A Metastudy of Adultspan Journal: An Analysis of Publication Characteristics From 1999 to 2019

Margaret Rippeto
Vanderbilt, Bradley.T.Erford@vanderbilt.edu

Elizabeth Stewart

Michelle Chowning

Sailee Karkhanis

Bradley T. Erford

See next page for additional authors

A Metastudy of Adultspan Journal: An Analysis of Publication Characteristics From 1999 to 2019

Authors

Margaret Rippeto, Elizabeth Stewart, Michelle Chowning, Sailee Karkhanis, Bradley T. Erford, and Leah Kepley

A Metastudy of *Adultspan Journal*: An Analysis of Publication Characteristics From 1999 to 2019

Margaret Rippeto, Elizabeth Stewart, Michelle Chowning, Sailee Karkhanis, Bradley T. Erford, and Leah Kepley

Articles published in Adultspan Journal from 1999 to 2019 were analyzed for trends over time in author characteristics (e.g., leading contributors and institutions, work setting, gender, domicile) and article characteristics (e.g., reporting standards, topics, research design, participant characteristics, and statistical sophistication).

Keywords: metastudy, author characteristics, article characteristics, adult development, aging

Among the varied landscapes of the counseling literature, adult development and aging remains a subject of critical importance, particularly given the diverse clientele that comprise counseling practice. Research on adults supports professional development of counselors by providing theoretical and practical discourse. *Adultspan Journal* (*ADSP*) is the official journal of the Association for Adult Development and Aging (AADA), a division of the American Counseling Association (ACA), and was first published in 1999. No issues of *ADSP* were published from 2002 to 2004, but publication resumed in 2005 and continues to the present time. Since the prior journal metastudy review completed in 2009 (Erford et al., 2011), editors of *ADSP* have included Catherine B. Roland (Vol. 2, No. 2, through Vol. 14, No. 2) and Suzanne Degges-White (Vol. 15, No. 1, to the present). *ADSP* is jointly published by AADA and ACA in partnership with Wiley-Blackwell and primarily features theoretical, practice, and research articles of interest to professional counselors who work with adult clients of all ages and in all settings. The purpose of this article is to provide a review and

Margaret Rippeto, Elizabeth Stewart, Michelle Chowning, Sailee Karkhanis, Bradley T. Erford, and Leah Kepley, Department of Human and Organizational Development, Vanderbilt University. Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Bradley T. Erford, Department of Human and Organizational Development, Vanderbilt University, PMB 90, Peabody College, Nashville, TN 37203-5721 (email: bradley.t.erford@vanderbilt.edu).

· ·

analysis of *ADSP* content as a follow-up to the original Erford et al. (2011) metastudy. This is done with the aim of describing both author and article characteristics, as well as looking for shifts or trends that may have occurred since the earlier review was conducted.

This follow-up article uses the quantitative metastudy approach summarized by Erford et al. (2010), which organized author and article characteristics into time intervals in order to view statistical trends over time. Although data regarding author and article characteristics remain of primary importance, special interest was paid to research articles, which included more detailed analyses of participants, statistics, methods, and design features, because research articles hold particular salience in relation to the journal's stakeholders.

The current article is the second publication pattern review conducted for *ADSP* articles. The first (Erford et al., 2011) was modeled on similar analyses of other counseling journals, such as the publication pattern reviews of *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development* (*MECD*; Erford et al., 2010). Several recent metastudies of counseling family journals have been produced upon which the current study and methodology are based, including *MECD* (Saks et al., 2020), *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling* (Gayowsky et al., in press), and *Counselor Education and Supervision* (*CES*; Johnsen et al., 2021).

In the first *ADSP* review (Erford et al., 2011), several trends were found among author and article characteristics. Overwhelmingly, first authors were affiliated with a university and were from the United States. Female authors were published at twice the proportion of male authors, and the average number of authors per article was 1.80. The top three contributors, as determined by a weighted point system, were Jane E. Myers, Suzanne Degges-White, and Andrew P. Daire. Regarding article characteristics, content related to practice and theory was more prevalent than content related to research. The two most prevalent types of study participants were undergraduate students and adults over the age of 60 years, each representing 20% of the participant pool. Research designs and statistical sophistication remained relatively stable across the time span of Erford et al.'s (2011) review, with surveys representing the most common type of research design.

Somewhat related to a metastudy, Fullen et al.'s (2021) article "Gerontological Counseling Trends in *Adultspan Journal*: 1999–2019" in this same issue of *ADSP* presents a content analysis of all articles published in this journal and 23 other counseling journals over the past 20 years. This focus on gerontological counseling and counseling older adults comprises a large subset (nearly half) of the articles in the present metastudy. Although the focus of Fullen et al.'s article shares a similarity in discerning the topical content appearing in *ADSP* articles, the scope does not explore the vast majority of author and article characteristics covered in the present metastudy. Instead, Fullen et al. focuses on topical content patterns, ratios of empirical and theory-based articles, and whether gerontological articles are increasing or decreasing in the journal and

2

profession. To the extent appropriate, our discussion of results from this current metastudy will be compared to elements of Fullen et al.'s gerontologically focused article.

As with the Erford et al. (2011) review, two primary questions were addressed in the current metastudy: (a) What notable trends appear regarding authors who publish in *ADSP* (author characteristics)? and (b) What notable trends appear regarding article characteristics published in *ADSP*, with a specific focus on research publications? Key consideration was given to whether characteristics have remained stable over time or changed as article content evolved over time.

METHOD

For this metastudy, all articles published in *ADSP* between 1999 and 2019 were reviewed for inclusion. The articles from 1999 to 2009 were coded previously by Erford et al. (2011). For the present metastudy, the articles from 2010 to 2019 were coded independently by the first two authors, and the fifth author adjudicated any disagreements. The characteristics or variables coded fell broadly into two categories: author characteristics and article characteristics. Author variables were categorized according to names, number of authors per article, gender (male or female), employment setting (university or nonuniversity), university affiliation, and location of domicile (United States or international). Author contributions were weighed according to procedures outlined by Erford et al. (2010), whereby the first author was awarded 3 points, the second author was awarded 2 points, and all subsequent authors were each awarded 1 point. The individual contribution is the simple sum for each author over the entire time period.

Article characteristics included article type (research or nonresearch) and topics (e.g., aging issues, career/retirement, caregivers). An article was classified as research if it included a sample and methodology for systematic inquiry. Content topics mirror the categories used in the Erford et al. (2011) metastudy and were derived by collapsing and aggregating topical content categories using qualitative content analysis coding. More than one topic could be reflected in an article. Research articles were further examined to explore emerging trends since 1999. Coded characteristics included type of design used (i.e., correlational, survey, comparative, true/quasi-experimental, and ethnographic/interview), research method (i.e., qualitative and quantitative), intervention/nonintervention, sample size, participants sampled (i.e., adults, undergraduate students, older adults, counselors/professionals, graduate students, and children/adolescents), sampling/assignment randomization procedures (i.e., randomized and nonrandomized), statistical level of sophistication (i.e., basic, intermediate, and advanced), statistical procedures used (i.e., descriptive, correlation, multivariate analysis of variance [MANOVA], *t* test/analysis of variance [ANOVA], regression, nonparametric, and factor analysis), reported

sample reliability, and reported sample validity. Basic statistical sophistication included descriptive, correlation, and nonparametric procedures; intermediate statistics included regression analysis and *t* test/ANOVA; and advanced statistics included MANOVA and factor analysis.

Coded data were entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, aggregated into convenient class intervals (i.e., 1999–2009, 2010–2014, and 2015–2019), and analyzed using SPSS (Version 27) with descriptive and univariate statistical procedures (ANOVA) using weighted proportions to identify trends over time. We chose a weighted proportion ANOVA over a repeated measures ANOVA procedure because the latter assumes measurement of the same individuals/units over time. In this study, the data consisted of different articles, authors, and units over the 18-volume period, so that assumption was violated. Type I error was established at an alpha level of .05, and significant findings were further analyzed using Scheffé's test. Effect sizes are reported as eta squared (η^2) using interpretive range guidelines of .01 (small effect), .09 (moderate effect), and .25 (large effect).

RESULTS

ADSP published 190 articles from 1999 to 2019. Of these, 24 were editorials that were subsequently excluded from analyses, leaving 166 articles submitted for author and article variable coding. The coded results were aggregated into three multiyear time windows (i.e., 1999–2009, 2010–2014, and 2015–2019) and analyzed for trends over time. These results were segmented by author and article characteristics.

Author Characteristics

Women composed a substantial majority (74.1%) of *ADSP* lead authors from 1999 to 2019. Still, that majority significantly fluctuated in proportion from 68.4% in 1999–2009 to 89.4% in 2010–2014, then back to 67.4% in 2015–2019, $F(2, 163) = 4.11$, $p = .018$, $\eta^2 = .018$. A similar pattern of significant changes also occurred for all *ADSP* authors, as women also comprised a consistent, solid majority (72.1%) of all authors, $F(2, 355) = 7.29$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .039$. Again, the proportion of women among all authors rose from 66.4% in 1999–2009 to 85.1% in 2010–2014, before declining to 65.4% in 2015–2019. Since *ADSP*'s inception, women have composed a substantial majority of lead authors and all *ADSP* authors. Over the journal's history, the average number of authors per article also has risen steadily from 1.80 in 1999–2009 to 2.49 in 2015–2019, a significant difference over time, $F(2, 162) = 7.51$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .085$.

ADSP author employment affiliation in university and nonuniversity settings remained stable over time for both lead authors, $F(2, 163) = 1.18$, $p = .310$, $\eta^2 = .014$, and all authors, $F(2, 355) = 0.56$, $p = .572$, $\eta^2 = .003$. Overall, only 2.7% of lead authors and 2.9% of all authors were not primarily affiliated with a

4

university. Likewise, the proportion of international authors publishing in *ADSP* from 1999 to 2019 was a consistent 1%, $F(2, 163) = 0.51$, $p = .601$, $\eta^2 = .006$.

The most frequently contributing individual authors (weighted) from 1999 to 2019 included Suzanne Degges-White (22 points), Jane E. Myers (18 points), Andrew P. Daire (14 points), and at least 15 other authors who accumulated 6 points each or the equivalent of two lead author *ADSP* publications over the previous 20 years. From 1999 to 2019, the following universities supported the highest number of *ADSP* lead authors: Montclair State University (13 articles); University of Central Florida (six articles); a tie with five articles each for Rider University, University of North Carolina–Greensboro, and University of Tennessee–Knoxville; and a tie with four articles each for Ohio State University, Stephen F. Austin University, and Western Kentucky University.

Article Characteristics

Table 1 shows that topical content issues appearing in *ADSP* publications were stable from 1999 to 2019, $F(2, 224) = 1.02$, $p = .361$, $\eta^2 = .009$. The only topical categories to exceed 10% of articles were interpersonal relationships (11.0%), mental health issues (12.8), and wellness (11.0%). That said, *ADSP* substantially increased the proportion of research articles published, from 35.5% in 1999–2009 to 58.1% in 2015–2019, $F(2, 163) = 3.08$, $p = .049$, $\eta^2 = .036$. The remainder of the Results section reviews various characteristics of the 75 research articles published in *ADSP* between 1999 and 2019.

Table 2 shows the significant changes in types of research designs appearing in *ADSP* research articles from 1999 to 2019, $F(2, 98) = 5.88$, $p = .004$,

TABLE 1

Topic Categories in *Adultspan Journal* Articles From 1999 to 2019

Topic Category	1999–2009 (*N* = 113)		2010–2014 (*N* = 62)		2015–2019 (*N* = 52)		Total (*N* = 227)	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Aging issues	6	5.3	2	3.2	7	13.5	15	6.6
Career/retirement	7	6.2	5	8.1	3	5.8	15	6.6
Caregivers	8	7.1	2	3.2	2	3.8	12	5.3
Counselor education	5	4.4	9	14.5	3	5.8	17	7.5
Grief/loss/death	6	5.3	4	6.5	1	1.9	11	4.3
Interpersonal relationships	12	10.6	11	17.7	2	3.8	25	11.0
Mental health issues	10	8.8	5	8.1	14	26.9	29	12.8
Multicultural	8	7.1	2	3.2	3	5.8	13	5.7
Physical health issues	7	6.2	3	4.8	4	7.7	14	6.2
Psychosocial issues	13	11.5	2	3.2	2	3.8	17	7.5
Sexuality	4	3.5	5	8.1	2	3.8	11	4.8
Sexual minority issues	7	6.2	6	9.7	0	0.0	13	5.7
Spirituality	5	4.4	3	4.8	2	3.8	10	4.4
Wellness	15	13.3	3	4.8	7	13.5	25	11.0

Note. Many articles were coded to reflect multiple content topic areas. Thus, totals exceed the number of accepted articles. Percentages may not total 100 because of rounding.

TABLE 2

**Types of Research Designs Used in *Adultspan Journal* Research
Studies From 1999 to 2019**

Type of Design	1999–2009 (N = 42)		2010–2014 (N = 30)		2015–2019 (N = 29)		Total (N = 101)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Correlation	10	23.8	3	10.0	0	0.0	13	12.9
Descriptive/survey	16	38.1	12	40.0	15	51.7	43	42.6
Comparative	17	16.7	2	6.7	0	0.0	9	8.9
True/quasi-experimental	4	9.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	4.0
Ethnographic	5	11.0	13	43.4	14	48.3	32	31.7

Note. Percentages may not total 100 because of rounding.

η^2 = .107, with the largest effect size in this metastudy. The proportion of true/quasi-experimental designs dropped significantly from 1999–2009 to 2010–2019, whereas survey and ethnographic designs increased significantly. This was mirrored by the rising trend of qualitative research studies appearing in *ADSP*, $F(2, 72)$ = 2.48, p = .091, η^2 = .064, from 25.9% of all research studies in 1999–2009 to 52.1% in 2010–2019. Likewise, intervention studies also declined significantly from 18.5% of all studies in 1999–2009 down to only 2% of all research studies in 2010–2019, $F(2, 72)$ = 3.50, p = .035, η^2 = .089, a medium effect size.

ADSP research article sample sizes remained stable between 1999 and 2019, $F(2, 72)$ = 0.36, p = .698, η^2 = .010; 36% of research articles used small samples (< 30 participants), 13.3% used medium-sized samples (30–99 participants), 44% used large samples (100–499 participants), and only 6.7% used very large samples (500 or more participants). The median sample size decreased from 123 participants in 1999–2009 to only 45 participants in 2015–2019, probably because of the increase in qualitative studies. Stable proportions of types of participants were observed in *ADSP* research studies, $F(2, 77)$ = 0.86, p = .425, η^2 = .022, with about one fourth of participant samples coming from each of three groups: undergraduates, adults, and older adults. The proportions of use of randomization in participant selection or assignment procedures also held steady over the past 20 years, $F(2, 72)$ = 0.44, p = .643, η^2 = .012, as randomization was used in only 2.7% of all research studies.

Statistical sophistication involved categorization of statistical procedures into basic, intermediate, or advanced designations. The statistical sophistication of *ADSP* research articles has changed substantially over the past 20 years, $F(2, 90)$ = 4.792, p = .011, η^2 = .096, with the second largest effect size in this metastudy. Of *ADSP* research studies, 48.4% used basic statistical procedures in 1999–2009, increasing to 78.3% in 2010–2014. Concurrently, advanced research procedures dropped from a 21.2% use in all studies in 1999–2009 to only about 3% in 2010–2019. It is interesting that, at the same time, the

proportions of the actual statistical procedures used changed very little (see Table 3), $F(3, 214) = 1.96$, $p = .12$, $\eta^2 = .027$, as descriptive statistics were used in 30.2%, t test/ANOVAs in 18.1%, correlations in 20.7%, and regression analyses in 17.2% of *ADSP* research studies.

Finally, two reporting standards variables were coded to determine if authors and the *ADSP* editorial board provided study score reliability and score validity. The results indicate that these variables were each consistently displayed over the two periods of 2010–2014 and 2015–2019. The proportions of reports of sample reliability, $F(1, 46) = 0.29$, $p = .594$, $\eta^2 = .006$, were stable, maintaining a reporting rate of 56.2%. Likewise, the sample score validity also was stable, $F(1, 46) = 2.01$, $p = .163$, $\eta^2 = .042$, as authors reported validity metrics in 37.5% of the research studies from 2010 to 2019.

DISCUSSION

ADSP continues to grow as new advances occur in the field of adult development and aging, and as authors and editors focus on the issues that affect people in various stages of adulthood. As in the previous *ADSP* metastudy (Erford et al., 2011), emerging trends were reviewed among articles from 1999 to 2019 in the present article. The following sections examine these major author and article characteristics in detail and identify both stable and significant patterns of changes.

Author Characteristics: Who Publishes in *ADSP*?

ADSP published its first issue in 1999 when it was launched by the AADA. A continuing area of interest—global involvement in *ADSP*—was studied because globalization of counseling has advanced substantially over the past few decades. A variety of methods can be used to assess this level of

TABLE 3

Statistical Procedures Used in *Adultspan Journal* Research Studies From 1999 to 2019

Statistical Procedure	1999–2009 (N = 45)		2010–2014 (N = 29)		2015–2019 (N = 42)		Total (N = 116)	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Descriptive	12	26.7	10	34.5	13	31.0	35	30.2
Correlation	8	17.8	6	20.7	10	23.8	24	20.7
Multivariate analysis of variance	7	15.6	1	3.4	2	4.8	10	8.6
T test/analysis of variance	9	20.0	5	17.2	7	16.7	21	18.1
Regression	8	17.8	4	13.8	8	19.0	20	17.2
Nonparametric	1	2.2	1	3.4	1	2.4	3	2.6
Factor analysis	0	0.0	2	6.9	1	2.4	3	2.6

Note. Percentages may not total 100 because of rounding.

involvement, but the method of choice is to look at the proportion of articles a journal publishes authored by international lead authors. Within the years of interest from 1999 to 2019, only two lead international authors published in *ADSP*, a 1.2% overall proportion. Many counseling journals have similarly low international author rates (e.g., 0% for *Journal of Addictions & Offender Counseling* [*JAOC*], MacInerney et al., 2020; 0.9% for *Journal of Mental Health Counseling* [*JMHC*], Menzies et al., 2020). On the other hand, several counseling journals do quite well in attracting international authors (e.g., 53% for *Journal of Employment Counseling*, Siegler et al., 2020; 30% for *MECD*, Saks et al., 2020). International authorship can be used as a marker for *ADSP*'s global influence and reach. Thus, the editorial board should encourage international authors to submit manuscripts to *ADSP* to reflect and attract a more widespread, diverse readership.

Another demographic of interest is that almost three quarters of lead authors and all authors of *ADSP* articles from 1999 to 2019 were women. During the 20-year period, the percentage of female lead authors fluctuated significantly and actually jumped to nearly 90% in the 2010–2014 time window. A similar significant effect was noted for all authors as female authors spiked to 85.1% in the 2010–2014 time window. Increases to majority female authorship proportions have been noted in almost all counseling journals (*Counseling and Values* [*CVJ*], Alder et al., in press; *JAOC*, MacInerney et al., 2020; *MECD*, Saks et al., 2020; *Journal of College Counseling* [*JCC*], Milowsky et al., in press), but with more than 70% female authorship, *ADSP* is at the top end of the distribution. Only *The Journal of Humanistic Counseling* (Sylvester et al., in press) does not presently display majority female authorship among counseling journals. Given that women now represent 80% of the counseling profession workforce (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016), this greater than 70% proportion in female authors in *ADSP* is reflective of the important scholarly contribution of women.

ADSP displayed a steady, low proportion of nonuniversity-affiliated authors from 1999 to 2019. Only 2.7% of the lead authors and 2.9% of all the authors were not primarily affiliated with a university. Many other counseling journals have an equally low rate of nonuniversity authors (*CES*, Johnsen et al., 2021; *MECD*, Saks et al., 2020; *Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation* [*CORE*], Johnson et al., 2021; *CVJ*, Alder et al., in press; *JAOC*, MacInerney et al., 2020; *JCC*, Milowsky et al., in press;). Even the historically higher *JMHC* practitioner author rate of 10% dropped to 3.8% in 2015–2019 (Menzies et al., 2020). It is normal and expected that university faculty participate in research in their field of expertise, so the dominance of university-based authorship is not surprising; however, the near absence of practitioner voices in the literature is concerning. Research might benefit greatly from increased involvement of practitioners who are not university affiliated. Often, these practitioners hold a wealth of practical knowledge and experience resulting from their heavy emphasis on field work. While this study notes a lack of

practitioner involvement in research, the question arises as to how the extant literature might be improved by an increase in practitioner voices. That said, practitioners may be less interested in research involvement because of very busy work schedules or a lack of collaborative partnership opportunities. As *ADSP* moves forward, this practitioner demographic will continue to be of interest, as an increase in non-university-affiliated authorship may bring about interesting new results and practice methods. It is essential to have multidimensional and diverse perspectives to advance the field of counseling, whether pertaining to research or implementation of practice strategies.

There has been a steady and significant increase in the average number of *ADSP* authors per article, from 1.80 in 1999–2009 to 2.49 in 2015–2019. Although this increased collaboration is a positive trend, the ratio of the number of authors for each *ADSP* article is still low compared with most other counseling journals (e.g., *JAOC*, 3.31, MacInerney et al., 2020; *MECD*, 3.21, Saks et al., 2020; *JCC*, 3.20, Milowsky et al., in press; *JCD*, 3.18, Anderson et al., in press; *CORE*, 3.04, Johnson et al., 2021; *JMHC*, 2.95, Menzies et al., 2020; *CVJ*, 2.91, Alder et al., in press). Combined with the previous result that nearly all authors are affiliated with universities and the general increase in research articles published, it is probable that higher author-per-article averages reflect increased collaboration among faculty and graduate students, and this increased collaboration is often rewarded. This increased collaboration is a positive and growing trend among counseling journals. It will be interesting to see how *ADSP* responds and progresses over the coming decade regarding these interesting author demographic characteristics results.

Article Characteristics: What Is Published in *ADSP*?

ADSP publishes a well-balanced array of topical content, and this balance has been stable over time. The only topical issue categories to exceed 10% of the total articles were interpersonal relationships (11.0%), mental health issues (12.8%), and wellness (11.0%). All other issues fell between 4.4% and 7.5%, a very even display. These percentages match well with Fullen et al.'s (2021) topical content coding, although they embedded a number of Table 1 topics in the context of wellness (e.g., vocational wellness, social wellness, physical wellness) that we placed in more general categories (e.g., career/retirement, physical health issues) in our metastudy. For example, Table 1 shows that this metastudy coded 5.7% of articles as multicultural content, whereas Fullen et al. coded 3.9% as cultural diversity content; we coded mental health issues at 12.8%, whereas Fullen et al. coded 7.9% for clinical mental health disorders; and we coded counselor education at 7.5%, compared with 3.9% coded by Fullen et al. These slight variations in proportions are nominal given that Fullen et al. coded only the geronto-logical articles, which composed about 50% of the total articles published in *ADSP* from 1999 to 2019.

At the same time, over the past 2 decades, the number of research articles published in *ADSP* has steadily increased in comparison with the number of nonresearch articles. However, only during 2015–2019 did *ADSP* finally break the research article plateau of more than 50% (58.1%), the final counseling journal evaluated to do so. This is a milestone accomplishment for *ADSP* and its commitment to publishing counseling research. The overall proportion of research articles from 1999 to 2019 was 45.2% in this metastudy, compared with 39.5% in Fullen et al. (2021), who analyzed only those *ADSP* articles focusing on gerontological counseling, which was about half (49.35%) of the total articles published, indicating equivalent proportions.

Of the 75 research articles published in the last 20 years, there has been a significant increase in the use of surveys and ethnography within research designs, and a significant decrease in correlation, comparative, and true/quasi-experimental designs from 1999–2009 to 2015–2019. This is probably explained by the similar decreasing trend in quantitative methods, as the proportion fell from 74.1% to 48.0% over the same period. This substantial growth in use of qualitative research methods from 1999–2009 (25.9%) to 2015–2019 (52.0%) relied on the use of interviews and descriptive methods. Consistency was observed between the current metastudy results (57.3% quantitative, 42.7% qualitative) and those of Fullen et al. (2021; 62% quantitative, 38% qualitative) from 1999 to 2019. Again, this difference is nominal because of the small sample sizes (ns = 75 and 34, respectively) and because the Fullen et al. analysis involves a subset of the full article census sampling used in the present metastudy.

It is unfortunate to see that the proportion of intervention studies has fallen substantially because these true and quasi-experimental designs are the most robust, allowing causative glimpses into study results. No true or quasi-experimental studies were published in the journal in the past decade. Only 8% of the research studies published from 1999 to 2019 involved intervention studies. This was consistent with the 9.2% observation of Fullen et al. (2021) among the gerontological counseling article subset.

All four coded participant characteristics were stable over time: types of participants, randomization, sample size, and median sample size, although the median sample size did drop somewhat from 123 to 45 due primarily to the significant increase in qualitative studies, which tend to use smaller samples of participants. A closer look at this decline reveals that a post hoc analysis disaggregated the samples by quantitative and qualitative designs and found that, over the 21-year period, qualitative study median sample sizes were quite stable at 17 (n = 7), 11 (n = 12), and 14 (n = 13), respectively, across the three time windows (i.e., 1999–2009, 2010–2014, and 2015–2019), with an overall median of 14 participants. In contrast, the median sample sizes of quantitative studies across the three time windows were 155 (n = 20), 190 (n = 11), and 311 (n = 12), respectively, with an overall median of 190

10

participants. Thus, the drop in overall median sample sizes over time was due more to the increased proportion of qualitative studies in *ADSP* than to the decline in sample size.

ADSP displays a mature stability across participant characteristics and a nice mix. For example, study samples consisted of undergraduates (21.2%), adults (31.2%), and older adults (26.2%), along with much smaller percentages of counselors, counselors-in-training, and youth. Only two published studies used randomization procedures, tracking well with the small proportion of true or quasi-experimental designs used.

Regarding statistical sophistication in the conduct of research studies in *ADSP*, there has been a significant increase in the use of basic statistics from 48.4% in 1999–2009 to 67.6% in 2015–2019 of all research studies, whereas the use of advance statistics has decreased from 21.2% to 5.4% over the same periods. This is expected given the increase in qualitative studies, which primarily use content coding and descriptive procedures. Finally, the overall reported sample reliability and validity indices have both been stable over the last 20 years. Still, at 56.2% and 37.5%, respectively, there is still much room for improvement in these reporting practices.

Limitations and Conclusion

Several interesting trends in article and author characteristics have occurred in *ADSP* over the last 20 years, which should provide helpful insights to the readership, former and future authors, and editorial board members. However, the present metastudy does have a few limitations. First, inadvertent classification errors might have occurred even though the data were coded by two authors and cross-checked by another author when there were disagreements. Obviously, there was some level of subjectivity while coding data for certain categories or typologies. Second, because the data were analyzed using descriptive and comparative methodologies, any conclusions drawn from these analyses should be looked at with caution. A third limitation is the lack of power due to small sample sizes for most of the research article analyses. With only 75 total research articles and an average of 25 articles across each of the three time windows, the sample sizes across units of analysis were small. Some research teams may have coded different variables or used different categories within a variable to describe and analyze the data, whereas others may have chosen even smaller time windows than the 5- to 11-year windows used in the present metastudy. All the while, we took precautions to avoid overgeneralizing any points or conclusions and sought to eliminate potentially biased comments or judgments out of respect for the outstanding work of the authors, editors, and dedicated editorial board members. At more than 20 years old, *ADSP* has matured into a valuable repository of adult development and aging scholarship—a repository that becomes even more important as the profession makes a final push to obtain the long sought-after goal of Medicare provider status.

REFERENCES

Alder, C., Yu, C., & Erford, B. T. (in press). A metastudy of *Counseling and Values*: An analysis of publication characteristics from 2000 to 2019. *Counseling and Values.*

Anderson, B., Barstack, S., & Erford, B. T. (in press). A metastudy of *Journal of Counseling & Development*: An analysis of publication characteristics from 2000 to 2019. *Journal of Counseling & Development.*

Erford, B. T., Clark, K. H., & Erford, B. M. (2011). *Adultspan* publication patterns: Author and article characteristics from 1999 to 2009. *Adultspan Journal, 10,* 52–62. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-0029.2011.tb00006.x

Erford, B. T., Miller, E. M., Duncan, K., & Erford, B. M. (2010). Submission patterns: *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development* author and article characteristics from 1990 to 2009. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, 42*(4), 296–307. https://doi.org/10.1177/0748175609354619

Fullen, M. C., Chan, C. D., Jordan, J., Dobmeier, R. A., & Gorby, S. (2021). Gerontological counseling trends in *Adultspan Journal*: 1999–2019. *Adultspan Journal, 42*(1), 3–16. https://doi.org/10.1002/adsp.12102

Gayowsky, J., Choi, J., & Erford, B. T. (in press). Meta-study of *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling* publication patterns from 2006–2019. *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling.*

Johnsen, S., Watson, K., Erford, B. T., Crockett, S. A., & Byrd, R. (2021). *Counselor Education and Supervision*: An analysis of publication characteristics from 2000 to 2019. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 60*(1), 22–34. https://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12194

Johnson, A., West, C., & Erford, B. T. (2021). A meta-study of *Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation* (CORE): An analysis of publication characteristics from 2010–2019. *Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation.* Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1080/21501378.2020.1829967

MacInerney, E. K., Johnsen, S. T., Cobb, N., Smith, H., & Erford, B. T. (2020). *Journal of Addictions & Offender Counseling* publication patterns from 1998 to 2017: Author and article characteristics. *Journal of Addictions & Offender Counseling, 41*(2), 82–96. https://doi.org/10.1002/jaoc.12082

Menzies, A., Kepley, L., Erford, B. T., Crockett, S. A., Byrd, R., & Aier, B. (2020). A meta-study of the *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*: An analysis of publication characteristics, 2000–2019. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling, 42*(3), 206–219. https://doi.org/10.17744/mehc.42.3.02

Milowsky, A. I., Haffner, A. M., Bardhoshi, G., Erford, B. T., Byrd, R., & Crockett, S. A. (in press). A metastudy of *Journal of College Counseling*: An analysis of publication characteristics from 2000 to 2019. *Journal of College Counseling.*

Saks, J., Fuller, A., Erford, B. T., & Bardhoshi, G. (2020). Meta-study of *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development* (*MECD*) publication patterns from 2000–2019. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, 53*(4), 279–288. https://doi.org/10.1080/07481756.2020.1735222

Siegler, E., Stafford, C., Zhou, Y., Erford, B. T., & Crockett, S. (2020). A metastudy of *Journal of Employment Counseling*: An analysis of publication patterns from 2010 to 2019. *Journal of Employment Counseling, 57*(4), 178–189. https://doi.org/10.1002/joec.12153

Sylvester, A.-M., Wary, S., Erford, B. T., & MacInerney, E. (in press). A metastudy of *The Journal of Humanistic Counseling*: An analysis of publication characteristics from 2000 to 2019. *The Journal of Humanistic Counseling.*

U.S. Census Bureau. (2016). *Public use microdata sample* (PUMS) [Data file]. https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/pums.html