilized; little personalization was added about UD’s program. Dr. Susan Davies
(personal communication, August 23, 2012) indicated that this presentation was not necessarily used as a form of recruitment but as a time to speak about a field the students are passionate about.

**Purpose for the Present Study**

The field of school psychology needs to be promoted in many different settings to inform the public of its importance. Public knowledge of school psychology has not increased considerably throughout the years (Crislip, 2011; Gilman & Handwerk, 2001). This suggests a need to establish more effective recruitment in order to attract more school psychology students to training programs. The purpose of the present study was to examine the efficacy of a recruiting presentation conducted during School Psychology Awareness Week on increasing undergraduate students’ knowledge of and interest in the field of school psychology. The study investigated undergraduate psychology and education students’ knowledge of and interest in the field of school psychology before and after a presentation on school psychology. The presentation program was intended to spread awareness of the field of school psychology; the results of this program evaluation may help school psychology programs develop more effective recruitment strategies in hopes of gaining more well-qualified school psychology trainees.
CHAPTER III

METHOD

Research Questions

The present study examined two research questions:

1. Does the use of targeted recruitment strategies increase undergraduate psychology and education students’ knowledge of the field of school psychology?

2. Does the use of targeted recruitment strategies increase undergraduate psychology and education students’ interest in the field of school psychology?

Research Design

The current study utilized a program evaluation design aimed at determining if targeted recruitment strategies are effective at increasing undergraduate education and psychology students’ knowledge of and interest in the field of school psychology. Quantitative data were collected utilizing survey research that assessed undergraduate education and psychology students’ knowledge of and interest in school psychology both prior to and following a recruitment presentation (i.e., PowerPoint presentation, brochures, contact information). The criterion variable measured was knowledge of and interest in school psychology, as represented by a mean percentage correct score on the given survey. This was measured for both the pre- and post-survey. Predictor variables
included: (1) prior exposure to information on the field of school psychology, measured in number of sources, (2) students’ grade level, and (3) students’ undergraduate majors.

Participants and Setting

Participants in the study included (n = 192) undergraduate students in psychology and education classes at multiple colleges/universities located in Southwest Ohio (see Table 1 for participant demographic information). This region was selected based on convenience sampling. Each class who consented to participate in the study received a bag of various candies following the study, as thanks for their cooperation.

Table 1

*Participant Demographics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Male</td>
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<td>27-34</td>
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<tr>
<td>35-42</td>
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</tr>
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<td>8.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Specified</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The specific colleges and universities at which the research took place included:

three education classes at the University of Dayton, Psi Chi and Psychology Club at
Wright State University, two psychology classes at Wilberforce University, one psychology and two education classes at Wittenberg University, three education classes at Central State University, one psychology class at Sinclair Community College, one psychology class at Capital University, and one psychology class at Otterbein University. Convenience sampling was utilized through surveying undergraduate psychology and education majors across these institutions of higher education. Table 2 provides a description of the colleges/universities and their locations.

**Table 2**

*College and University Description*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College/University</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital University</td>
<td>Private, four-year undergraduate institution and graduate school</td>
<td>Columbus, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central State University</td>
<td>Public, Historically Black college and university (HBCU)</td>
<td>Wilberforce, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otterbein University</td>
<td>Private, four-year liberal arts college</td>
<td>Westerville, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinclair Community College</td>
<td>Urban, community college, lowest tuition rate in Ohio for residents of Montgomery County</td>
<td>Dayton, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Dayton</td>
<td>Private, Roman Catholic</td>
<td>Dayton, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilberforce University</td>
<td>Private, Liberal arts, Historically Black college and university (HBCU), Nation’s oldest African American college</td>
<td>Wilberforce, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wittenberg University</td>
<td>Nationally ranked Lutheran-affiliated, liberal</td>
<td>Springfield, Ohio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Materials

Measures. Two measures were utilized in this study: (1) the School Psychology Awareness Inventory (SPAI) and (2) a demographic questionnaire.

School Psychology Awareness Inventory (SPAI). The survey instrument, the School Psychology Awareness Inventory (SPAI), was created using a modified version of the Undergraduate Knowledge about the Field of School Psychology survey, developed by Crislip (2011). The Undergraduate Knowledge about the Field of School Psychology survey is a modified version of the Undergraduate Psychology Information Inventory (UPII) that was developed by Gilman and Handwerk (2001). The UPII was assessed for content validity and reliability before it was released. Permission to use a modified version of the UPII was obtained from Gilman and Handwerk. The modified survey (SPAI) was evaluated and approved by the thesis committee chair and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Dayton before it was administered to participants.

The SPAI assessed participants’ knowledge of school psychology in the following domains: training options, qualifications, duties, work places, and populations served (See Appendix A for a copy of the SPAI). The SPAI was administered prior to (pre-SPAI) and following (post-SPAI) a recruitment presentation. The survey included: (1) two Likert scale questions, (2) one multiple-choice question, and (3) ten true/false questions, for both the pre- and post- SPAI. For the post-SPAI, one additional Likert scale question was added. The survey was imbedded in a PowerPoint presentation and
administered electronically to participants. However, in the event of a technology malfunction, paper versions of the survey were also available.

**Demographic questionnaire.** A demographic questionnaire (See Appendix A) was given to participants prior to the pre-SPAI. On the first page of the demographic questionnaire, various demographic and background information was collected to gather indicators regarding the sample of student participants. Questions included: (1) college/university, (2) academic major, (3) anticipated graduation year, (4) gender, (5) age, (6) year in school, (7) hometown (location they are from), (8) ethnic background, (9) iClicker I.D. # (so participants’ qualitative responses could be linked to their iClicker responses). The second page of the demographic questionnaire contained three, write in qualitative questions for the participant to fill out after the PowerPoint presentation and post-SPAI. The first question examined how participants learned about the field of school psychology and from which sources they gained information. The last two questions were open-ended and asked participants to provide suggestions improving future presentations and any additional information they wanted to share about the presentation.

**Recruitment materials.** The targeted recruitment strategies used in the present study included: (1) a PowerPoint presentation on the field of school psychology and UD’s current program; (2) contact information of current school psychology graduate students enrolled in UD’s program; (3) an informational brochure on UD’s school psychology program; (4) and a business card of UD’s current school psychology program director, Dr. Susan Davies.
A PowerPoint presentation (See Appendix B) from NASP’s website was adapted for this study. The NASP-approved School Psychology Awareness PowerPoint supplied a general overview of school psychology to which additional, relevant information was added (i.e., training options, additional resources, etc.). The presentation was designed to increase participants’ knowledge and understanding about the field of school psychology. The modifications to the NASP PowerPoint were intended to gain and sustain the participants’ attention and interest. Each presentation lasted approximately 30 minutes. Informative brochures (See Appendix C) designed by the primary researcher and a colleague were also distributed to the participants as a resource for the future. The brochure contained information on school psychology and UD’s school psychology program. Also included in the brochure was the contact information of the researcher and her thesis partner, should participants want additional information. The participants were encouraged to make personal contact via email or phone should they have additional questions about the admission process or the program in general. Additionally, Dr. Susan Davies’ (thesis committee chair and UD’s program director) business card was distributed to participants wanting the opportunity to contact her for more information on UD’s program.

**Procedures**

During the summer of 2012, the survey instruments (SPAI & Demographic Questionnaire), presentation, and brochure were created and evaluated by the thesis committee for content. Prior to conducting the current study, permission was obtained through the University of Dayton’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). Permission to present and collect data was obtained through the psychology and education department
chairs at each of the universities via e-mail. Once permission was granted, psychology and education classes were selected for the study based on the recommendations of the department chairs (either psychology or education) from each university in accordance with presentation schedule, availability of the presenters, and class time.

Survey data were collected from each of the eight targeted colleges/universities in Ohio both before and after the presentation. The researcher, along with seven fellow school psychology trainees from the University of Dayton, collected the data from the different schools. The primary researcher and her thesis partner presented ten of the fifteen presentations, and the remaining five presentations were delivered by fellow school psychology trainees and interns. All individuals who collected the data were trained on the appropriate way to administer both the pre- and post- SPAI utilizing the iClickers, before their presentations. They were also shown how to properly conduct the presentation and given all the materials needed for the presentation. iClicker is a student response technology that has a unique, but anonymous identifier, so no names were recorded. The iClickers allowed the participants to “click” in his or her answer to the accompanying question, rather than writing it out. A wireless signal immediately sends participants’ responses to a receiver, which links their answers to their iClicker identification number. All presenters were also given an integrity checklist (See Appendix E) that listed, in order, the steps for properly conducting each presentation. The checklist was used as a means to prepare for the presentation as well as a reference to utilize during the presentation.

Participant consent was obtained on the day the presentation. An informed consent script was read aloud to participants (See Appendix D for the verbal informed
Participants were told their participation was voluntary and if they chose to take part in the study, they consent would be provided by answering the questions in pre- and post- SPAI.

Following informed consent, the front page of the demographic questionnaire was completed by participants. Then, the researcher (or fellow school psychology trainees) collected the pre-SPAI data from the participants, on their knowledge of and interest in school psychology, using the iClickers. The SPAI was embedded into the beginning (pre) and end (post) of the PowerPoint presentation. Each SPAI question was on an individual slide, to which participants “clicked” in their response.

After the pre-SPAI was completed, the researcher began the PowerPoint presentation. Once the presentation was complete, the post-SPAI was administered and data on participants’ knowledge of and interest in school psychology were again collected. Participants then filled out the second page of the demographic questionnaire, leaving the researcher with suggestions for future presentations. Finally, participants were given the informational brochures to keep, along with the option to take a business card for UD’s school psychology program director, Dr. Davies.

**Data collection.** Quantitative and qualitative data were collected from each of the eight Ohio universities/colleges used in the study. Quantitative data were collected from the pre- and post- SPAI using the iClickers, along with data obtained from the first page of the demographic questionnaire. Qualitative data were collected from the second page of the demographic questionnaire. All quantitative data yielded from the pre- and post- SPAI were entered into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

One-hundred and ninety-five undergraduate students, from eight Ohio universities, attended the presentations and completed the demographic questionnaire, the pre-SPAI prior to the targeted recruitment strategies, and the post-SPAI immediately following the targeted recruitment strategies. However, two participants did not complete the post-SPAI and one participant did not complete a substantial amount of questions throughout the pre- and post-SPAI; their data were excluded from the study. Data from the one-hundred and ninety-two undergraduate students who fully completed the demographic questionnaire and the pre- and post-SPAI was utilized for the study.

Knowledge of and Interest in School Psychology

Two main research questions were looked at for this study. Data were collected and the following results were discovered.

**Research question 1.** A paired-samples t-test was conducted to determine the impact of targeted recruitment strategies (i.e., PowerPoint presentation, brochures, contact information) on participants’ knowledge of the field of school psychology. For the pre-test, participants achieved an average score of 9.01 out of a possible score of 13 (69%) and for post-test, participants achieved an average score of 10.33 out of a possible score of 13 (79%). Mean scores from the pre-SPAI were compared with mean scores from the post-SPAI to determine the influence of the recruitment strategies on participant
knowledge. A level of \( p = .05 \) was used to determine significance in SPSS. The statistical analysis revealed a significant increase in participants’ knowledge from pre-SPA1 (\( M = 9.01, \text{SD} = 1.39 \)) to post-SPA1 (\( M = 10.33, \text{SD} = 1.01 \)); \( t (191) = -11.52, p = .000 \) (see Figure 1 and Figure 3).

**Research question 2.** An additional t-test was conducted to determine the impact of targeted recruitment strategies (i.e., PowerPoint presentation, brochures, contact information) on participants’ interest in school psychology. Participants were asked to rate the likelihood they would pursue school psychology by applying to a graduate program. Participants had the option to select “No Interest” (scored as 0), “Not Likely” (scored as 1), “Most Likely” (scored as 2), or “Definitely Will Apply” (scored as 3). The analysis revealed a significant increase in participants’ interest from pre-SPA1 (\( M = 1.25, \text{SD} = .71 \)) to post-SPA1 (\( M = 1.45, \text{SD} = .75 \)); \( t (191) = -4.55, p = .000 \) (see Figure 2 and Figure 3).

Figure 1

*Mean Knowledge Scores for Participants Prior to and Following Targeted Recruitment Strategies*
**Figure 2**

*Mean Interest Scores for Participants Prior to and Following Targeted Recruitment Strategies*

**Additional Findings**

**Sources of information.** Quantitative data were collected to determine from which sources participants learned of the field, if any. Participants were able to select multiple sources from which they had heard or learned of the field of school psychology which resulted in multiple responses from each participant. Results found that participants learned of school psychology primarily from instructors (140 reports), while participants seldom learned of the field via television or movies (11 reports) (see Figure 4).
Sources from Which Participants Reported Learning About School Psychology

**Perceived primary role.** Quantitative data were also collected to determine the primary role participants believed school psychologists perform. Data were collected both prior to and immediately following the structured recruitment strategies to determine if participant’s perceptions became more accurate. Results indicated that prior to the targeted recruitment strategies, participants perceived the primary role of a school psychologist to be individual therapy (46%) (see Figure 5). Results following the targeted recruitment strategies indicated that participants perceived the primary role of a school psychologist to be assessment (56%) (see Figure 6). A comparison of participants’ perceptions both prior to and following targeted recruitment strategies can be seen in Figure 7.
Figure 4

Participants’ Perceptions of a School Psychologist’s Primary Role Pre-Test

- 46% Individual Therapy
- 27% Assessment
- 18% Consultation
- 7% Research
- 2% Group therapy

Figure 5

Participants’ Perceptions of a School Psychologist’s Primary Role Post-Test

- 56% Assessment
- 21% Consultation
- 16% Individual Therapy
- 5% Research
- 2% Group therapy
Personally know a school psychologist. Prior studies found that individuals reported learning of the field of school psychology from relational sources, such as instructors and personal experiences (Gilman & Handwerk, 2001). For this reason, data were collected to determine how many participants reported personally knowing a school psychologist. The results were a recognition of how hidden the field of school psychology may be, with only 57 out of 192 (29.7%) participants indicating that they know a school psychologist (see Figure 8).
Helpfulness of targeted recruitment strategies. Data were collected to determine participants’ opinions on how helpful the overall presentation was. Out of the 192 participants, 185 (96.4%) reported finding the presentation “Extremely Helpful” to “Pretty Helpful,” while only 7 reported finding the presentation “Somewhat Helpful” to “Not Helpful” (see Figure 9).
Qualitative Data

Open-ended feedback was sought from participants on two areas following the targeted recruitment strategies. The researcher asked participants to state any suggestions they had for improving future presentations, along with any additional information that would be of benefit to them. These results were desired not only to help improve the targeted recruitment strategies utilized by the University of Dayton’s school psychology program, but to also help other universities improve or adopt effective recruitment strategies. This data was analyzed using a content analysis. The researcher examined the qualitative responses for common themes. The common themes were compared with the common themes reported by the researcher’s thesis partner.

Three common themes were found from participants’ suggestions for improving future presentations. Overall, participants reported that the presentation was very informative and provided great information with little to no recommendations for future presentations. Recommendations from others included providing a handout to students to take notes on during the presentation, making sure technology is functioning properly, and making the presentation more interactive with the audience. Furthermore, participants reported that they appreciated the sharing of personal experiences and found the presentation to be most beneficial and engaging when presenters appeared confident, projected their voice, talked slow, and were prepared and knowledgeable on the topic.

Below is some specific feedback participants provided:

“I thought this was really great & informative! Definitely makes me think about applying to a program like this because I’m interested in school psychology! Thanks!”
“It was a great presentation. It was very informative and I liked the fact that the presenters incorporated personal stories. It may be helpful to have someone who is already a school psychologist come into talk as well.”

“You did an awesome job. You delivered everything successfully. I love that you didn’t read from the PowerPoint, but used it as a guide.”

“Good job overall! My only suggestion would be to speak at a slower pace throughout the presentation.”

“The presentation was awesome. I think more interaction between survey giver and survey taker would improve the presentation for the future.”

Additionally, two common themes were found from participants’ recommendations for additional materials to include or provide. The majority of participants (approximately 120) stated that they were provided adequate information during the presentation with limited to no further information needed. Other participants requested material including more information on financial aid, assistantships, cost of the program, a curriculum/course requirement map, internship salary, and the cost of the Argentina trip. Below is some feedback participants provided.

“I am/I was actually thinking of duel majoring in education and psychology! All of this info was very inspiring and beneficial.”
“The information in the slideshow was enough to perhaps persuade me to change my graduate major. 😊”

“I would like to know more about UD’s program and more about paid internships and half-off each semester.”

“What the school looks for in applicants, application process, funding available.”
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of targeted recruitment strategies implemented during School Psychology Awareness Week on increasing undergraduate students’ knowledge of and interest in the field of school psychology. The presentation program was intended to spread awareness of the field of school psychology, while recruiting more well-qualified school psychology trainees.

Review and Interpretation of Findings

Results from the study indicate that participants became more knowledgeable on the field of school psychology following the targeted recruitment strategies. The results showed a significant increase in participants’ mean scores from pre-test to post-test, suggesting the recruitment strategies were effective in their aim. The percentage correct scores for the pre-test show that participants only knew 69% (9 correct out of a possible 13) of the questions they were asked on the topic of school psychology. These finding are consistent with Gilman and Handwerk’s (2001) findings that when asked to answer factual questions on school psychology, participants’ knowledge scores tended to be lower than what they thought they knew on the subject area. It should be noted that the pre-test scores may have been higher than the participants’ actual knowledge on the topic because the majority of the questions were presented in a “True/False” manner, giving the participant a 50/50 chance of answering the question correctly.
The percentage correct scores for the post-test show that participants knew 79% (10.33 correct out of a possible 13) of the questions they were asked on the topic of school psychology, demonstrating a 10% increase following the brief 20-minute presentation. This increase shows that a short presentation can have an impact on participants’ understanding of the field of school psychology. Furthermore, Stark-Wroblewski et al. (2006) concluded that undergraduate psychology students were lacking sufficient information about professional careers in psychology, and the data confirms that this still appears to be the case with school psychology. Specifically, the results suggest that universities that utilize the specified targeted recruitment strategies will increase participants’ knowledge of the field of school psychology.

Another positive finding from this study was that participants’ interest in school psychology increased at a level considered significant from pre-test to post-test. Participants’ mean interest score from pre-test was 1.24 and participants’ mean interest score from post-test was 1.45. A score of “1” indicates that the participant is “Not Likely” to pursue school psychology and attend a school psychology graduate program and a score of “2” indicates that the participant is “Most Likely” to pursue school psychology and attend a school psychology graduate program. The pre-test mean score indicates that participants, as a whole, felt they were not likely to attend a school psychology graduate program. While the post-interest score did not increase drastically, it was still statistically significant. The post-test mean score indicates that participants, as a whole, became more interested in the field and shifted toward being most likely to apply to a school psychology graduate program. While the increase does seem small, this could be due to the fact that all participants’ interest scores were averaged. Thus, while some
participants’ interest increased following the presentation, other participants’ interest decreased. This is what one would expect because not everyone will be interested in the same field. For example, individuals who thought school psychology entailed more one-on-one therapy with children may have left the presentation less interested in pursuing a career in school psychology. Overall, data indicates that after the presentation more participants became interested than disinterested in the field. Additionally, the study targeted primarily undergraduate students in their junior and senior years. Thus, there is a high likelihood that they have already chosen a career path and may be set on their decision or simply not want to go through the steps to change their career plan. Crislip (2011) found that students who knew more about school psychology became more interested in the field and more likely to pursue it. These results support that notion; knowledge increased with participants as did their interest in the field. It can only be hoped that this increased interest will draw at least a few participants into a training program and eventually into practice. Specifically, the results suggest that universities that utilize the specified targeted recruitment strategies will increase participants’ interest in the field of school psychology.

With the presentation showing positive results for knowledge and interest, more studies are needed to continue spreading awareness. While a presentation may not increase the interest of every participant, it does increase the participants’ awareness of the field of school psychology. This helps improve awareness of possible career paths, should a participant change fields later in life. It also gives participants a new contact in the school system, whether the participant ultimately works there or needs the school psychologist’s help for his or her own child. Finally, if a participant has increased
knowledge and interest in the field, he or she may be likely to inform other individuals who were not present at the presentation information about the field. Thus, a participant who has already decided to pursue school administration might talk with her roommate, who is uncertain about her career path, about the presentation.

Additional data for this study were collected to gather more information on other aspects of school psychology, such as how/where participants have learned of the field, their perceptions on a school psychologist’s duties, and if they personally know a school psychologist. Participants (73%) reported that they mostly learned about the field of school psychology from previous instructors. This supports Gilman and Handwerk’s (2001) findings that students reported learning about the field through instructors and personal experiences. The current study found that relational sources of learning through instructors, personal experience, and family/friends were three of the top five sources. The data also revealed that course textbooks were the second highest source, accounting for 31% of participants. This finding was surprising, as Haselhaun and Clopton (2008) had found that school psychology received coverage in the fewest textbooks. While the internet was the third highest source (only 30%), television and movies came in last. With media and technology being popular and highly used in today’s society, the field of school psychology should perhaps try and utilize such sources to inform the public and raise awareness.

Data on participants’ assumptions of a school psychologist’s primary role shows a general lack of understanding about the field. The majority of participants thought that the primary role of a school psychologist was to conduct individual therapy. This finding was anticipated, as Davis et al. (2004) revealed that many school personnel were unaware
of a school psychologist’s role in the school. If individuals who work in the same environment as a school psychologist are unaware of his or her roles, then the likelihood of undergraduate students knowing is slim. This finding stresses the importance of school psychologists making themselves known in the school system to all staff and students, not just those with whom they are directly serving. This would then improve another area of concern found in this study. Data determined that only 30% of participants reported personally knowing a school psychologist. If students in related fields (i.e., psychology and education) are unable to report knowing a school psychologist, the likelihood of other, less relevant majors knowing a school psychologist is extremely low.

Finally, the study sought to determine participants’ perceptions of the benefits, or lack thereof, of the targeted recruitment strategies. Overall, 97% of participants found the presentation to be helpful, indicating the presentation gained their attention and increased their knowledge and awareness with the information presented. Additionally, the majority of qualitative feedback was positive and encouraging. Most participants reported enjoying the presentation and learning a lot about school psychology from it. Universities need to be aware of effective recruitment strategies to inform, interest, and recruit undergraduate students into their school psychology training programs. This data should encourage other school psychology programs and organizations to promote the use of targeted recruitment strategies such as these. School Psychology Awareness Week is as an ideal time to utilize the recruitment strategies to spread awareness of the field of school psychology. With this week taking place around the same time each year (last
fall), it would be a convenient and consistent time to educate students, especially those who have yet to decide upon a career path or apply to graduate schools.

**Limitations**

While the results from the current study are considered valid, some limitations were discovered. First, convenience sampling was utilized for this study. Therefore, all participants had to attend one of the eight chosen universities in Ohio, reducing the study’s generalizability. Studies should try and expand the sample to include additional locations across the United States. Also, there were some technological issues. Some universities did not have the updated technology needed to use the iClickers. Additionally, several universities had Mac computers instead of PCs, and because the researcher was not trained on how to use the iClickers on a Mac, the iClickers could not be used at those universities. Consequently, for six presentations, participants responded using a paper/pencil version of the survey. Future studies should consider using a form of data collection that would allow all the data to be collected in the same manner. Next, data were collected using self-report, and perhaps the fixed-responses did not allow participants to fully display their knowledge of and/or interest in the field of school psychology. Studies should consider using alternative forms to obtain participant answers, in order to get a more complete and thorough representation of the participant’s knowledge of and interest in the field. Finally, not all participants had the option to take one of Dr. Davies’s business cards with them. This was due to the fact that the researcher ran out of business cards and was not able to acquire anymore. Before beginning a study, the researcher should ensure that adequate materials are available to guarantee all participants receive the same materials.
Implications for Future Research

Future research should replicate this study but expand it to other universities across the United States, specifically larger 4-year universities. While this study solely focused on education and psychology majors, future studies should consider including majors such as Spanish and other foreign languages or even “undecided” majors. Targeting foreign language majors may increase the linguistic diversity in the field, something that is important in meeting the needs of the growing population of English Language Learners (ELLs) in the U.S. Targeting “undecided” majors may help the students decide on a career choice or at least give them an option. Additionally, studies should also consider targeting more undergraduate students and perhaps even high school students in order to introduce the students to the field before they have decided upon a career path. Future research might look to expand presentations to teachers and other school personnel in schools, rather than just undergraduate students. Research could also examine the benefits of presenting to and/or informing students during career fairs both at the high school and undergraduate level. Finally, this study solely focused on the immediate knowledge of undergraduate students following targeted recruitment strategies. Future studies should investigate what participants actually remember and take away from the presentations months or years later.

Conclusion

The present study found promising results for ways to increase knowledge of and interest in the field of school psychology. The targeted recruitment strategies proved to be effective in increasing knowledge, interest, and awareness of school psychology and a school psychologist’s primary role. The targeted strategies were also perceived as
helpful and informative by participants. While this study rendered many positive results, more studies are needed to gain further information on effective recruitment strategies and on promoting such strategies to universities across the United States. With further research the gap between the number of practicing school psychologists and the number needed in schools can hopefully be reduced through the recruitment of more students into school psychology training programs.
REFERENCES


School Psychology Awareness Inventory

Pre-test Paper Version

College/University: _________________________

Major: _______________

Anticipated Graduation Year: __________

Gender: _____ Age: _____

Where are you from? (Check the one that best describes location of your “home town”)

- Ohio
- Midwestern US (not Ohio)
- Northeastern US
- Southeastern US
- Southwestern US
- Great Plains
- Western US
- Outside of the US __________

What is your ethnic background? (Check all that apply)

- African (any African country)
- Canadian
- East Asian (Japan, China, Korea, Philippines)
- European (any European country)
- Latino/a (any Central or S. American country)
- South Asian (India, Malaysia, Indonesia, etc.)

Clicker I.D. #: ____________________________
☐ African-American
☐ Canadian-American
☐ East Asian-American
☐ European-American
☐ Latino/a-American
☐ South Asian-American
☐ Not Listed
Clicker Pre-Test with PowerPoint Presentation

Directions: We would like to know about your current knowledge of the profession of School Psychology. Please be as honest as possible and do not discuss your answers with anyone else while completing this inventory. This is NOT a test. Your answers will not affect your academic grades in any way and your responses will be confidential. Only your clicker number will be associated with your responses and only the presenters and their program advisor will have access to the data collected.

1. How knowledgeable are you about the field of school psychology?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Knowledge</th>
<th>Somewhat Knowledgeable</th>
<th>Pretty Knowledgeable</th>
<th>Extremely Knowledgeable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Indicate the source(s) that you primarily used/are using to learn about the field of school psychology. (NOTE: you may choose more than one if applicable).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructors</th>
<th>Books/ Magazines</th>
<th>Journals</th>
<th>Television/ Movies</th>
<th>Friends/ Family</th>
<th>Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Experience</th>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>Professional Organizations</th>
<th>Course Textbook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Check which role you feel school psychologists are trained to perform:

- Group Therapy: _______
- Assessment: _______
- Individual Therapy: _______
Directions: Please circle “true” if the statement you read is correct. Please circle “false” if the statement you read is incorrect.

True  False  School Psychologists work in hospitals.

True  False  School Psychologists work in private practice.

True  False  School Psychologists must hold a doctoral degree in order to practice.

True  False  School Psychologists perform individual assessments on children.

True  False  School Psychologists help teachers improve their classroom management skills.

True  False  School Psychologists do crisis support in schools.

True  False  School Psychologists complete course work in areas such as special education, statistics, child psychology, assessment, and reading.

True  False  School Psychologists only deal with minor forms of emotional disturbances such as depression or anxiety.

True  False  School Psychologists perform research and program evaluations.

True  False  I know someone personally who is a School Psychologist.
Please indicate how interested you are in attending a school psychology program in the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Interest</th>
<th>Not Likely</th>
<th>Most Likely</th>
<th>Definitely will apply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Clicker Post-Test with PowerPoint Presentation

**Directions:** We would like to know about your current knowledge of the profession of School Psychology. Please be as honest as possible and do not discuss your answers with anyone else while completing this inventory. This is NOT a test. Your answers will not affect your academic grades in any way and your responses will be confidential. Only your clicker number will be associated with your responses and only the presenters and their program advisor will have access to the data collected.

1. **How knowledgeable are you about the field of school psychology?**

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<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Check which role you feel school psychologists are trained to perform:**

   - Group Therapy: _______
   - Assessment: _______
   - Individual Therapy: _______
   - Consultation: _______
   - Research: _______

**Directions:** Please circle “true” if the statement you read is correct. Please circle “false” if the statement you read is incorrect.

- **True**  **False**  School Psychologists work in hospitals.

- **True**  **False**  School Psychologists work in private practice.

- **True**  **False**  School Psychologists must hold a doctoral degree in order to practice.

- **True**  **False**  School Psychologists perform individual assessments on children.

- **True**  **False**  School Psychologists help teachers improve their classroom management skills.
True   False   School Psychologists do crisis support in schools.

True   False   School Psychologists complete course work in areas such as special education, statistics, child psychology, assessment, and reading.

True   False   School Psychologists only deal with minor forms of emotional disturbances such as depression or anxiety.

True   False   School Psychologists perform research and program evaluations.

1. Please circle how informative/helpful you felt the PowerPoint presentation was.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Helpful</th>
<th>Somewhat Helpful</th>
<th>Pretty Helpful</th>
<th>Extremely Helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. How interested are you in applying for a school psychology program in the future?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No interest</th>
<th>Not likely</th>
<th>Most likely</th>
<th>Definitely will apply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. After hearing the presentation, what is the likelihood that you will apply to a school psychology program after graduation? (Circle the answer that most applies to your situation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No interest</th>
<th>Not likely</th>
<th>Most likely</th>
<th>Definitely will apply</th>
</tr>
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Post-Test Paper Version

Directions: We would like to know about your current knowledge of the profession of School Psychology. Please be as honest as possible and do not discuss your answers with anyone else while completing this inventory. This is NOT a test. Your answers will not affect your academic grades in any way and your responses will be confidential. Only your clicker number will be associated with your responses and only the presenters and their program advisor will have access to the data collected.

1p. Indicate the sources you primarily used/are using to learn about the field of school psychology. (NOTE: you may choose more than one if applicable).

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<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2p. Please provide any suggestions you have for how we can improve the presentation for the future:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

3p. If you are interested in applying to a school psychology program, what information would be beneficial for you?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Making a Difference: A Career in School Psychology
Agenda

- What is a school psychologist?
- What do school psychologists do?
  - Roles & Responsibilities
- Where do they work?
- Why should I be a school psychologist?
- How do I become a school psychologist?
- University of Dayton’s Program

What is a School Psychologist?

- Help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally
- Promote children’s mental health
- Work collaboratively with others
- Collaborate with educators, parents, and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments
- Strengthen connections between home, school, and the community for all students
What Do School Psychologists Do?

- Assessment
- Consultation for student and systems-level change
- Prevention
- Intervention
- Staff, parent, and student education
- Research and program development
- Mental health care
- Advocacy

School Psychologists work with Students

- Help students who may have:
  - Learning difficulties
  - Behavior concerns
  - Attention problems
  - Problems at home or with peers
  - Fears about war, violence, terrorism
  - Depression and other mental health issues
  - Coping with crisis and trauma
  - Poverty, violence, or life changing events
  - Advocacy of their learning and mental health needs
School Psychologists work with Families

- Help address learning and behavioral problems that may interfere with academic success
- Evaluate eligibility for special education services
- Enhance the collaboration between home and school

School Psychologists work with Teachers & Administrators

- Collect and analyze data related to school improvement and student outcomes
- Implement school-wide intervention programs that promote a positive learning environment
- Respond to crises by providing leadership and coordination with community resources
- Collaborate with teachers to help them identify classroom-based problems and implement data-based interventions (Ex. Classroom management)
Where do they work?

- Public & Private Schools
- Colleges & Universities
- Mental Health Centers
- Private Practice
- Pediatric Clinics & Hospitals
- Public agencies
- Criminal Justice System

The Benefits of Being a School Psychologist

- Making a huge difference in children and families' lives
  - Help students with learning problems
  - Help students and families with life stressors
  - Help students with behavioral problems learn new ways to respond
What else?

- **Excellent** job outlook both now and long-term!
  - Not enough graduates to meet demand
    - Significant shortages of school psychologists are projected to continue to decline through 2020
  - Retirement will soon open many positions
    - 52.9% are expected to retire by the year 2015

- Named **one of the best careers** in 2010 by US News Weekly and World Report

What do School Psychologists make?

- **Median** salaries range from $47,880.00 to $67,070.00, while top salaries can exceed $100,000.

- **Mean per diem salary** for practitioners at the specialist level is $287.00 and $350.00 at the doctoral level.

- **Salaries for school psychologists** vary by state and region.
Undergraduate Education

- Must complete a Bachelor's degree
- Consider an education, psychology or related field
- Take courses in
  - Child development
  - General and child psychology
  - Statistics, measurement, and research
  - Philosophy and theory of education
  - Instruction and curriculum
  - Special education

Graduate School

- Education Specialist
  - In most states, certification as a school psychologist requires training at the specialist level.
  - Specialist-level degrees can be identified by several acronyms including: Educational Specialist (EdS), Masters (MA, MS, MEd) and Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS/CAS) etc.
- Doctorate (PhD, PsyD or EdD)
Program Length

- **Specialist-level:**
  - 3-4 years (60+ semester credit hours) of full-time training including a 1200-hour internship*

- **Doctorate:**
  - 5+ years or more (90+ semester credit hours) of full-time training including a minimum 1500-hour internship*, and dissertation

*At least (600) hours of the internship must be completed in a school setting.

How do I choose a program?

- Specialist vs. Doctoral degree
- NASP approval/alignment and/or APA accreditation
- Size of cohort and location of program
- Department of Education or Psychology
- Theoretical orientation
- Specialties (e.g., early childhood, low incidence, urban, rural, bilingual etc.)
- Research opportunities
- Financial support (assistantships/fellowships)
Applying to a Graduate Program

- GRE: Graduate Record Exam
  - Some programs may require the GRE—Psychology
- Undergraduate transcripts
- Letters of recommendation
- Personal statement(s)
- Practice or research interests

University of Dayton

- NASP & NCATE-approved program
- Training in intervention-based consultation and assessment approaches
- Receive Master's degree in Education (MSE) & Education Specialist (Ed. S)
- Hands-on practicum experiences throughout 3 years
- Small student-faculty ratio for ideal learning environment
- Paid internship in Ohio
Why UD?

- Progressive, innovative coursework
  - Course work in areas such as special education, statistics, assessment, crisis intervention, child psychology etc.

- Marianist Mission
  - Strong emphasis on community, leadership, and service

- School Psychologists of the University of Dayton (SPUD)

- Opportunity for study abroad experience

Why UD?

- Well-known faculty members who promote success in a variety of ways
  - Publications and presentations
  - Various research backgrounds & specialties

- Assistantships offered to students
  - Full-time students hold a wide range of assistantships:
    - Department of Counselor Education and Human Services; GA’s to professors; Montgomery County ESC; Teacher Education Department; Ready, Set, Sear; Center for International Programs

- Students receive their tuition at half price in addition to a bi-monthly stipend.
SPUD

Argentina Trip
University of Dayton

- 3 cohorts, each with full- and part-time students:
  - Typically accept 10 full-time and 2 part-time students each year.
- All cohorts are made up of students from both psychology and educational backgrounds
- Allows for discussion from different perspectives and experiences.

Contact Information

- Susan Davies  Program Coordinator  937-229-3652
- Counselor Education and Human Services
- Chaminade Hall, Room 301
- Phone: 937-229-3644  Fax: 937-229-1055
Contact Information

- Amanda Fritz
  School Psychologist in Training
  afritz1@udayton.edu
- Emily Hendricks
  School Psychologist in Training
  hendrickse1@udayton.edu

Questions?
References


APPENDIX C

Testimonials

"I feel honored to be part of the School Psychology Program at the University of Dayton. The students and faculty have provided me with support and encouragement as I changed my career path in life. I am confident that I am able to provide professional and ethical services to students and their families after receiving my training at UD." - Kathleen Spairio, Intern

I chose the University of Dayton’s school psychology program because the program’s content is cutting edge. The University of Dayton’s school psychology program offers many unique options for students which includes attending the program on a full-time or part-time basis. - Kendra Hubbard, Intern

"The professors in our program are unique in that they have all worked, or are currently working as a school psychologist. When covering new material it’s very helpful to have someone with experience to provide insight on how the new information can be applied." - Jared Fletcher, 2nd year

"School Psychologists are child advocates. There is no greater reward then seeing the smile on a student’s face when they make progress academically or behaviorally to meet grade level expectations." - Brooke Ford, School Psychologist & Instructor at UD

Contact Information

Amanda Fritz,
Second Year Student
Phone Number: (619) 231-3373
Email Address: zfrizzi@udayton.edu

Emily Hendrickx,
Second Year Student
Phone Number: (618) 293-4243
Email Address: hendedri@udayton.edu

How can I find out more?

Visit the University of Dayton’s School Psychology Program website at:
http://www.udayton.edu/sum/graduate/education/major_school_psychology.php

The application process is online, easy and fast.

Complete online application at:
https://grad admission.udayton.edu/

*Full Application Deadline: January 15th
What does a School Psychologist do?

- Help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally
- Promote children’s mental health
- Work collaboratively with others
- Collaborate with educators, parents, and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments
- Strengthen connections between home, school, and the community for all students

Benefits of Being a School Psychologist

- Create positive environments and make a difference in the lives of children, both academically and emotionally
- Not enough school psychologists to meet the expanding demand
- 53.9% of school psychologists are expecting to retire by the year 2015

University of Dayton
School Psychology Program
(M.S.P., Ed.S.)

- Low student to faculty ratio
- Accredited by the National Association of School Psychologists
- Hands-on internship and practicum experience throughout the program
- Innovative, data-based, problem-solving approach to learning
- Participation in a unique study abroad experience
- Become a high-caliber professional who is an adaptive leader in a changing and evolving world

For More Information...

Susan Davies
Program Coordinator
E-mail: sddavies@udayton.edu
937-229-3652

Counselor Education and Human Services
Chaminade Hall, Room 301
Dayton, OH 45469-0330
Phone: 937-229-3644
Fax: 937-229-1085
APPENDIX D

Informed Consent Script

“Hello. We are graduate students in the school psychology program at the University of Dayton. In the presentation today we will be providing you with information on the field of school psychology and information about our program at UD. Before we start the presentation, we will ask you some questions about your knowledge and interests in the field of school psychology. You will use iClickers (*hold up an iClicker to demonstrate*) to give your answers. We are collecting this data for a study we are conducting about undergraduate’s knowledge about school psychology and so we can learn about the impact of our presentations on admissions. Your participation voluntary and your answers will be confidential, which means no individual response will be linked with you or your name. Your agreement to participate in our survey will be indicated by your decision to accept the electronic clicker. You can also accept a clicker and skip any questions that you choose not to answer. There is no penalty for not participating in our study and of course you can choose to not answer the questions, but stay for the presentation. Data from this presentation will be saved and merged with data from other university presentations. At the end of the presentation you will use the clickers again to answer questions, plus we will pass out paper and pencil surveys so you can give us feedback on the presentation. If you have any questions please feel free to contact us. Our contact information will be included at the end of our presentation and on the brochures we hand out at the end.”
APPENDIX E

Steps for School Psychology Awareness Week Presentations:

1. Introduce yourselves.
2. Read the informed consent to the class.
3. Have one person hand out the iClickers and one upload the PowerPoint from your USB.
4. Once the PowerPoint is up on the computer, remove your USB, and insert the iClicker USB.
5. Open the iClicker file according to the yellow sheet we provided you with.
6. While one of you is opening the iClicker file, the other should hand out the paper portion of the survey.
7. Instruct the students to record their iClicker ID # onto the sheet.
8. Then, demonstrate to the students how to turn on their iClicker.
9. Have the students fill out the first page ONLY of the paper portion of the survey.
10. Open the PowerPoint, tell the class you are going to begin by collecting some information, and begin the PowerPoint survey. Remember to push start before collecting data and stop after collecting the data-for each question.
11. After the survey, continue with the PowerPoint and begin the presentation portion.
12. Once the presentation portion is over, inform the students you will be collecting some more data, and begin the PowerPoint post-presentation survey.
13. Once the PowerPoint (iClicker) post-presentation survey is completed, have the students turn over their paper portion of the survey and fill it out.
14. Collect the iClickers and paper portion of the survey. ***When collecting the paper portion of the survey, check and make sure each students put their iClicker ID# on there.***
15. Hand out the informational brochures to the students in the class.
16. Give the “Thank You” card to the professor and thank him or her for allowing us to present to his or her class.
17. Leave a bag of candy for the students as a gift of our appreciation for their cooperation.
18. You’re DONE!! Thanks so much for your help 😊