

Amanda Abeywickrama

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EDUCATION

Master of Arts in Sociology

December 2023

Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas

Thesis title: Investigating Campus Stakeholder Experiences in Addressing Sexual Violence through the Lens of Institutional Courage

Committee: Dr. Jodie Hertzog (Chair), Dr. Jennifer Pearson, Dr. Rachel Goodman-Williams

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology

December 2020

Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant

August 2022 – December 2024

Department of Sociology, Wichita State University

- Conducted exploratory research on experiences of joy among LGBTQ+ populations
- Data collection through individual interviews and focus groups
- Data analysis: conducted qualitative data analysis utilizing a grounded theory approach
- Created abstracts and poster presentations for conferences

Senior Research Associate

January 2024 – September 2024

The National Library of Patient Rights and Advocacy

Cherry Hill, New Jersey

- Compiled literature reviews on current trends in global health, social determinants of health and medical sociology
- Disseminated research to the general public as a contributing author in the book recently published as “Unpacking Global Health,” with the aim of increasing health literacy and awareness on patient rights

Research Assistant

August 2020 - March 2023

Initiatives Supporting Positive Youth Relationships (INSPYRE) Clinical-Community

Psychology lab

Wichita State University

- Collaborated with PhD graduate students and professors on multiple research projects, including children’s peer relationships during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns, demographic variations in telehealth utilization during the COVID-19 pandemic, and parenting practices and children’s psychological adjustments in rural communities during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Conducted literature searches and created annotated bibliographies

- Cleaned, analyzed and interpreted quantitative data utilizing SPSS
- Created abstracts and poster presentations in preparation for conferences
- Mentored children in USD259 school district in Wichita, KS through Pen Pal project conducted by the lab in lieu of the Lunch Buddy mentoring program with the goal of promoting positive connections and wellbeing among youth during the COVID-19 global pandemic
- Interviewing undergraduate candidates for Lunch Buddy Mentoring program

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Abeywickrama, A.** (2024, October). *Investigating campus stakeholder experiences in addressing sexual violence through the lens of institutional courage*. Paper presented at the Kansas Gender and Sexuality Conference. Wichita KS.
- Pearson, J., **Abeywickrama, A.**, Bentemen, E., Hollingsworth, B., & Maupin, M. (2024, August). *The joy of LGBTQ identities: Affirmation, connection, and community*. Roundtable presentation at the American Sociological Association Conference. Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
- Abeywickrama, A.** (2023, March). *Investigating experiences of joy among LGBTQ young adults*. Poster presented at the Midwest Sociological Society Annual Meeting. Minneapolis MN.
- Rosebraugh, E., **Abeywickrama, A.**, Gregus, S., Hernandez Rodriguez, J., & Faith, M. (2023, March). *Parenting practices, stress, and child anxiety and depression in rural communities during the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Poster presented at the Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting. Salt Lake City UT.
- Abeywickrama, A.** (2022, April). *Factors affecting psychological and socio-emotional wellbeing of undergraduates during the COVID-19 pandemic*. Poster presented at the Midwest Sociological Society Annual Meeting. Chicago IL.
- Ramirez, E., Failes, E., **Abeywickrama Arachchilage, A.**, Gregus, S., Hernandez Rodriguez, J., & Faith, M. (2021, June). *Assessing Children's Peer Relationships at the Time of COVID-19*. Poster presented virtually at the Society for Prevention Research 29th Annual Meeting.
- Abeywickrama Arachchilage, A.**, Ramirez, E., Failes, E., Gregus, S., Hernandez Rodriguez, J., & Faith, M. (2021, April). *Implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown on Peer Relationships Among School-Aged Children*. Poster presented virtually at the Wichita State University Psychology Department's 17th Annual Research Roundup.
- Vuong, N., Failes, E., **Abeywickrama Arachchilage, A.**, Gregus, S., Hernandez Rodriguez, J., & Faith, M. (2021, April). *Assessing racial and income differences in telehealth usability and satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic*. Poster presented virtually at the Wichita State University Psychology Department's 17th Annual Research Roundup.

TEACHING AND MENTORING EXPERIENCES

Graduate Teaching Assistant

August 2021 – May 2023

Department of Sociology, Wichita State University

- Assisted in teaching Introduction to Social Research, Introduction to Sociological Theory, First Year Seminar on The Sociology of Harry Potter, Introduction to Gender Studies, Sociology of Sexualities, Schools and Society, Social Problems, and Sociology of Violence
- Held office hours, advised undergraduate students, graded assignments and exams, and provided feedback and support

Graduate Mentor

January 2023 – May 2023

Health, Outreach, Prevention and Education Services, Wichita State University

- Mentored an undergraduate psychology student in data collection and qualitative data analysis

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Health & Outreach Manager

January 2025 - present

Director

June 2013 – April 2017

Amavie Suwahala (PVT) LTD

Kirulapone and Agalawatta, Sri Lanka

- Planning medical outreach events upon request by community organizations and businesses
- Organizing the company's annual mobile clinics in local and private companies
- Conducting workshops and creating educational resources to enhance public health awareness and knowledge on occupational hazards, sexual health, and prevention among vulnerable groups in local and private companies
- Submitting quarterly reports to the Managing Director

Project Specialist

January 2024 – November 2024

Sociology Graduate Assistant

July 2022 – December 2023

HOPE Services Advisory Board Member

July 2022 – present

Health, Outreach, Prevention and Education (HOPE) Services

Student Wellness Center

Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas

- Conducted campus outreach events on mental health, suicide, substance use, and dating and domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking (DVSAS) with the goal of increasing education, awareness, and influencing pro-social behaviors among students
 - Coordinated outreach events with campus and community partners such as the Wichita Family Crisis Center, University Police Department, Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center

- Created original outreach content on DVSAS for the Suspenders4Hope #WSUWeSupportU campaign
- Created pro-social norm campaigns based on prevention best practices and campus and community statistics (primarily National College Health Assessment by the American College Health Association and campus specific Alcohol and Other Drugs Surveys) to address common misconceptions and increase awareness surrounding healthy relationships, sexual health, sexual assault, consent, hookup culture, substance use and sexual relationships, interpersonal violence, campus red zone, and bystander intervention
- Conducted original research on examining campus wide stakeholders' perceptions and experiences related to campus grant efficacies and current sexual violence response and prevention efforts
 - Conducted focus groups among campus leadership from multiple departments as primary facilitator
 - Qualitatively analyzed findings to present to the US Department of Justice
 - Supervised undergraduate researcher in conducting qualitative analysis
 - Disseminated findings and provided suggestions for next steps to the campus and community leadership and experts in sexual violence response and prevention
- Created and conducted Bystander Intervention Trainings
 - Conducted in-person trainings for student leadership and international students
 - Created and adapted training for international student community in recognition of unique experiences and barriers to intervening among foreign students from various cultures
 - Compiled accessible resource guides on sexual violence for international student survivors
 - Created original interactive educational activities based on best practice for online Bystander Intervention Training for WSU students
 - Supervised graduate student in conducting Bystander Intervention training for international students
 - Created evaluation surveys on Qualtrics
- Coordinated *The Wardrobe* project, a safe space on campus to explore gender expression for transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming students and staff
 - Supervised undergraduate peer educators in organizing and creating marketing materials
- Member of the HOPE Services Advisory Board Preventing Sexual Violence Subcommittee (Coordinated Campus Community Response Team)
- Assisted with writing campus progress reports for DOJ grant requirements
- Collected and analyzed procedures and policies of all campus departments related to DVSAS to review accessibility, transparency, trauma-informed language, clarity, inclusiveness, and identify areas for improvement in the presentation of the policy
- Created outreach, marketing and promotional materials
 - Created original outreach and marketing materials for Suspenders4Hope awareness events and trainings on preventing sexual violence, mainly on Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Domestic Violence Awareness Month
 - Designed marketing materials for campus surveys such as the National College Health Assessment

Youth Development Professional

May 2021 – May 2022

Boys and Girls Clubs of South Central Kansas

- Facilitated youth development programs for low income children and youth between K-12 to promote healthy development, creativity and prevent summer learning loss
- Managed the after school “Homework Room” to increase club members’ engagement in learning mathematics and vocabulary

Teaching Assistant

July 2019 – March 2020

Child Development Center,

Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas

- Assisted lead teachers with carrying out daily lesson plans, classroom management and maintenance of children between the ages 0 and 5 years
- Utilized principles of “Conscious Discipline” and gained skills in age appropriate communication, organization, analyzing, team work, fast decision making and problem solving in the classroom
- Encouraged enhancement of children’s academic and gross motor skills by motivating them to engage with each other through reading, creative arts, mathematics, puzzles and play

HONORS AND AWARDS

Graduate Student of the Year Finalist 2023, Student Engagement and Belonging, Wichita State University

Ron Matson Sociology Fellowship, 2022-2023, Wichita State University

Summer Research Grant, 2023, Department of Sociology, Wichita State University

Special Research Fellowship – Travel Award, 2022-2023, Jayne and Glenn Milburn Fellowship, Wichita State University

Jayne and Glenn Milburn Fellow, 2022-2023, Wichita State University

Student Travel Grant, 2022-2023, Midwest Sociological Society

Alpha Kappa Delta Research Travel Grant, 2022-2023, Alpha Kappa Delta International Sociology Honor Society

Dr. Laiten L. & Verna Nye Camien Memorial Fellowship, 2021-2022, Wichita State University

Graduate Teaching Assistantship, 2021-2023, Department of Sociology, Wichita State University

Dean’s Honor Roll, 2018-2020, Wichita State University

Global Select Scholarship, 2018-2020, Wichita State University

High Achiever Award, 2018, American National College, Sri Lanka

LANGUAGES

- English – Fluent

- Sinhalese – Fluent