

Montessori Research: *Inquiries and Insights*



Presenters

- Sharon Damore, Ed.D., Chair, AMS Research Committee; AMS Board; Asst. Professor, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois
- Angela Murray, Ph.D., AMS Research Coordinator; 2008 Dissertation: Public Perceptions of Montessori Education, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas
- Carolyn Daoust, Ph.D., AMS Research Committee; AMS Board; 2005 AMS Dissertation Award; Associate Professor, St. Mary's College, Moraga, California

Today's Agenda

- Overview/Introductions All
- AMS Research Support Angela
- Past Montessori Studies Carolyn/Angela
- Planned/Potential Future Research Carolyn/Angela
- Where do we go from here? All

AMS Research Resources

AMS Research Coordinator Role

- Producing research-related resources for Montessori community
- Identifying new research opportunities
- Locating outside funding sources for research
- Supporting dissemination of research outside Montessori community
- Consulting with those wishing to do research
- Reviewing for Montessori Life and conferences
- Presenting at conferences

Online Research Library

- Montessori related Dissertations and Theses
- Presentations from recent AMS conferences (under “Research”)
- Full text journal articles
 - A study published in the September 29, 2006 issue of *Science* reports that “at least when strictly implemented, Montessori education fosters social and academic skills that are equal or superior to those fostered by...other types of schools.” The study is titled “The Early Years: Evaluating Montessori Education” and the authors are Angeline Lillard and Nicole Else-Quest.

Resources for Researchers

- Research Committee White Paper Series
- Bibliography and Database links
- Links to outside organizations

Highlights from White Paper Series

Suggested Topics

Challenges

Suggested Topics: Theory

- Examine Montessori education in light of contemporary theories in educational scholarship
 - motivation
 - executive functioning
 - student engagement (flow)
 - constructivism
 - sensitive periods
 - brain development
 - planes of development

Suggested Topics: Practice

- Examine aspects of Montessori education which align with educational research topics in “best practices”
 - phonemic awareness
 - writing before reading
 - interdisciplinary curriculum
 - educating the whole child
 - uninterrupted work time
 - self-directed learning
 - sensory education
 - inclusion of students with exceptionalities
 - individualized pacing
 - use of manipulatives
 - mixed ages
 - cooperative learning
 - authentic assessment
 - incorporating nature
 - peace education
 - bullying/ social justice
 - class meetings
 - critical thinking

Suggested Topics: Outcomes

- Studies of the outcomes of Montessori education most requested. But, what outcomes?
 - academic success
 - long term impact, longitudinal research
 - student attention
 - problem solving skills
 - creativity and innovation
 - social or emotional intelligence
 - love of learning
 - community service
 - self-regulation

Challenges: Study Design

- Precise definitions required, but Montessori name is not legally protected
 - Strategies: AMS school accreditation, AMI school recognition or teacher certification
- Relevant basis of comparison difficult because Montessori parents may differ fundamentally
 - Strategies: comparing students in a Montessori magnet school to those enrolled in a magnet school with a different focus, or students in a private Montessori school could be compared with students enrolled in a private school having a different orientation

Challenges: Dissemination

- *Montessori Life* is an important publication
- AMS encourages dissemination beyond the community, but Montessori education remains outside the mainstream of most university schools of education
 - Publications: Early childhood Montessori research has been published multiple times in *Early Childhood Education Journal* and *Young Children*.
 - Conferences : AMS, AERA, ACEI, ASCD, NAEYC

AMS Outstanding Thesis and Dissertation Awards

- The American Montessori Society offers annual awards for graduate level work that furthers the public understanding of Montessori education. The application deadline for 2010 awards is November 1, 2009.

Attention Montessori Researchers

Call for Poster Session Proposals

AMS Annual Conference: Boston, MA, 3/26/2010

- Proposal Topics: Current Research Addressing Montessori Education
 - Suggestions: curriculum application, working with families, assessment, policy & practice, children with exceptionalities
 - Research can be on-going
- Proposal Criterion
 - focused, succinct research question(s)
 - connection to Montessori education
 - brief description of appropriate methodology
 - clear analysis of findings

Attention Montessori Researchers

Call for Poster Session Proposals

AMS Annual Conference: Boston, MA, 3/26/2010

- Poster Display Format
 - Posters mounted on Bulletin Boards
- Proposal Submissions
 - Email Sharon Damore: sjdamore@aol.com
 - Include your preferred email address
 - Deadline: January 8, 2010
 - Questions? Ann Epstein, co-chair of poster session, aepstein@lander.edu; 864-388-8279

Share your findings AND find out what Montessori researchers are learning!

Past Research Studies

- Carolyn
 - An examination of implementation practices in Montessori early childhood education
- Angela
 - Public perceptions of Montessori education
 - Identifying challenges to the future of public Montessori elementary schools

Potential Future Research

- Implementation in Montessori Education
- Montessori record keeping
- Public school data

Let's Hear from the Audience

See you in Boston,
AMS Annual conference,
March 25 - 28, 2010

