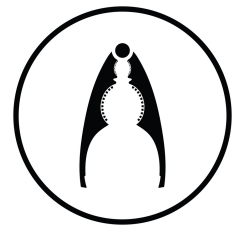


Research in a Nutshell

@RiaN4Teachers

Volume 8, Issue 1

Fall 2023



A Message from the Editorial Team

Welcome to the Fall 2023 edition of Queen's Faculty of Education newsletter! In this issue, we feature the research of five graduate students: Emily Canie, Emma Hamilton, Andrea Hill, Mohammed Yusuf, and Brooke Parker. Emily explores the qualifications and experiences of instructional designers employed in post-secondary education; Emma investigates how K-3 Ontario literacy teachers provide children with evidence-based literacy education; Andrea discusses the perceptions of formerly incarcerated women of their educational experiences; Mohamed investigates the supports and barriers affecting Black enrollment and experiences in graduate studies; and Brooke discusses how educational programming during teacher training increases the mental health literacies of pre-service teachers in Ontario!

Sincerely, Ikeoluwapo Baruwa, Maryna Stoliar, Kavya Jidugu, Nicole Leach, Uvini Colonne Appuhamilage, and Jianing Lv

What are the qualifications and experiences of instructional designers employed in post-secondary education?

Emily Canie
M.Ed, B.Ed, BAH

Why is this important?

- Insufficient research has been conducted on the roles, competencies, and academic qualification requirements for instructional designers employed in post-secondary settings in Canada.
- The study explores the qualifications, academic histories, and work experiences of four instructional designers working in different departments within a post-secondary institution located in Ontario, Canada, to establish a clear understanding of what constitutes the role of an instructional designer.

What did this research uncover?

- Four themes emerged from the research interviews: professional growth, project management, relationship development, and righteous drive.
- Instructional designers are highly educated, informal leaders who make significant contributions to teaching and learning in postsecondary education.
- They have a wide range of diverse responsibilities and roles within their respective organizations.

Why does this matter?

- The findings underscore the significant impact on students and their learning experiences within post-secondary institutions in Canada.
- This study contributes to the existing literature on instructional designers by acknowledging their multifaceted role and recognizing those in this capacity as informal leaders who make substantial contributions to teaching and learning in postsecondary education.

Canie, E. (2023). The Qualifications and Experiences of Instructional Designers Employed in Post-Secondary Education. [Master's thesis Queen's University]. QSpace
<https://qspace.library.queensu.ca/server/api/core/bitstreams/dd6e5126-8a70-4418-ad53-47d422b7fa8d/content>

How do K-3 Ontario literacy teachers provide all children with evidence-based literacy instruction that facilitates students' right to read?

Emma Hamilton
M.Ed, B.Ed, B.AH, OCT

Why is this important?

- Findings from the Ontario Human Rights Commission's (OHRC) Right to Read (2022) inquiry revealed that the approach to early reading used in some Ontario schools does not align with the science of reading.
- This approach fails our most vulnerable students, despite research on effective literacy instruction being widely available and well-established.

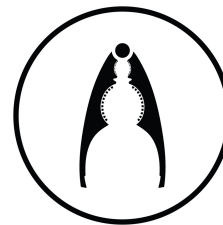
What did this research uncover?

- Despite not being initially trained in the science of reading, passionate teachers engaged in self-initiated professional learning on the science of reading and began implementing what they had learned.
- The OHRC (2022) called attention to the issues with reading instruction in Ontario, yet some school boards are still not supporting teachers in implementing a science of reading approach or providing teachers with the training, materials, and resources they need to implement an evidence-based literacy program.

Why does this matter?

- Learning to read is not a privilege given to some, but a basic human right that Ontario public schools must fulfill.
- Many teachers were initially taught and told to teach literacy in a way that does not align with reading research. Without adequate science of reading training, materials, and resources, teachers cannot fulfill their obligation to teach all children how to read.

Hamilton, E. (2023). Achieving Literacy Equity by Practicing Excellence: Ontario Teachers' Shift to Science of Reading Approaches. [Dissertation, Queen's University]. Queen's Graduate Theses and Dissertations.
<https://qspace.library.queensu.ca/items/ef335671-0dfd-45f6-a5e2-75fe7f3e0aac0>



What are formerly incarcerated women's perceptions of their educational experiences?

Andrea Hill
M.Ed., OCT

Why is this important?

- Adverse childhood experiences, trauma, and exclusionary discipline impede educational attainment and are further impacted by the intersections of race and gender, potentially leading to women's engagement in criminogenic behaviours.
- Trauma-informed and culturally responsive pedagogy serves as a protective factor in mitigating women's pathways to confinement.
- Incarcerated women are an underrepresented population within Canadian literature, but their reasons for criminal justice system involvement often differ from those of men.

What did this research uncover?

- The women experienced a lack of resources and care from school staff and educators while they were in school, particularly regarding support for mental illness, abuse in the home, financial difficulties, learning disabilities, adolescent pregnancy, and gender and sexual identity and expression.
- Compounding individual and societal strains created feelings of frustration and disillusionment with the education system.
- The participants internalized their *delinquent* and *at-risk* labels, ultimately contributing to further engagement in criminogenic behavior.

Why does this matter?

- A more equitable educational system requires caring educators to challenge their biases and hold all of their students to high expectations that are consistent and attainable while considering the boxes they place students in.
- Educators and policymakers must prioritize trauma-informed approaches and work to dismantle systemic barriers that hinder the educational attainment of oppressed individuals in an effort to reduce the continued manifestation of the school-to-prison pipeline.

Hill, A. (2023). Escaping the Box: Exploring the Educational Experiences of Formerly Incarcerated Women. [Thesis, Queen's University]. Queen's Graduate Theses and Dissertations.
<https://qspace.library.queensu.ca/handle/1974/31897>

What are the investigating supports and barriers affecting Black students' enrollment and experiences in graduate studies?

Mohamed Yusuf
M.Ed., B.Ed., BAH, OCT

Why is this important?

- This research gives a voice to those young black students who are breaking the glass ceiling of graduate-level academia.
- With education being a strong factor in overall life satisfaction and happiness, the ultimate goal of this research is to mitigate the effects of educational, systematic, and financial barriers, and provide new avenues for support for Black students so that the path to graduate studies can be a more accessible option (Cheung & Chan, 2009).

What did this research uncover?

- Major support for Black graduate students included receiving support from individuals, which included mentors, family, and friends or peers.
- Black graduate students also received support from within the university community, which included race or ethnic-based student groups, diversity within the university or program, and university athletics.
- Major barriers for Black graduate students included access to graduate funding and applying to or completing graduate-level studies when coming from a low socio-economic background.

Why does this matter?

- This study contributes to the existing body of literature on the accessibility of higher education for Black graduate students.
- The findings inform the development of effective educational policies that reduce barriers and expand support systems, including mentorship programs and graduate funding, to promote success in pursuing graduate studies.

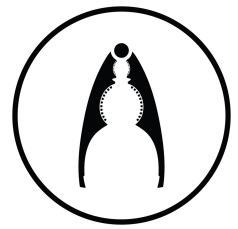
Yusuf, M. (2023). Investigating Supports and Barriers Affecting Black Students' Enrolment and Experiences within Graduate Studies. [Thesis, Queen's University]. Queen's Graduate Theses and Dissertations
<https://qspace.library.queensu.ca/items/e05413f9-f3f1-4899-9b3d-ab21b8ddo028>

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How can educational programming during teacher training be leveraged to increase the mental health literacies of pre-service teachers in Ontario?

Brooke Parker, M.Ed.

Why is this important?

- Millions of children and youth in Canada experience mental illness, yet only 20% receive proper support and treatment. Although teachers are in a position to help, they feel ill-equipped to support the mental health of their students.

What did this research uncover?

- Pre-service teachers in Ontario demonstrate high accuracy in recognizing signs of mental health concerns, in addition to demonstrating empathetic attitudes towards supporting student health.
- However, when it comes to seeking help for their students, they lack both knowledge and confidence in mental health.

Why does this matter?

- The findings discuss how resources and training opportunities can be used during teacher training to address gaps in teachers' mental health literacies.
- Empowering teachers with the tools to foster student mental health will enhance the overall well-being of children and youth.

Parker, B. (2023). Enhancing pre-service teachers' mental health literacies through educational programming. [Master's thesis, Queen's University]. QSpace. <https://qspace.library.queensu.ca/handle/1974/31907>

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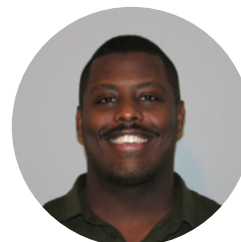
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