Title of Session: Targeting Librarians - Social-Emotional Behavior and Information Literacy
Moderator: Lesley Farmer
Title of File: 20041020targlibinfolit
Date: October 20, 2004

Room: Hot Tub Conference Room

Social-Emotional Behavior and Information Literacy
Dr. Lesley Farmer, California State University Long Beach
(lfarmer@csulb.edu)

Abstract:
The study investigated the degree of correlation of information literacy competency and social-emotional behavior of high school students. Specifically, three assessment instruments were administered to a sample of ninth and eleventh grade students in Orange County. Respondents indicated the relative degree of their information literacy competency and social-emotional behavior. Sample research reports of those students were rated by their teachers. Correlation statistics tested hypotheses linking literacy and behavior. Persistence and getting along were the best predictors of information literacy and research success.

Introduction
K-12 library media programs are trying to establish correlations between well-implemented library service and student achievement. In terms of curriculum, school librarians tend to focus on information literacy. In attempts to measure information literacy competency, professionals are examining student research processes and products, and developing corresponding rubrics. School librarians are using those rubrics more specifically to assess student work, although such work is difficult to generalize and extrapolate or do on a large scale.

Research process and product rubric assessments tend to focus on cognitive skills, with little regard to studentâ??s social-emotional-motivational competence. The main seminal work in this area has been conducted by Carol Kuhlthau (1985), who tracked students' emotional status during their research process. However, little research has been conducted in the area of emotional readiness with respect to information literacy. Indeed, there may be a developmental and psychological aspect that influences student success with regard to information literacy.

Ellis and Bernard (1971, 1983, 1990) have led the research in social-emotional behavior therapy, which examines students' affective-motivational characteristics as contributing independently from students' cognitive characteristics to student achievement. On a broader scale, the Collaborative to Advance Social and Emotional Learning (a professional organization of leading researchers and practitioners in the field of school-based social and emotional education) have identified key social and emotional

competencies, which include several that align with information literacy: problem identification and solving, communication skills, and social skills of cooperation and help-seeking (Zins, et al., 2004). Thus, as students exhibit positive social-emotional behavior, they may be more likely to achieve information literacy competency.

Based on these premises, this research investigated the correlation of social-emotional behavior and information literacy competencies of a sample of high school students.

Research Questions
Based on the statement of the problem, the guiding research questions were:
1) To what degree does a correlation exist between students' social-emotional behavior status and students' research information literacy competence?
2) To what degree does a correlation exist between students' social-emotional behavior status and students' research project quality?

If a significant correlation exists, then the next step in social-emotional behavior therapy may be investigated. Specifically, school librarians would focus on critical affective and behavior competencies within the information literacy framework, and provide effective interventions so students would be given opportunities to learn and practice these behaviors during the research process.

This research builds on the research that the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) is doing to insure high-quality library media programs that support the mission of ensuring that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information. It also builds on Farmer's research regarding the perceptions of school community members towards the AASL factors. (Farmer, 2004) The project also links to various research correlating information literacy standards and student achievement. (Goodin, 1991; Harada & Yoshina, 1994; Lance, 2002)

Room: HotTubConf

LesleyF: Yes, people aren't used to water from above, just the ocean. While we're waiting for the others, you can read a summary of my research in this area of emotions and information literacy.
LesleyF: I've put that document on the whiteboard. [Ed. Note: The research summary is appended to the beginning of this document.]
LesleyF: Let me know when you have some questions or thoughts...
JaneGst5: Lesley, This is an area of special and great interest to me...I have always embraced the Social and Emotional learning model, and believe it is truly at the foundation of all learning...that to
JaneGst5: separate cognitive from affective always has us falling short as educators...in my setting most of the teaching staff attends to cognitive issues, and esp. in regard to technology which
JaneGst5: seemingly is so inherently cognitive...so to see this abstract gets me hopping with joy!
JaneGst5: I think you and I could collaborate on a book one day on this very subject!!!

JaneGst5: In JCS setting our students MUST develop communication skills, all the things addressed in the abstract to succeed in any thing related to technology.

LesleyF: another book, eh? It's a thought!

BjB: are you considering students with special needs in your research?

LesleyF: this should work with students with special needs as well, as long as they can articulate feelings.

BjB . o O (other than social and emotional)

JaneGst5: I would love to develop an AFFECTIVE curriculum or affective-based curriculum or orientation to technology that would allow learners to thrive

LesleyF: For extreme cases, it probably doesn't really relate because those same students wouldn't be doing much information literacy on a formal basis

JaneGst5: Hmmmmm, I think it does relate

JaneGst5: IN this way, to follow

LesleyF: The issue is, if we don't explicitly address affective issues, students won't be able to deal with them effectively and that will interfere with their learning

JaneGst5: Students with extensive limitations will respond to affective based training and that will

JaneGst5: enhance their outcome in whatever area.

JaneGst5: Well, most of our incarcerated kids read grades 1-6...and the sixth grade readers are considered strong readers, even at age 17..

LesleyF: True, Jane. That's the larger picture. One reason people shy away or undervalue the affective domain is that they think that emotions are a fixed set and unchangeable. They forget that emotions can be dealt with and leveraged to help one learn and succeed.

LesleyF: If you're really frustrated in your environment, you're going to put your energies there, so you have less energy/attention for the academics of life.

JaneGst5: I'd really like to learn more about and explore the relationship between emotions of the learner and "THOUGHTS" of the learner because it truly is our thoughts that contribute to the outcome as well

LesleyF: On the other hand, if school can be considered an area where you can excape and overcome your surroundings, then those emotions can be put to positive use.

BjB . o O (as long as the school is a safe and secure environment)

LesleyF: What I was looking at were students' self-perceptions of their social-emotional maturity.

JaneGst5: In our library, I love to take even a few minutes to head into the affective with a kid, and sometimes the outcome is amazing.

JaneGst5: For incarcerated students, self-perception is at the core of things...there is such self-loathing and at the least lack of confidence and hope.

LesleyF: There's a great site / group that deals with this issue. Want to see?

JaneGst5: YES!

LesleyF: Another issue is that incompetent students sometimes over-rate their competence. And part of that stems from unrealistic self-assessment and murky emotional maturity.

LesleyF: So here's the URL: http://www.casel.org -- it's the Collaborative for Social and Emotional Learning.

LesleyF: Just click on the URL, and browse a bit...

JaneGst5: I have had such limited experience/exposure with those students.

JaneGst5: This is such a fantastic site..I'll see it after this chat so I don't have to rush...

LesleyF: makes sense.

CarolN joined the room.

LesleyF: Hi, Carol!

JaneGst5: Hi Carol

LesleyF: Are you here to discuss the affective side of information literacy?

JaneGst5: Lesley, I'd like to ask about how LMT's can encourage teachers to explore SEL/affective measures...this has been a huge challenge in my setting.

CarolN: Hi everyone. Have been meaning to become involved with Tapped In for months. Am looking forward to this discussion on the affective side of information literacy.

LesleyF: There are a couple of other theories that deal with the affective domain that impact student info lit success.

JaneGst5: Please share...

LesleyF: The most important thing is to deal with these issues explicitly. Give students coping tools.

LesleyF: In terms of information literacy, there are some very specific findings and ways to help.

JaneGst5: What are some of the specifics...

LesleyF: For example, persistence correlated highly with doing a good research project.

LesleyF: Especially for boys, students need to learn how to persist when they are frustrated. See, Juan succeeded.

JaneGst5: For at-risk youth frustration is primary...so how is this frustration addressed?

LesleyF: So LMTs need to help students persist by showing them how to choose alternative key words when their first ones don't work.

JaneGst5: So to just apply all the technical tips, etc, and blend the coping skills with the task throughout

JuanAlvGst9: DR. F, do you mean like looking up words in a thesaurus?

LesleyF: yes, a thesaurus -- or even the end of an encyclopedia article or the subject headings in the library catalog.

LesleyF: use the cross-reference words in indexes

JuanAlvGst9: Do you think that boys get more easily frustrated when searching.... I never really thought about it. My class is mostly boys now

JaneGst5: This is very helpful for me in the sense that in our setting there's always so much happening.

LesleyF: actually, if the topic is not of interest to boys, they'll get bored more easily and get more frustrated than girls will.

LesleyF: When they hit that emotional wall, they tend to either fight back or withdraw.

JaneGst5: So to get the students to persist in light of all the distractions and interruptions and codes, etc, etc,   Many of the at-risk girls do much better in all academic areas and love technology!

JuanAlvGst9: It must have something to do with the maturity level. I guess I am even like that in regards to some things. Must be a male thing...

LesleyF: So you have to give them incentives/reasons why it's worthwhile to hang in there and succeed. The payoff has to be worth it.

LesleyF: it's actually a chemical thing and the way brains work -- I've been doing some research in that area recently.

JuanAlvGst9: What type of payoff are you referring to? Like making the topic that they are searching more interesting to boys? (High interest topics?)

JaneGst5: Could you say a bit more about the chemical thing and your research/

LesleyF: On the good side, if the process IS important, boys can be very analytical and get the big picture and aggressively try to succeed and win.

LesleyF: Well, it has to do with testosterone levels, oxytoxin, and some other chemical -- they're at different levels than girls so it makes the brain behave / react differently, at least to a degree.

LesleyF: Close to persistence is emotional resiliency. That is also highly correlated to success in information literacy.

LesleyF: the older the student, the more resilient they are (in K-12). We old folks aren't quite as resilient...

LesleyF: So again, what teachers and LMTs can do is to teach kids that if one resource doesn't work, try another. If one research strategy doesn't work, try another.

JuanAlvGst9: So I guess that by being a male LMT, I can more easily tap into and relate to the boys' reactions when they are frustrated during searches. (we share common defects!   )

JaneGst5: This is proving so helpful...would be impt. to develop ways of creating opportunity for emotional resiliency in the learning setting..

LesleyF: If you're feeling frustrated, take a mental break and do something that you're good at, and then come back to the problem.

JaneGst5: Actually teaching kids how to be more resilient, how to persist, how to do this as a successful learner in general and in technology as well

LesleyF: Another part of the emotional picture is following directions -- or not. If students don't follow directions, their papers aren't as good. Duh. But we have to TELL them and help them self-check their work, see if it aligns with directions, etc.

LesleyF: yes, these skills are good for all aspects of life. That's a good incentive, in fact, to motivate them to learn these skills.

CarolN: Kuhlthau has a model identifying points in the research process where students are most apt to feel discouraged. Is this similar to what you're suggesting?

LesleyF: here's one that seems to impact girls more: risk-taking. Risk-taking correlates well with info lit processes and products, and girls take fewer risks, both physically and intellectually. So LMTS/teachers need to provide a safe learning environment and encourages and reinforces intellectual risks.

LesleyF: Yes, Kuhlthau's work fits into this picture well.

JaneGst5: Just an aside, I'd love for one of our course lessons/assignments to address the affective domain

LesleyF: Some of the affective domain stuff, though, transcends any one research step.

JaneGst5: And our media centers can be stellar models for safe learning spaces,

LesleyF: Hmm, in YA lit we talk about development including the affective/emotional side, but it's not real emphasized or detailed. Not enough time!

LesleyF: In the research course I will note this more explicitly when I teach it this coming spring.

JaneGst5: Well when you add a course to the program, that can be it!

LesleyF: Yes, Jane, the library as a safe learning haven is key.

LesleyF: Especially because we can treat students as people rather than as grade points...

JaneGst5: In my particular setting, this is essential and also has made profound changes with students.

JuanAlvGst9: Yes, not being concerned about grades and having a different type of "teacher-student" relationship seems much more possible as an LMT

LesleyF: A simple process that ties in Kuhlthau's work and helps students become more emotionally able is to do I-Search projects.

LesleyF: it's one reason I became an LMT, Juan.

LesleyF: We're on the students' "side"

JuanAlvGst9: Jane, how have you fostered this in your setting

LesleyF: more of a coach model

JaneGst5: Yes, and the students really know it!

LesleyF: Another part of the affective picture is communication -- especially the LISTENING part.

BjB perks up her ears

LesleyF: So as you help students learn to listen actively, that can help them with their school and social life.

JaneGst5: We have some really wonderful programs going on...I'm a delegate to the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation and so the students participate as well..also we do poetry programs to be presented for guests, parents, teachers, etc, and during these preparations, the thrust is strongly affective

LesleyF: if done right, it can also foster good social collaborative skills. Let me explain.

JuanAlvGst9: Listening.... wow, my group of boys is struggling with that one. Does the research show that boys are not very good listeners too?

LesleyF: If a student is frustrated or wants to quit, having a peer give some suggestions about alternative sources or processes can really help -- both!

JaneGst5: Building on self-esteem, learning to communicate with one another, building a community of students who support and help each other, all firsts for these students. Giving awards at the end

LesleyF: yep, Juan.

LesleyF: yes, the model of a community of learners/practitioners does work with young folks too

LesleyF: and lack of listening impacts boys' success more than it does girls, sadly enough...

JaneGst5: Our boys threaten one another in general, but in our special programs, they befriend one another..it is awesome

JuanAlvGst9: It sounds like you are doing a lot to foster their emotional development Jane. It must be something your school & community value. It is something I have rarely (if at all discussed) much less implemented. If anything it would be more of a side product at my school.

JaneGst5: They do actually listen to one another.

BjB . o O (depends on the phases of the moon sometimes)

LesleyF: However, girls who socialize a lot and don't ask experts/teachers but just other peers who aren't listening as well, tend to do REALLY BADLY in research products. They tell each other the wrong things...

JaneGst5: My school does not really value this...but there are a few teachers and is something I strongly value and know to work with students...this is the LAST chance for these students so I just take every moment and make it count so they leave feeling more positive about who they are and what they can accomplish...for many this is the first time they have ever done anything respectful.

LesleyF: yes, schools tend to overlook these aspects (it's the parents' job), and so students aren't at a stable emotional state that they can listen freely without those emotional distractions. Bad investment on the school's part.

LesleyF: it's probably more important to help kids listen, learn how to cope emotionally, be organized BEFORE they start tackling big research projects...

JaneGst5: To me, this is the nuts and bolts of education, or at the very least, inseparable from the cognitive.

LesleyF: I think middle schools think kids don't need any more training at that point, forgetting the new challenges that puberty "gives"

LesleyF: It also reinforces Maslow's pyramid of needs.

JaneGst5: A good way is to lighten the setting...Lesley, take a look at Harvey Jackins work on learning and emotions...about how the brain/cognition just shuts down when we are upset

LesleyF: if you're afraid of being killed on the way to school or in school, you're not going to be in much emotional shape to learn algebra, Big6 research, etc.

JuanAlvGst9: Well in my setting, (we are a low performing urban school) we do try to develop their character. We do a lot for that. We try to ensure that they all are decent, good people. As a self contained 5th grade teacher, I really do concern myself with their affective well being, but only because the self contained nature of my classroom lends itself well to that. However, it usually only comes up during conflicts/problems.

LesleyF: right, Jane.

LesleyF: yes, Juan, the idea of preventative learning seems like a logical choice doesn't it -- rather than just reacting to crisis...

JuanAlvGst9: it really does Dr. F

JaneGst5: Juan, how fantastic that you have these 5th graders and can lend time to establishing emotional wellness, resiliency, etc...

JuanAlvGst9: teach them how to deal to avoid those situations in the first place.

LesleyF: of course, teaching explicit emotional/coping skills requires that the student TRUST the teacher, so you're one up in that case.

LesleyF: both of you

JuanAlvGst9: I can... but being here makes me feel like I don't do enough. In addition, I do find it hard to be a nurturer many times.

LesleyF: emotional tuning/harmony

LesleyF: well, we all have complex actions/thoughts so it's good for students to see our different facets.

JuanAlvGst9: I have to run guys.... thank you for giving me lots to think about.

JaneGst5: One thing about these chats/forums...I just see how much more there is to learn and how much further I can go in my quest...so relax, Juan, because it truly is a journey

LesleyF: just nurturing can be stifling and unnatural. Even birds kick their young out of the nest

LesleyF: thanks for trying this format out, Juan

JuanAlvGst9: thank you. Take care everyone.

LesleyF: yes, I like the monthly schedule because it gives me a refresher course in different topics and stretches my mind by communicating with others

JaneGst5: Lesley, could you send the link for the abstract? This has been a great hour...

LesleyF: SO I was starting to tell you about a couple of other theories that fit into the picture. ... Shall I stop at this point? I can email you my paper, Jane.

JaneGst5: I would like to see more emphasis on this in my school setting, and I think LMT's can bring it to each one's setting.

LesleyF: there's also Library anxiety theory, which is an emotional issue

JaneGst5: Yes, do share

JaneGst5: I think I have Library anxiety!!!

BjB laughs

LesleyF: And there's a metastudy that shows that social and emotional learning programs increases attendance, improves student attitudes/behaviors, and increases academic performance.

LesleyF: As a continuance, I can share theories about self-determination

CarolN: I'm sold on the need to address the affective domain, I need help on the nuts and bolts of doing so.

JaneGst5: Yes, theories about self-determination

LesleyF: OK, so let's do that: how self-determination impacts student use of libraries -- with a focus on research processes

LesleyF: does that sound useful?

JaneGst5: Yes, that will be very useful...

CarolN: sounds good

JaneGst5: Thank you, Lesley, and **BjB**., and all...I appreciate all the dialogue and learning~ Lesley, it is an honor to be one of your students.

JaneGst5: I have to unsit !

BjB: Carol, did you have any questions?

CarolN: This is such an exciting forum. Hopefully, I can participate again. I just graduated from Univ. of Wisc in the spring. I'm still programmed to learn, and learn, and learn.... Thank you for sharing your work and time with us. Until next month.