

RELEVANCE OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS FOR CANADIAN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS AND COUNSELLOR EDUCATORS

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Abstract

One hundred and eighty members of educational psychology and allied departments in Canadian universities were surveyed regarding the journals they considered most relevant to their overall professional development. The results of the survey revealed that journal rankings related closely to professional interest areas. In addition, it was discovered that the *Canadian Counsellor* ranked first among the Canadian journals and ranked second among all journals cited.

Résumé

On a mené une enquête auprès de 180 membres oeuvrant en psychologie ou dans d'autres disciplines connexes dans nos universités canadiennes. Le but de l'enquête était de déterminer quels journaux scientifiques contribuaient le plus, selon eux, à leur développement professionnel global. Les résultats de cette enquête ont révélé qu'il y avait une correspondance étroite entre les journaux choisis et les domaines d'intérêt professionnel. De plus, on a découvert que le *Conseiller Canadien* se classait au premier rang parmi les revues canadiennes et au deuxième rang parmi toutes les revues.

Recent studies (Mace & Warner, 1973; Koulack & Keselman, 1975a, 1975b), involving the rating of professional journals, have been concerned with the "reputation" or prestige of journals rather than the actual use reportedly made of them by psychologists. This emphasis was accentuated by both groups of investigators employing a prearranged list of journal titles for respondents to rank as opposed to presenting an open-ended question.

Koulack and Keselman (1975a) noted that journal rankings change with professed interest area and type of work. These investigators, however, did not specifically refer to either educational psychology or counselling psychology in their surveys. A further shortcoming of their work was the low response rate which was 36% of an original random sample of A.P.A. and C.P.A. members. The principal objective of the present study was to supplement Koulack & Keselman's (1975a) Canadian data by assessing the comparative importance of relevant journals to the professional development of educational psychologists and counsellor educators teaching in Canadian universities.

METHOD

Subjects

The subjects of this study were 180 full-time members of educational psychology and allied departments (special education, counselling, applied psychology) in Canadian Universities. Individuals located within non-departmentalized education faculties and regular psychology departments were not included. All full-time members of relevant departments as listed in current university calendars were surveyed, the response rate being 63% (N = 285).

Procedure

Subjects received a questionnaire, a cover letter and a return self-addressed envelope. The questionnaire was concerned with the background, interests and professional "identity" of those teaching in educational psychology departments, including counsellor educators. The form was anonymous. Provision, however, was made for subjects to indicate their names and addresses if a preliminary report of results was desired. The item concerning journals read: "List up to five journals you find most relevant to

your overall professional development''. Following this statement were five spaces for the inclusion of journal titles. Elsewhere on the questionnaire subjects indicated their teaching and research interests.*

*Details available on request from the author.

Results and Discussion

The rank order of the twenty one most frequently cited journals is presented in Table 1. Table 2 includes the rank order of Canadian journals cited.

A total of 164 journal titles was cited, 100 of these being mentioned by only one respondent each. The

TABLE 1

Rank order of Top 21 Journals by Canadian Educational Psychologists		
Rank	Title	Percentage of respondents citing journal
1	Journal of Educational Psychology	22
2	American Educational Research Journal	21
3	Child Development	19
4	American Psychologist	18
5	Exceptional Children	15
	Review of Educational Research	
7	Journal of Counseling Psychology	12
8	Counseling Psychologist Personnel and Guidance Journal	10
	Psychological Bulletin	
11	Canadian Counsellor Developmental Psychology	9
13	Journal of Educational Measurement Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science	9
15	Psychological Review Journal of Learning Disabilities	—
17	Canadian Psychological Review	7
18	Educational and Psychological Measurement Cognition	7
20	Psychometrika Counselor Education and Supervision	6

most frequently cited journal was mentioned by less than one-fourth of all respondents. This result probably reflects the fact that educational psychologists are a heterogeneous group. Differences in journal rankings beyond about the twentieth reflect the opinions of a very small proportion of individuals.

The diversity of interests of Canadian educational psychologists is reflected in the variety of journals listed in Table 1. In the present survey, 42% of the subjects classified their principal teaching area as

general educational psychology, learning and development; 23% listed counselling psychology; 16% indicated special education, and 13% educational and psychological measurement.

Forty one individuals reported that counselling was their major teaching area and cited a total of 70 journals. Table 3 shows the rank order of the top ten journals cited. *The Canadian Counsellor* ranked first among Canadian journals by a very wide margin, and second among all journals cited.

The present data confirm Koulack and Keselman's (1975a) observation that journal rankings relate closely to professed interest area. This suggests that future surveys should employ more specialized classifications than those used in the past. While educational psychology may be perceived as a relatively well defined field by psychologists at large,

its heterogeneity is reflected by the diversity of journals reported in this survey. The present data should prove useful to educational psychologists and counsellor educators in selecting journals for the submission of articles designed to reach audiences with specific interests.

TABLE 2

Canadian Journals cited by Canadian Educational Psychologists		
Overall rank	Title	Percentage of respondents citing journal
11	Canadian Counsellor	9
13	Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science	9
17	Canadian Psychological Review	7
24	Alberta Journal of Educational Research	4
30	Canadian Journal of Education	3
33	Interchange	3
56	Canadian Journal of Psychology Special Education in Canada	1
64*	Journal of Educational Thought Ontario Psychologist Manitoba Counsellor Saskatchewan Educational Research Journal	

*Final four journals cited once only.

TABLE 3

Rank order of Top 10 Journals by Canadian Counsellor Educators		
Rank	Title	Percentage of respondents citing journal
1	Journal of Counseling Psychology	49
2	Canadian Counsellor Counseling Psychologist	41
4	Personnel and Guidance Journal	39
5	American Psychologist	34
6	Counselor Education and Supervision	24
7	The School Counselor	15
8	Canadian Psychological Review Vocational Guidance Quarterly Exceptional Children	10

References

- Mace, K. C. & Warner, H. D. Ratings of psychology journals. *American Psychologist*, 1973, 28, 184-186.
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