

Call for Participation

What's All This I Hear About Self-regulation, Executive Function, and Mindfulness?

Abstract:

Self-regulation is a critical skill for academic success and future outcomes (Morrison, Ponitz, & McClelland, 2010). Children from low socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to experience the stress, violence, and instability that hinder development of self-regulation (Blair & Raver, 2012). However, self-regulation may be a protective factor for children who experience early adversity, as children with stronger self-regulation outperform their peers regardless of risk factors (Sektan et al., 2010; Pears, Fisher, Bruce, Kim, & Yoerger, 2010). Efforts to develop interventions to support self-regulation and executive function with a socially and linguistically rich milieu (Blair & Raver, 2014), mindfulness training (Flook et al., 2015); and executive function training (Jacob & Parkinson, 2015) have had limited success.

Although researchers agree that self-regulation is an important skill for children to progress through school, there is extensive debate regarding its definition and measurement. Generally, self-regulation is an umbrella term encompassing cognitive regulation, executive function, behavioral regulation, and emotion regulation. However, this is complicated by the proliferation of divergent terms and conceptions of the construct from multiple disciplines (Morrison & Grammer, 2016). Greater clarity would be especially important to ethnically and socioeconomically diverse populations who are the most vulnerable and least studied.

With this in mind, the aim of this participatory session is to engage in a discussion for student organizers and participants to share perceptions about self-regulation in the classroom, strategies to teach children self-regulation, and ideas to better define and measure self-regulation as a construct to improve future research.

Instructions:

Please submit a term or set of terms you associate with self-regulation or executive function.

These can be terms that you have firm understanding and opinions on or terms you have

questions about. For each term, write a sentence or so about your understanding or questions for that term.

Examples:

Executive function. Is that basically being good at getting stuff done? Also, shouldn't that be "executive functions" with an *s*?

Mindfulness. I know what it is, but why do people talk about it and executive function together?

Inhibition. If I include a measure of inhibition in my study, does it matter if it is response inhibition vs. inhibitory control?

The presenters will be best prepared to address questions and statements submitted in advance, but we will in no case assume the role of expert. Rather, the forum is specifically intended to shine a light on questions and to draw on the greater knowledge of the participants. Come prepared with citations, if you'd like.

Some choice terms to ponder:

- attention(al) control
- attention(al) flexibility
- attention monitoring
- attention shifting
- attention switching
- behavioral coordination
- behavioral engagement
- behavioral inhibition
- behavioral regulation
- cognitive control
- cognitive flexibility

- conflict-resolution
- effortful control
- executive attention
- executive skills
- inhibition
- inhibitory control
- response inhibition
- self-regulation
- set shifting
- switching
- updating
- work-related skills
- working memory

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