

Encouraging Psychosocial Wellness in Developmental Mathematics

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Abstract

While educators across the country continue to develop and build successful developmental mathematics programs, the fact remains that developmental mathematics students lack confidence in mathematics. Helping students strengthen their mathematics abilities should only be one facet of the developmental mathematics classroom. Developmental educators also need to address students' overall academic abilities, confidence, and awareness. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of incorporating psychosocial wellness mini-lessons on the affective traits of students enrolled in developmental mathematics. A quasi-experimental control-treatment design was utilized. Results indicate that there is potential for content- and classroom-specific psychosocial interventions to have a positive impact on student attitudes and beliefs. However, classroom climate and dynamics may act as a significant mediating variable when investigating the effectiveness of psychosocial interventions.



Debra D. Ward completed her doctorate in mathematics education at Texas State University in San Marcos, TX. Following her doctoral studies, she accepted a position at Cameron University, where she acted as the developmental mathematics coordinator. Through this position, Ward had the opportunity to examine the developmental-education process as well as investigate factors that contribute to student success and motivation. She has continued to investigate these factors through her current position at Utah Valley University. Her main research interests involve understanding student and course characteristics that hinder or support students' successful completion of developmental mathematics sequences.

Lindsey N. Gerber is currently an assistant professor in the developmental mathematics department at Utah Valley University. She graduated from Texas State University–San Marcos with a PhD in mathematics education. She also has a BS and MS in mathematics as well as her certification to teach high school mathematics in Texas. Her research interests include placement of students in mathematics courses, nontraditional teaching instruction, mathematics methods, and elementary and middle school preservice teachers in developmental mathematics. Gerber has held teaching positions at both the secondary and postsecondary levels. Through these experiences, she has gained extensive experience in curriculum development, creating curriculum and instruction workshops, and nontraditional teaching methods, such as cooperative learning groups and using various instructional models, manipulatives, and technologies in the classroom.

