
HANDBOOK OF
RESEARCH ON
SCHOOLS, SCHOOLING,
AND HUMAN
DEVELOPMENT



EDITED BY

JUDITH L. MEECE

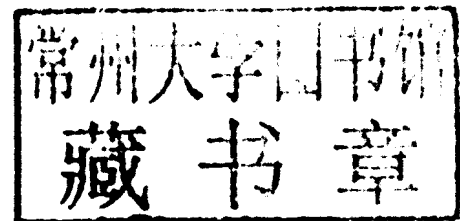
JACQUELYNNE S. ECCLES

Handbook of Research on Schools, Schooling, and Human Development

Edited by

Judith L. Meece

Jacquelynne S. Eccles



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Handbook of Research on Schools, Schooling, and Human Development

Children spend more time in school than in any social institution outside the home and schools probably exert more influence on children's development and life chances than any environment beyond the home and neighborhood. The purpose of this book is to document some important ways schools influence children's development and to describe various models and methods for studying schooling effects. Key features include:

Comprehensive Coverage—This is the first book to provide a comprehensive review of what is known about schools as a context for human development. Topical coverage ranges from theoretical foundations to investigative methodologies and from classroom-level influences such as teacher–student relations to broader influences such as school organization and educational policies.

Cross-Disciplinary—This volume brings together the divergent perspectives, methods, and findings of scholars from a variety of disciplines, among them educational psychology, developmental psychology, school psychology, social psychology, psychiatry, sociology, and educational policy.

Chapter Structure—To insure continuity, chapter authors 1) describe how schooling influences are conceptualized, 2) identify their theoretical and methodological approaches, 3) discuss the strengths and weaknesses of existing research, and 4) highlight implications for future research, practice, and policy.

Methodologies—Chapters included in the text feature various methodologies including longitudinal studies, hierarchical linear models, experimental and quasi-experimental designs, and mixed methods.

Judith L. Meece (Ph.D., University of Michigan) is Professor and Chair of Human Development and Psychological Studies at the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill. She has conducted research in school settings for over 25 years, and was the first scholar to write a child and adolescent textbook specifically aimed at educators. A Fellow of APA Division 15, Meece's research focuses on the role of classroom and school influences on the development of adolescents' academic motivation, future aspirations, and educational attainment.

Jacquelynne S. Eccles (Ph.D., University of California at Los Angeles) is McKeachie/Pintrich Distinguished University Professor of Psychology and Education at the University of Michigan. Her research focuses on gender-role socialization, school influences on academic motivation, and social development in the family and school context. Eccles has served as the president of the Society for Research on Adolescence, and has received numerous awards for her lifetime contributions to research on adolescence and human development.

*For our authors, students, and readers with gratitude
for advancing this field of inquiry.*

**Judith L. Meece
Jacquelynn S. Eccles**

Preface

Research on the school effects on children's development has greatly expanded over the last 30 years. Whereas early studies focused on school effectiveness in terms of standardized achievement, more recent studies have focused on a wider range of effects such as social and emotional development. Research now shows that the experiences and interactions of young people at school have a lasting influence on almost every aspect of development. Moreover, for many young people today, schools play an influential role in protecting them from the adverse effects of poverty, dangerous neighborhoods, or difficult home environments. At present, however, there is no single volume that brings together research and scholarship on schools as a context for children's development. This *Handbook* fills the gap by bringing together the research and scholarship of over 50 scholars in the fields of education, psychology, sociology, medicine and psychiatry, and educational policy.

We, the editors, have over 25 years of studying classroom and schooling effects on children's development. During this time the goals of schooling have shifted from addressing issues of desegregation and educational equity to increasing academic achievement, educational attain-

ment, and workforce preparation for the global economy. In recent weeks, we have heard calls from the nation's highest office to increase the length of the school day and the school calendar. These requests come at a time of unprecedented school enrollments, student diversity, accountability pressures, teacher shortages, and declining school budgets. There is much we demand of educational practitioners today. Thus, in designing this *Handbook*, we wanted to produce a scholarly but practical discussion of research on schools, schooling, and development. The *Handbook* is intended as a resource for educational professionals, policymakers, scholars, and students. We anticipate that scholars and students from different fields of psychology (cognitive, developmental, educational, school, and social), education (educational leadership and administration, curriculum, teaching and learning, research methods, and school counseling), sociology, and public policy will find this *Handbook* useful and informative. In summary, the *Handbook* is intended for both consumers and producers of research with the overall goal of creating positive school environments for children and youth based on the best scholarly and empirical evidence available today.

Acknowledgments

As coeditors we are grateful to each of the authors of this volume who understood the value of this *Handbook* and gave generously of their time to write and revise chapters. We also acknowledge the support these authors received from schools, students, and family members during their research and writing. We are also greatly indebted to Lane Akers and his staff at Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, now Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, for understanding the importance of this volume and his unwavering support despite unexpected delays. We would also like to thank several external reviewers for their support on various chapters of the *Handbook*: Linda Baker, David Bergin, Peter Blatchford, David Bjorklund, Sara Rimm-Kaufman, Lisa Linnebrink-Garcia, Samuel Miller, Tamera Murdock, Scott Paris, Dale Schunk, Samuel Song, and Christopher Wolters. We also acknowledge the research and editing support of Karyl Askew, Katie Bouchard, Belinda Locke, Victoria Schaefer, and Meredith Walton at UNC-CH, as well

as Lynn Goeller of EvS Communications, and Alexander Sharp of Routledge.

The editors have a long history of collaboration. We were very fortunate to share this history together and to have other University of Michigan colleagues who made important contributions to this field of research. We wish to especially acknowledge the important early contributions of Phyllis Blumenfeld, Harold Stevenson, Janis Jacobs, Carol Kaczala, Martin Maehr, Carol Midgley, Paul Pintrich, Robert Roeser, Arnold Sameroff, and Allan Wigfield in assisting in the development of this field of inquiry. We also acknowledge the significant contributions of Victor Battistich to research on schooling and development. A contributing author, Victor, died unexpectedly in June 2008.

The final stages of this *Handbook* project were completed during a semester research leave to Judith Meece from the School of Education at UNC-CH in Spring 2009.

Judith L. Meece
Jacquelynne S. Eccles

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Part I

Introduction

1

Schools as a Context of Human Development

JUDITH L. MEECE AND VICTORIA A. SCHAEFER

Schools are one of the most influential contexts for children's development in our society. By the time they graduate from high school, children and adolescents will have spent more time in schools than any other social institution outside their home and community. Schools not only influence children's acquisition of knowledge and skills, but also provide an important context for their social and emotional growth. From the way schools are organized to the instructional and social processes that occur within and outside classrooms, children's daily experiences at school affect their behavior, beliefs, and well-being. Additionally, the cumulative effects of children's schooling experiences strongly contribute to their lives as adults, including future educational opportunities, career choices, and lifetime earnings.

The study of schooling experiences and children's development is a growing field of inquiry. Beginning with *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (Coleman et al., 1966), the field has expanded in terms of the theoretical perspectives and topics represented. As this edited volume demonstrates, children's schooling experiences have been examined through the lens of developmental, sociological, educational, and policy perspectives. Whereas early studies focused on school effectiveness in terms of achievement scores, more recent studies have examined the relation of school contexts to measures of social adjustment, identity development, and even mental health. Additionally, the development of new research methodologies has also contributed to the expansion of research on schools and development. Longitudinal studies have documented the long-term impact of school transitions, grade retention, curricular tracking, and other schooling experiences on children's development. Similarly, hierarchical linear modeling procedures provide methods for examining the ways in which individual, classroom, and school level characteristics interact in complex ways to influence children's development. The *Handbook of Research on Schools, Schooling, and Human Development* includes a diverse

range of theoretical perspectives, developmental outcomes, and methodological approaches.

Current Status of Youth in Schools

The focus of this edited volume is development during the elementary and secondary years when school attendance is compulsory in the United States. Although there are many excellent international and comparative studies of schooling experiences, this *Handbook* focuses on children's and adolescents' schooling experiences in American schools. Nearly 50 million students attend public elementary and secondary schools in the United States, and school enrollment is expected to reach a record of 54 million by 2017 (Planty et al., 2008). America's schools now serve a more diverse population of students than ever before. The number of racial or ethnic minorities in America's schools, 43% of the school population, has nearly tripled since the early 1970s, and the diversity of students extends beyond race and ethnicity. Approximately 10 million school-age children speak a language other than English at home, and an even larger proportion of America's students qualify for free or reduced lunch due to low family income status (Planty et al., 2008). Moreover, our students attend schools in diverse settings. Approximately, 35.4% and 30.4% of students attend schools in suburban or urban locations respectively, compared to 12.9% in towns and 21.3% in rural areas (Provansnik et al., 2007). Schools in these geographical regions must address different issues in meeting the needs of their children, such as teacher shortages, low parent education involvement, low tax revenues, high poverty rates, geographical isolation, and language diversity.

This edited volume draws together research on schooling experiences and children's development during a time of heightened scrutiny in public education from the highest level of government to local school boards regarding accountability and reform. Schools today are being asked to

meet important challenges. International studies indicate that American students are routinely outperformed by other industrialized countries on standardized tests, especially in mathematics and science (Planty et al., 2008). The high school graduation rates of U.S. students are also among the lowest for industrialized countries (National Governor's Association, 2005). Despite school reform efforts over the last decades, significant differences in the academic achievement of White, Black, and Hispanic students remain, especially at the high school level (Planty et al., 2008). Lastly, data indicate that with the implementation of national accountability standards grade retention is on the rise, and it is a powerful predictor of school underachievement and drop out (Allensworth & Nagaoka, chapter 20 this volume).

While reports of school achievement and completion raise concerns about the status of America's children, reports of school violence and crime have shown some improvements. Over the last several years school violence has been declining but it has not yet returned to its lowest rate at the beginning of this decade (Planty et al., 2008). Large scale studies reveal that between 10 and 15% of students feel their schools are unsafe (DeVoe et al., 2003). One of young people's strongest fears is peer harassment in the form of bullying. In a study of over 15,000 adolescents (6th to 10th grade), nearly 30% of the participants indicated involvement in physical or verbal bullying, either as the bully or the victim (Nansel et al., 2001). Peer harassment at school has immediate consequences for school engagement and achievement, but it also has a long lasting impact on self-esteem, social isolation, and depression (Olweus, 1993).

Taken together, the reports on the status of children in America's schools reveal a number of important challenges facing primary and secondary education. While important gains have been made in achievement since the late 1970s, large achievement discrepancies remain related to ethnicity, family income, and geographical location. Moreover, a large proportion of America's youth report *not* feeling connected, engaged, or motivated to learn in school (National Research Council and Institutes of Medicine, 2004). By adolescence, poor achievement and disaffection combine such that far too many of America's youth leave school before earning a high school diploma. To address these issues, schools must implement practices, programs, and policies to foster the positive development of all its youth. There is now a wealth of research on schools, schooling, and human development to inform these efforts.

Organization of *Handbook*

The purpose of this edited *Handbook* is to (1) document some important ways in which schools influence children's development; (2) describe various models for studying schooling effects; and (3) provide methods for studying schooling effects. The *Handbook* includes 30 chapters,

organized into seven sections. In chapter 2, Jacquelynne Eccles and Robert Roeser describe an ecological model for examining the influence of school contexts on adolescent development. This multilayered model of schooling hierarchically orders the effects of schools from the proximal influences of learning tasks and teacher-student interactions within classrooms to the more distal influences of district, state, and national educational policies outside of schools. Jacquelynne Eccles, Carol Midgley, Robert Roeser, and other colleagues at the University of Michigan were among the first researchers to identify ways in which certain aspects of the school environment can shape developmental trajectories in adolescence and beyond. This research played a significant role in shaping a new field of research on schooling and development. Eccles and Roeser's ecological model of school contexts guided the development and organization of the *Handbook*. Each chapter in this *Handbook* connects with the chapter in some important way.

Part II highlights research on the classroom context which has received the most attention from developmental and educational researchers thus far. Early classroom research focused on the effects of teacher management styles, classroom organization, nature of classroom work, student response opportunities, and so on. As demonstrated by the chapters in this section, classroom-level research has begun to focus more on the quality of instructional processes in terms of promoting academic and social development, as well as school engagement. This section leads off with a chapter, by Bridget Hamre and Robert Pianta (chapter 3), describing a methodology for examining classroom influences.

Part III examines school level processes. For the most part, developmental researchers and scholars have drawn on sociological studies to understand processes at the school level. Like Part II, this section deviates from previous traditions by examining the contributions of developmental theories to understanding the larger school context influences on development. All three chapters featured in this section draw on ecological theories to examine the influence of schools as developmental contexts on youths' social, moral, and civic development. In these chapters, we learn that schools have more than an instructional or academic attainment purpose; schools help to develop the citizens of tomorrow. This section leads off with a chapter, based on John Dewey's writing, written by Victor Battistich, a strong advocate for the positive role schools could play in developing the moral and civic attitudes of youth.

The effects of school transitions emerged as a field of developmental study in the late 1970s. By this time, federal funding was available to study the transition of Head Start students to elementary school. At the same time, national achievement data were suggesting that early benefits of Head Start could not be sustained. Also, due to the seminal work of Roberta Simmons and Robert Blyth (1987), many developmental and educational researchers began

to focus on the effects of school transitions during the early adolescent years. For developmental scientists, these transitions represent a time when various developmental processes undergo significant change. Youth development is most challenged during these points of transition. For this reason, we feature four chapters on school transitions, and include one chapter by Melissa Roderick and Ginger Stoker (chapter 14), on the postsecondary transition, an understudied area of inquiry.

For the past 30 years, the editors of this volume have been strong advocates for educational equity. Most studies focused on educational equity and access have drawn on sociological theories or policy analyses. Of the various fields of schooling and development featured in this volume, this section needed to include a strong interdisciplinary focus. Five chapters are featured in this section, each of which is focused on a particular socioeconomic, ethnic, or racial group; however, there are common themes found across these chapters. In reading these chapters, it is clear that students' schooling experiences vary significantly depending on race, ethnicity, and gender; however, low family income and poverty are, by far, the most persistent barriers to attaining educational equity in American schools. Doris Entwisle, Karl Alexander, and Linda Olson (chapter 15) provide a 30-year analysis of the Beginning School Study of 1982 that focuses on the long-term impact of children's socioeconomic status.

Part VI features research on school organization and educational policy. In Eccles and Roeser's model of school contexts (chapter 2 this volume), the organization and policies of schools are distal influences which affect young people's development through shaping learning opportunities (e.g., class size, curricular tracking, retention and suspension policies, etc.), parent involvement programs, access to extracurricular activities, and school calendars. Part VI of the *Handbook* provides a wide sampling of research on these areas of schooling influences. Missing from this section are reviews of the effects of class size and curricular tracking; however, there are many excellent reviews of this research available.¹

Part VII provides a description of five school-based interventions designed to improve a range of developmental outcomes, including school achievement, reading abilities, and social competence. The interventions draw on both quasi- and randomized controlled experiments. This section begins with James Comer's review (chapter 26) of the Yale Child Student Center School Development Program, which began in the late 1960s as one of the first comprehensive school reform efforts directed toward promoting children's development.

Summary

Research on the influence of schools and schooling on human development is an emerging field of inquiry. This *Handbook* was intended to gather together important research in this area, to offer an interdisciplinary perspective, and to provide direction for future research. It is hoped that this field of inquiry will continue to grow and to expand over the next decades.

Note

1. For an excellent review of research on class size, see Finn, Pannozzo, and Achilles (2003); Oakes (2005) provides a comprehensive overview of research on curricular tracking.

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