Qualifying Exam Defense

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Qualifying Exam #1:

An Analysis of Resilience, English Language Development, and Formative and Summative Assessments among Mueller Charter School Students

Faculty Advisor:
Dr. Rafaela Santa Cruz, San Diego State University
Purpose of the Study

• To explore the relationship students’ level resilience, English language acquisition, and summative and formative assessments

• To examine the ways that school’s wide support system (Resiliency Quadrant System) related to students’ performance on assessments
Variables Involved in the Study

- Student Quadrant Designation
- Student CELDT Scores
- MAPs Summative Assessment (LA/Math)
- CST Summative Assessment (LA/Math)
RESILIENCY QUADRANTS: A Closer Look at Student Quadrant Designation

Student Quadrant Designation

Q4: At or Above Grade Level

Q3: Approaching Grade Level

Q2: Showing Little to No Growth

Q1: ICU
What is the resiliency quadrant designation among Mueller Charter School’s third, fifth, and seventh graders during the 2006-07 school year?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quadrant 4</th>
<th>Quadrant 3</th>
<th>Quadrant 2</th>
<th>Quadrant 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Third Grade</td>
<td>33 (30%)</td>
<td>54 (49.1%)</td>
<td>21 (19.1%)</td>
<td>1 (.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 109</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Grade</td>
<td>24 (21.6%)</td>
<td>57 (51.4%)</td>
<td>28 (25.2%)</td>
<td>1 (.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 110</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Grade</td>
<td>27 (45.8%)</td>
<td>22 (37.3%)</td>
<td>9 (15.3%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Grades</td>
<td>84 (29.9%)</td>
<td>134 (47.7%)</td>
<td>58 (20.6%)</td>
<td>3 (1.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 279</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Research Questions & Findings

Is there a relationship between students’ resiliency quadrant designation, CELDT, MAP’s, and CST scores?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Quadrant Designation</th>
<th>2. CELDT Score</th>
<th>3. MAPs Reading Score</th>
<th>4. MAPs Language Score</th>
<th>5. MAPs Math Score</th>
<th>6. CST Language Arts Score</th>
<th>7. CST Math Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. CELDT Score</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.150*</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.67**</td>
<td>.65**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. MAPs Reading Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. MAPs Language Score</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>.512**</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. MAPs Math Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. CST Language Arts Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. CST Math Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05

**p < .01
Research Questions & Findings

③ Are there statistically significant differences in students’ quadrant designation by class or grade level?

While results indicated that there were no significant differences based on classroom, statistically significant mean differences on students’ quadrant designation were evident based on grade level (Sig of F = 3.84, p = .02), with seventh graders (M = 3.27) possessing a higher mean than fifth graders (M = 3.09).
Research Questions & Findings

Are there mean differences in CST scores based on students’ resiliency quadrant designation, CELDT level, and an interaction of resiliency quadrant designation and CELDT level?

A 4 x 5 ANOVA yielded statistically significant differences in the means of both CST math and CST language arts scores when based on student’s resiliency quadrant designation and CELDT score (p = .000). Results also indicated a statistically significant difference in the means of students’ CST language arts scores when based on CELDT level (p = .000).
Research Questions & Findings

5 What variables best predict students’ levels of resilience?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CST Math Score</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CST Language Arts Score</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion & Implications

• First formal analysis of Mueller Charter School’s Resiliency Quadrant System
• Students’ level of resilience positively correlated with academic achievement
• Teacher’s assessment vs. students’ self-reported levels of resilience
• Qualitative data and inclusion of more variables could strengthen study findings
Qualifying Exam #2:

“Why Resilience?”
A Literature Review of Resilience and Implications for Further Educational Research

Faculty Advisor:
Dr. Philip Dreyer, Claremont Graduate University
7 Central Questions

- Resilience Defined
- Origins of Resilience Research
- Resiliency vs. Resilience
- Resilience within School Settings
- Methodological Strengths and Challenges
- Trends in Resiliency Research
- Benefits and Challenges to Future Research
Key Findings

- Common thread connecting “resilience”
- Emerged from fields of psychopathology, traumatic stress, and poverty
- Resiliency (innate) vs. Resilience (process)
- Waves of resilience research
- Isolating risk and protective factors is challenging
- Need to continue questioning how Western paradigms are used to examine resilience research
- Need for mixed methods within school settings
Key Findings

“Avoiding bias in how resilience is understood and interventions are designed to promote it, researchers and interveners will need to be more participatory and culturally embedded to capture the nuances of culture and context.

The better documented youth’s own constructions of resilience, the more likely it will be that those intervening indentify specific aspects of resilience most related to health outcomes as defined by a particular population” (Ungar, 2008, p. 234).
Qualifying Exam #3:

**ABUEL@ LOVE:**
A Look into the Lives Resilient Grandparents Raising Grandchildren – Insights Through Pláticas/Conversations with Latin@ Families

Faculty Advisor:
Dr. Alberto Ochoa, San Diego State University
## Rationale for the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>School aged children living in Grandparent-headed Homes</th>
<th>School aged children living with Custodial Grandparents</th>
<th>Percentage that are Latin@ families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>4.5 million</td>
<td>2.4 million</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>7 million</td>
<td>2.7 million</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Highest concentration of grandparent-headed homes within California: Los Angeles & San Diego

- 2010: San Diego ranked 7\(^{th}\) among top ten cities with custodial grandparents

Thomson & Minkler (2005;)
Risk Factors for Custodial Grandparents & Grandchildren

Bowlby (1980); Grinstead et al. (2003); Minkler & Roe (1996); Musil & Ahmad (2002); Scarcella et al. (2003); U.S. Census Bureau (2010)
Overview of the Study

• To examine factors that promote resilience for abuelo/grandparent – headed families.

• Through in-depth pláticas/conversations with two Latin@ families, this study also explored:

  1) How abuelos and their grandchildren source strength and resilience,
  2) How abuelos negotiate and made meaning of their new parenting roles,
  3) How abuelos navigate and negotiate resources for support,
  4) How abuelo-headed families made meaning of their unique family arrangement, and
  5) How educators can support abuelo-headed families.
Study Findings

La Familia Amor

La Familia Esperanza

12
10

48

82

12

9

51

84
Study Findings

**On Sources of Resilience:**
- Renewed Purpose
- Joys of (Re)Parenting
- Faith
- Commitment
- Love

**On Parenting:**
- Raising grandchildren as if they were their own children
- Being Present
- Respeto
- Filling in for an absent parent
- Finding a balance: Self & Grandchildren
On Navigating Support:
• First contact with school is critical
• Teacher-grandparent relationships
• Relationships with other family members
• Relationships with community members

On Making Meaning of New Family Arrangement:
• Dreams for the Future
• Being remembered

On How Educators Can Support Abuelo-headed Families:
• Abuelos Dual Role
• Creating a Space for Love & Familia
Putting the Pieces Together

Need to infuse student, parent and educator voice.

Need for mixed methods within school setting with attention to culture and context.

Need to further assess effectiveness of pláticas as a research method and examine resilience research systemically.
Research Agenda

• Common Themes Among Qualifying Exams
  – Resilience research
  – Equity for all students (focus on Latin@ students)

• Teaching Experience
  – Seminar in Multicultural Dimensions in Schools
  – Family Counseling in Schools
  – Theoretical Foundations in Counseling
  – Advanced Statistics (T.A.)
  – Seminar in Educational Statistics (T.A.)

• Growth as Researcher
  – Qualitative and Quantitative Methods
  – Extensive literature reviews
  – Presentations various conferences