
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

NAME: Marie-Ann Suizzo

eRA COMMONS USER NAME: suizzom

POSITION TITLE: Associate Professor, Department of Educational Psychology

EDUCATION/TRAINING

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE	Completion Date MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY
Georgetown University, Washington, DC	BA	05/1981	Government
Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA	MA	08/1987	Education
Harvard University, Cambridge, MA	MA	06/1993	Human Development and Psychology
Harvard University, Cambridge, MA	EDD	06/1997	Human Development and Psychology
Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, Bethesda, MD	Postdoc	06/2001	Children and Family Research

A. Personal Statement

I am a developmental psychologist who specializes in parent-child relationships and their effects on children's cognitive and academic development. I also focus on ethnic, cultural, and racial differences and on variations associated with socio-economic status. In my research, I investigate the ways that parents socialize their children to be successful in school and seek to identify specific parental beliefs and practices that lead to positive outcomes. I have focused on low-income families and on Latino and African American families in an effort to reduce the educational inequality that exists in these communities. I also examine the specific role of fathers in supporting adolescents' academic achievement and gender differences between sons' and daughters' relationships with their fathers and mothers. My research fits within the PRC's primary research areas of Demography: Family Demography and Intergenerational Relationships and Demography: Education, Work, and Inequality.

In the next five years, I expect to make major contributions to research in the area of demography by expanding and deepening my research on low-income Latino and African American families. I will continue examining gender and cultural differences in parent-adolescent relationships. Additionally, I will pursue a new line of research on the mechanisms through which these parents convey beliefs and values to their adolescents. A key aspect of this research is a close examination of parent-adolescent conversations and their effects on adolescents' self-understanding, emotional well-being, and academic achievement. I have conducted a pilot study on this topic, and am working on the resubmission of an R21 grant to NIH entitled "Parent-Adolescent Conversations' Effects on Adolescent Social-Emotional Development." I expect to resubmit this grant in March 2017. Having just joined the PRC, I have not yet had the opportunity to participate in working groups or serve in an administrative role. I look forward to engaging in these activities over the next five years.

B. Positions and Honors**Positions and Employment**

1989-1992	Teacher and Social Studies Department Chair, Central Catholic High School, Modesto, CA.
1997-1999	Senior Research Associate, Report on Early Childhood Pedagogy, National Academy of Sciences, Washington, D.C.
1999-2001	Post-doctoral Intramural Research Training Fellow, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Child and Family Research Section, NIH, Bethesda, MD.
2001-2006	Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, The University of Texas at Austin
2007-present	Associate Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, The University of Texas at Austin

Other Experience and Professional Memberships

Present Member:
Society for Research in Child Development
Society for Research on Adolescence
International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology

Honors

1992-1993 Doctoral Student Entering Award, Harvard University Graduate School of Education
1996 Doctoral Dissertation Award, Harvard University Graduate School of Education
1996-1997 Advanced Doctoral Fellowship, Harvard University Graduate School of Education
1999-2001 NIH Intramural Research Training Award, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, Child and Family Research Section, Dr. Marc H. Bornstein, Chief
2008 (Spring) Dean's Fellow, College of Education, The University of Texas at Austin
2015 (Fall) Dean's Fellow, College of Education, The University of Texas at Austin

C. Contributions to Science

1. The first major contribution of my research has been **identifying resource and protective factors in children's and adolescents' academic and social-emotional development, with a focus on their most proximal contexts -- home environments and schools**. Although increasing, research on parents' contributions to children's academic achievement in low-income and ethnic minority groups remains surprisingly scarce, especially with adolescents. One reason for this gap is the challenge of recruiting and retaining participants in these populations. Another is a historical assumption that research on parent-child relationships can be applied across diverse groups, regardless of cultural and contextual differences. As a consequence of these limitations, much of the research on parental support of children's education has focused exclusively on school-based involvement, leaving many questions about the parental processes that propel adolescents' motivation and determination unanswered. In my research with Mexican-origin and African American families, I have identified several key parental processes that are directly linked to children's achievement motivation and school performance. Because I conduct mixed-methods research, I have been able not only to model the relations between these variables, but to provide some insights into their meaning to parents and children. In a recent paper, my co-authors and I found that 6th graders in urban schools internalize their parents' frequent messages about the importance of education through conversations. This internalization process contributes to increased higher academic self-efficacy, higher internalized motivation, greater persistence on school tasks, and higher grades. In interviews, adolescents recalled the same conversations as their mothers, providing a basis for further study into the power of parent-adolescent conversations in shaping adolescents' positive attitudes. Further, the majority of these parents had low levels of education themselves, and many did not speak English nor did they visit their children's schools. Despite these potential barriers, these parents successfully socialize their children to be competent and achievement oriented students. Understanding these parent-adolescent relational processes is crucial to inform interventions aimed at strengthening parent-school partnerships and improving the effectiveness of parental support strategies.

Suizzo, M.-A., Pahlke, E., Chapman-Hilliard, C., & Harvey, K. (2016). African American and Mexican American youths' college adjustment and perceptions of parental academic socialization: Interactions between ethnicity and parental education. Invited submission to special issue of the *Journal of Research on Human Development*, 13, 241-257.

Suizzo, M.-A., Jackson, K., Pahlke, E., McClain, S., Marroquin, Y., Blondeau, L., & Hong, K. (2016). Parents' school satisfaction and academic socialization predict adolescents' autonomous motivation: A mixedmethod study of low-income ethnic minority families. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 31, 343-374.

Suizzo, M.-A., Jackson, K., Pahlke, E., Marroquin, Y., & Martinez, A. (2012). Pathways to achievement: How low-income Mexican-origin parents promote their children through school. *Family Relations*, 61, 533-547.

Cooper, C. E., Crosnoe, R., **Suizzo, M.-A.,** & Pituch, K. A. (2010). Poverty, race, and parental involvement during the transition to elementary school. *Journal of Family Issues*, 31(7), 859-883.

2. A second contribution of my research has been **identifying and describing similarities and differences in parents' childrearing beliefs, goals, values, and practices across cultures and ethnic groups**. Cross-cultural and cross-ethnic research on human behavior has taught us a great deal about how cultural values shape parenting and parent-child relationships. In an increasingly multicultural nation, this research has important implications for education and public health policies. One of the aims of my cross-cultural research has been to question our theories about what matters in children's development and what explains observed cultural differences in parenting practices. For example, in a large-scale data analysis of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, my colleague and I discovered that singing to or with children was a frequent parenting practice among Latinos and African Americans, but not among European Americans. This finding was echoed in my own study of parents of preschoolers across four ethnic groups in Austin, Texas. When I searched for research on the possible effects of this practice on children's language development, I found little to none. Yet research on the importance of reading to young children abounds. If a large proportion of two major ethnic groups in the US utilize singing to children as a means to teach them language, we need to expand our lens to include such practices. In this vein, I apply multiple methods in my research to obtain an in-depth, accurate understanding of, not only how practices differ, but what those practices mean in the contexts of individuals' lives. I have conducted numerous comparative studies involving both interviews and surveys, and when discovering new constructs, I have designed culturally appropriate instruments through ethnographic interviews with multi-ethnic research teams. Within this line of research, I have identified cultural differences in parenting goals and values that cannot be adequately explained using the highly utilized Individualism-Collectivism framework. Along with a small group of leaders in this field, I have argued for and proposed refinements to this theory that more accurately describe cultural variations.

Suizzo, M.-A., Chen, W.-C., Cheng, C.-C., Liang, A., Contreras, H., Zanger, D., & Robinson, C. R. (2008). Parental beliefs about young children's socialization across U.S. ethnic groups: Coexistence of independence and interdependence. *Early Child Development and Care*, 178(5), 467-486.

Suizzo, M.-A. (2007). Parents' goals and values for children: Dimensions of independence and interdependence across four U.S. ethnic groups. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 38(4), 506-530.

Suizzo, M.-A., & Stapleton, L. (2007). Home-based parental involvement in young children's education: Examining the effects of maternal education across U.S. ethnic groups. *Educational Psychology*, 27(4), 533-556.

Suizzo, M.-A., & Soon, K. (2006). Parental academic socialization: Effects of home-based parental involvement on locus of control across U.S. ethnic groups. *Educational Psychology*, 26(6), 827-846.

3. A third and more recent area of research to which I have made contributions is **understanding how fathering and father-child relationships affect children's social-emotional and intellectual development**. Although expanding rapidly, our knowledge of fathers' roles in children's development, especially during adolescence, is very limited. One of the challenges of this research is conceptualizing and measuring the interactions of fathers' influences with those of mothers. Increasing research has shown that fathers' influences are not only unique, but vary according to the child's gender, often in unexpected ways. Existing theories about fathers' roles and their variations with child gender need further development both to explain and frame future studies. Research on fathers in ethnic minority families is especially scarce, yet promises to offer insights into how fathering varies with culture and race. My research on fathers began with a mixed methods study of stay-at-home fathers conducted with my colleague, Dr. Aaron Rochlen. In this study, fathers reported generally high levels of life satisfaction and confidence in their parenting efficacy. I have continued work on fathers through my recent study of the effects of fathers' warmth on adolescent positive attitudes, including optimism and academic self-efficacy. In this study, we found that fathers' warmth positively affects adolescents' attitudes, and that those attitudes then predict higher achievement, however, the specific attitudes affected differ by adolescent gender (Suizzo et al., under review). The proposed R21 project expands on this line of research by investigating fathers' conversations with their adolescents, through surveys, interviews, and observational data.

Suizzo, M.-A., Rackley, K., Robbins, P., Jackson, K. M., Rarick, J. D., & McClain, S. (in press). The effects of fathers' warmth on adolescents' academic achievement: Pathways to resilience in low-income families. *Sex Roles*.

Rochlen, A. B., **Suizzo**, M.-A., Scaringi, V., & McKelley, R. A. (2008). "I'm just providing for my family": A qualitative study of stay-at-home-fathers. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*, 9(4), 193-206.

Rochlen, A. B., McKelley, R. A., **Suizzo, M.-A.**, & Scaringi, V. (2008). Predictors of relationship satisfaction, psychological well-being, and life satisfaction among stay-at-home fathers. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*, 9(1), 17-28.

Complete List of Published Work in MyBibliography:

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/myncbi/collections/bibliography/50400716/?reload=addSuccess>

D. Research Support

Completed Research Support

Research Award (M.-A. Suizzo, PI) 05/01/15-08/31/15

UT Austin Special Research Grant, Office of the Vice President for Research
How Low-income Fathers Socialize their Adolescents through Conversations.

To conduct a pilot study of father-adolescent conversations about difficult topics, to test the feasibility of the current project being submitted for review to NIH.

Role: Principal Investigator

Responsibilities: As PI, I designed the study with the assistance of a team of graduate students, and supervised the recruitment of families to participate in the study. I trained these students to conduct interviews, and supervised and participated in all aspects of the administration of the study. I am currently leading a group of students in the analysis of the data collected from the study.

200800101 (M.-A. Suizzo, PI) 01/01/08-08/31/11

Spencer Foundation Research Grant

Pathways from Parental Socialization to Children's Achievement: A Study of Resilience in Low-Income Mexican American and African American Families.

Goals: To increase knowledge of how low-income parents contribute to their adolescents' educational experiences and whether and how their beliefs and practices shape their children's motivation to persist and succeed in school.

Role: Principal Investigator

Responsibilities: As PI, I designed the study, hired and trained research assistants, and supervised the recruitment of families to participate in the study. I communicated directly with school administrators and teachers during the course of the study and supervised the research team in all aspects of data collection (questionnaire administration, home interviews, neighborhood observations). I directed and supervised all data analyses, both quantitative and qualitative.