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Data Summary: Listening to students talk

Description of the project: Dr. Lia Daniels (University of Alberta) and Dr. Robert Klassen (The University of York, UK), and a research team of graduate students were interested in exploring topics related to emotions, bullying, and life in general for university students. This study examined the thoughts and opinions of pre-service teachers on a number of important issues related to contemporary research.

Procedure: A total of 80 students were recruited in Fall 2012 through a participant pool in exchange for research credits. Participants were required to complete one 60-90 minute focus group. Our research group conducted four separate focus groups projects titled as A) A Narrative View of Procrastination within Emerging Adults, B) Life Goals among Emerging Adults, and C) Pre-service Teacher Perspectives on Social Emotional Competence and Social Emotional Learning Personally and in the Classroom D) Perspectives of Bullying in Emerging Adults.

Data summary: The remainder of the document is intended as feedback to our participants. We have included information that we hope you find interesting and informative. Specifically, we list the full set of interview questions discussed, suggest some themes that emerged from the dialogue, provide participants' own words, and offer some conclusions. **Thank you so much** for your willingness to discuss these topics with us.

Table of Contents

Focus Group Topic	page
<i>A Narrative View of Procrastination within Emerging Adults</i>	2
<i>Life Goals among Emerging Adults</i>	3-4
<i>Preservice Teacher Perspectives on Social Emotional Competence and Social Emotional Learning Personally and in the Classroom</i>	5-6
<i>Perspectives of Bullying in Emerging Adults</i>	7-8

A Narrative View of Procrastination within Emerging Adults

Focus group questions:

What does procrastination look like?

1. What does it mean to procrastinate within your own life?
2. Is there an image or a metaphor that comes to mind when you think about your procrastination?
Probe questions: Does it have a colour? Smell? Sound?
3. Does it appear, sneak up on you or always around?
4. How does your procrastination affect you? Is it your friend, or enemy or both?

Where in life does procrastination affect you?

5. Where does it affect your life, and when?
6. How does it affect your mood, performance?
7. How in the past have you been successful in dealing with procrastination?
8. Has your procrastination ever helped you out?
9. How is the procrastination that affects you different than others?
10. Has your procrastination changed throughout your life?

How do you perceive procrastination to affect you in the future as an emerging adult?

11. In the next 10 years, how might procrastination affect your life goals?
12. Do you have any plans on how to fight procrastination in the future?
13. How do you think your procrastination is perceived by others?

Theme 1: Procrastination is sometimes good

- Positive pressure to get work done
- Pressure and anxiety is needed to motivate the person to complete the task

Theme 2: There is a constant weighing involved with procrastination

- Students look at the pros and cons of doing a task right now
- Often procrastination is looked at in economic terms in which the task appears more important as time gets closer to the deadline
- A constant assessment of the meaning behind the tasks and whether they want to do them right now

Theme 3: Procrastination increases productivity of other tasks

- Procrastination can be seen as good such that other tasks that are less aversive get done (ex. cleaning, socializing etc)

Theme 4: Procrastination comes in the form of over-planning or over-organizing tasks when no actual work gets done

- Students struggle with wanting to plan the tasks but not getting to the actual work

Metaphorical Externalization Themes

1. Procrastination is like taking the scenic route in life
2. Procrastination is like being stuck on a trail going the wrong way
3. Procrastination is seen as both a friend and an enemy in people's lives

Conclusions: These findings from the two focus groups brings a greater understanding of what it means for students to experience procrastination. Procrastination is a very complex *process* that current measures possibly limit in terms of how it is represented. More research is needed on the individual differences of how procrastination is thought of cognitively, how it is experienced emotionally, how procrastination relates motivationally, and, as this study shows, how procrastination can be understood through individuals' metaphors and symbolic constructions.

Thank you!

Life Goals among Emerging Adults

Opening question: How do you know when you've become an adult or reached adulthood?

1. What characteristics do you think indicate that you are an adult (or have reached adulthood)? (These criteria may be related to any life domain, such as friendship, academic, antisocial/aggressive conduct, work and romantic.)
2. Do you think the characteristics for adulthood have changed over the past decades? How? Probe: What changes do you see between your generation's perspective on criteria for adulthood and your parent's generation?
3. Do you think you are an adult now? Probe: if yes or sometimes yes, would you like to share some experiences or moments in which you felt you are an adult?
4. If you do not think you are an adult totally, what label would you use to describe yourself? Probe: What feelings do you have about this point/time in your life?
5. At this point in your life you may face to various transitions and changes and goals would play dominant roles for your daily life. Generally, what are your life goals? (These goals/projects may be related to any life domain, such as education, work, family, or self-related issues).
6. To what extent are these goals important to you? Why?
7. To what extent are you confident you can attain these goals?
8. To what extent are you stressed about being able to attain these goals?
9. What is the source of these life goals from? (individual/ parents/ peers/teachers)

Themes and Conclusion

Overall there were five main findings that came from this this: 1) Criteria of being an adult, 2) Concepts and Stigmas on being an adult, 3) The transition to adulthood, 4) Characteristics of being an emerging adult, and 5) The goals of emerging adults. We have presented an abridged version of the main findings and subthemes below.

What are the concept/stigma on adulthood/adults?

1. Positive
 - People have dreams have goals and aspiration. That is what we all think what adult to be.
 - I do want to be adult. but I do not think I can be until I am done school. To be an adult, you do not need to be dependent on other people.
2. Negative
 - I think it is also important to keep some perspectives of childhood as an adult.
 - I do not want to be adult.
 - I think to keep expected childish is really important to find happiness in adulthood.
 - I just want to say the definition is negative stigma. When you say adult, people would think you are not fun.
 - I think Part of being an adult is the willing to continuously to grow. I want to be adult sense that I want to be responsible. I want to accomplish something in my life. But at the same time, I do want to have fun and I do not want to be stressed out about my life.
 - I think people should change their conception about being an adult.
 - they are stressful and their life are miserable for any reasonable reasons.
 - they always say what should I do, I am tired
 - Everybody costs as an adult.

How to transition into adulthood?

1. Natural
 - It was no choice to be an adult

2. Nurture

- Environment impact
 - Nobody wants to grow up. But at some points the support from environment allows you to be child disappeared.
 - We can control and make ourselves to prepare for being adult. but we cannot manipulate our surroundings. I can get the best possible conditions for me I need.
 - So it is more about your environment and your study.
 - I think to be adults is depend on people you are around.
- Career goals and preparation
 - I mentally prepared to be adult but I know I do not have to be.
 - I think having a job will help you move close to adult because you are responsible and you are independent.
 - you can do is to be seeking the opportunities, which is a skill.
 - you can have the direction and the plan.
- Past experiences
 - One of the big one was to coach and take five high school students... things was going to wrong and I would have to take care of it .
 - I think people are productive in some certain circumvents. Because based on what they have done in their lives and their past, how they were raised and things like that
 - I think learning time management and living on my own for the first time doing that all at once really push me to transition to be adult.

What are the goals among emerging adults (college students)?

1. Related to families
 - “I want to go to Disneyland with my family.”
2. Related to education
 - “I do not know, for me my goal is vague... I want to do is continue my learning.”
3. Related to career
 - “one of my goals was influence on people. So that is why I want to be a teacher.”
 - “sustain employment for many years, at a job which I enjoy to go to work everyday.”
4. Related to health
 - Happiness/well-being
 - my goal, I think most of people have already take it. Just be happy.
 - I think for me it is about finding a joy that transcends circumstance
 - my is about happiness things.
 - I have mental strength
 - Physical health
 - physical health,
5. Related to material life
 - financial freedom in the sense like comfortable living.
 - I guess my goal is own a big house with garden.

Thank you!

Preservice Teacher Perspectives on Social Emotional Competence and Social Emotional Learning Personally and in the Classroom

Below we present the specific questions posed and some verbatim quotes from participants:

1. When you hear the phrase “social emotional competence”, what does it mean to you?
 - a. “I feel like you’re able to be confident in your ability...to cope with situations, emotions, anxiety, doubt, and your skills in teaching”.
 - b. “To be able to communicate effectively with it comes to, well, everything is going to be thrown at you (at first), so it’s how you take everything in and how you produce results”.
 - c. “I think of it as being able to understand other people, there the social aspect of it, and the emotional as well, not only yourself, but peers you can deal with”.
 - d. “You have to deal with the social aspects of like, groups and stuff, but then you have to deal with the individual emotional aspects or the emotional aspects of the whole entire group too, so they are like combined together”.
 - e. “I see it more as your awareness of your emotions and people around you”.

2. My next question is a two part question again: Can you think of a teacher or instructor that you would consider to be lacking in social emotional competence? Tell me about them.
 - a. “I had a teacher like that, he couldn’t really relate to the kids, but they was trying to and didn’t realize that he wasn’t, that it wasn’t working”.
 - b. “I would say like a teacher who is more interested in themselves and their qualities rather than their students so they don’t really show compassion or concern for their students”.
 - c. “I’d say yes, because there are some teacher that they main focus is to get the lesson out and they don’t take the time to recognize you as a student. So they’re not noticing if you don’t understand things and instead they are just moving at a fast pace that gets their job done”.

3. How do you believe you develop personal social emotional competence?
 - a. “Probably outside the profession, their outside life, like family, friends, if they’re not very social or whatever in their real, outside life, it’s probably going to show up in their teaching”
 - b. “It has to be acquired, it’s not taught formally, like in a lecture or a classroom setting, it just has to be learned, like we said, through experiences. Maybe you can watch, be able to learn things by seeing others do it, but it has to be something inside of you, it has to be a desire to want the skills, I guess”.

4. How do you see SEC as connected to teaching and the classroom, if at all?
 - a. “If they (students) don’t have a positive relationship with the teacher, in a way, they are probably less likely to want to learn”.
 - b. “I just think you’re in the wrong profession if you aren’t willing to, or if you don’t have these skills. I think you are in the wrong profession if you’re not willing to acquire them”.

5. What responsibilities do you believe teachers have for educating students about social emotional learning and competence? (Follow up: How do they fit with the Program of Studies?)
 - a. “I feel like the teacher is responsible for themselves, they can 100% put what they can put into it, I don’t mean like outside of class time, within the time between when the

class starts and the class ends, you are putting in your best effort to incorporate your course material, as well as trying to model and somewhat provoke further than just modeling...I don't know, 100%. Give 100% in everything”

- b. “I think you are responsible to teach as much as you can about it (SEC), but every student comes in with a different background. They kid that's at home that has parents who are always working, or tell the kid they are stupid and stuff like that, they are going to need a lot more instruction when it comes to that than the kid that's raised by two parents who are there to keep them in activities and everything. So it all depends on the student and their background, too. But as much as you can, you should try to (as the teacher)”.

Other questions:

6. How might SEC impact/effect one's teaching confidence and satisfaction with the teaching profession?
7. How might social emotional competence be relevant for interactions between teachers and their colleagues?
8. In what ways do you believe someone could increase/alter their social emotional skills?
9. Any further questions or comments regarding any portion of this focus group or the topic discussed?

Themes and Conclusions

In response to the research question “how is personal SEC developed?”, the results showed four major themes; SEC is believed to be developed by: engaging with others to practice SEC skills, gaining experience and confidence, self-reflection and observation of models with SEC, and interestingly, some reported that they believe that SEC is intrinsic or of internal nature - something that teachers just “have”.

In examining teachers' beliefs about their responsibility for teaching these skills to students, four main themes of responsibility emerged. These preservice teachers felt responsible for: connecting emotionally with students, creating a classroom climate that is conducive to SEC development, modeling SEC skills, and being aware and reflecting on personal SEC.

Overwhelmingly, participants confirmed that having SEC and modeling SEC skills were not at the sacrifice of understanding course content or effectively teaching the required program of studies. A major area for future discussion that emerged from these focus groups is the difference, or similarity between a “good” teacher and a socially-emotionally competent teacher. These ideas were discussed synonymously and require more study.

More research is needed to explore the ability to for a teacher to be socially emotionally competent if they are not an extrovert and what this looks like. Additionally, more study on where SEC skills are developed and how they are increased or altered would be beneficial for considering how SEC can be introduced and discussed in teacher education programs.

Thank you!

Perspectives of Bullying in Emerging Adults

This study was designed to assess pre-service teachers' opinions about bullying. The questions asked were designed to elicit participant views regarding the nature of bullying, dynamics observed between aggressor and victim, as well as whether they felt prepared to deal with issues related to bullying. The following guiding questions were used:

1. What does bullying mean to you? Probe: can you provide examples of what you would consider bullying?
2. What is the current state of bullying in schools? Probe: Verbal, Psychological, Physical, Cyber
3. What makes someone an aggressor (i.e., the bully)?
4. What makes someone a victim of bullying?
5. What does it look like to cope with being bullied?
6. What allows some people to be able to cope with bullying while others have much more difficulty?
7. How do schools manage bullying?
8. How confident are you in teachers' abilities to effectively deal with bullying and why do you think this?

Themes and Conclusions

What is the current state of bullying in schools?

It was clear many participants felt that technology provides an opportunity for bullying to become more concealed, with it happening more online and being easier to get away with. For example, one participant stated, "It's easy to send an anonymous text or email", and another mentioned, "I feel most [instances of bullying] would be cyberbullying, just because with social networks, anyone can create a Facebook page and say 'look at this kid, and point them out'". Pre-service teachers also felt that the impersonal nature of online bullying allowed instances of verbal bullying to be harsher. To illustrate this, some participants said, "Online is becoming way bigger than anything else, because people find it easier to say whatever they want online rather than face-to-face, so I feel the comments are harsher and whatever is said is worse", and "You're more likely to say something over text that you might not in person." And: "You can say a lot more especially since they're behind a screen, and for the person receiving it, if it's anonymous, they don't know where it's coming from so they're gonna feel threatened pretty much by everyone.

What does bullying mean to you?

Pre-service teachers were aware that bullying can occur in many forms, and does not necessarily have to take any one form. One participant mentioned, "Anything that sticks out of the norm. It doesn't have to be one specific type (i.e. Verbal, physical). If you were the smartest kid, you definitely got picked on. Some preservice teachers also acknowledged the multidimensional nature of bullying: name calling, insults, physical aggression, while others regarded it to be predominantly verbal, "Just because with verbal you can get away with it much more."

What makes someone an aggressor?

Aside from salient acts of aggression, some students mentioned that being familiar with the relational dynamics between kids is important to noticing who may be an aggressor "Noticing the way some kids react when they are around certain individuals, say they're having lots of fun before class starts, and somebody comes in and everybody goes awkward and silent." And "You have to pay attention to the interaction between individual people"

What makes somebody a victim?

Pre-service teachers were also sensitive to the indirect effects that arise from bullying, “If one kid is being picked on but it really really affects his best friend, then he can be considered a victim”. This was a profound response that reflects the fact that people who care about those who are victimized may suffer alongside them.

How do schools manage?

Some pre-service teachers did not feel that enough was in place to prevent instances of bullying from happening in school: “I think they...have presentations throughout the year, like no bullying tolerance, but I think if someone is out there and they're looking to bully I don't think listening to a presentation is necessarily going to stop them” Prior schools, based on pre-service teacher's school/work experience said that schools that had strict no tolerance policies (i.e. immediate expulsion) would have less instances of bullying, but as technology continues to grow, bullying becomes harder to monitor: “I think with the bullying that goes on now through Facebook, there's no way that people can really monitor it.”

How confident are you as pre-service teachers to deal with bullying?

Experiences appear to be the main determinant in pre-service teachers perceived ability to deal with the issue of bullying in schools. “It's more of an experience thing” And “I don't think you're ever gonna go to a class specifically like bullying 101, but I agree with life experiences. If you can step in a school setting, whether you've seen something happen before, you can be that person for the bully to come to instead of them channelling their anger on some kid with self-esteem issues. And: “I'm very well aware that student teaching doesn't teach you everything, you have to be put in the field in order to get that experience. With that being said, nowadays there a lot more resources that you can access (i.e. Google search)”

Teacher attitudes?

When asked how teacher attitudes may play a role in bullying participants offered a range of responses including: “Being more of a jokey teacher would be kinda better, because the kids who are getting bullied would feel more comfortable coming to you. I feel if you are more on there level it would help the victims if you're more open.” OR “I think if teachers have that balance, they would have the kids respect. In no way do you want your students to be intimidated by you, but if they know you have that authority....” And “I think it would be better for the teachers to be more stern, because it would help the bullies to understand that it's really not ok”. “I agree. You can certainly be a playful teacher and joke around with your students, but in the event a student is bullied, and the bully uses the exact same comment as the teacher, if the teacher were to step in and interject it would almost be hypocritical. Of course it depends on the context, but I think it would be better to be more consistent and stern just to show the students that you take bullying seriously.”

Based on the quality of discussions that took place during the focus groups, it is evident that bullying is a familiar topic with pre-service teachers. In reflecting back on the content of the focus groups, it appeared that each participant had either a direct or indirect experience with bullying during their youth, which served to personalize the topic for them.

Thank you!
