

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL
COUNSELOR ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

Laura A. Kuhn, Master of Arts, 2004

Thesis Directed By: Director of Counselor Education, Dr. Courtland Lee,
Counseling and Personnel Services

The Education Trust, a non-profit organization that works towards the high achievement for all students, emphasizes the importance of five transformed school counselor roles: leader, advocate, collaborator, counselor and coordinator, and data utilizer. This study examined high school students' perceptions of the roles of school counselors and the functions associated with those roles. A 20 item questionnaire was administered to students at two urban high schools. The questionnaire instructed the students to rate the importance of 15 school counselor functions based on the five school counselor roles. Furthermore, the students rated the importance of five noncounseling functions that school counselors often perform (e.g. test administration, registration). Overall, the students rated the five school counseling roles as important, indicating that students perceive the transformed roles as significant. However, the students also rated a few noncounseling functions as important, demonstrating that misperceptions of the school counselor's role still exist.

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STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL COUNSELOR ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

By

Laura A. Kuhn

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Advisory Committee:

Professor Courtland Lee, Chair
Assistant Professor Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy
Associate Professor William Strein

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The roles of school counselors have changed dramatically over time. At the turn of the 20th century, school counselors did not exist; rather teachers were using a few minutes of their day to provide students with vocational guidance (Bowers & Hatch, 2002). In the early 1900s, an influx of various types of students in the public schools occurred as a result of the Industrial Revolution, initiating the development of the school guidance movement. At his time, the purpose of the guidance counselor was to avoid problem behaviors, relate vocational interests to curriculum subjects, and develop character. In the 1940s and 1950s, a popular model of school guidance that focused on directive counseling was being used in the schools. This model, developed by E.G. Williamson, emphasized teaching skills and using information to solve problems. Albeit popular, Carl Rogers's nondirective approach to counseling gained recognition in the 1960s for its focus away from the problem and its emphasis on the relationship between counselors and clients (Muro & Kottman, 1995). Today, school counselors serve as leaders, effective team members, and an integral part of a student's educational program. School counselors have "switched their emphasis from service-centered for some of the students to program-centered for every student" (Bowers & Hatch, 2002, p. 8).

School counselors address the needs of students through individual and group counseling, large group guidance, consultation, and coordination (ASCA, 1999). They help students to resolve or cope with developmental concerns. Employed in elementary, middle/junior high, and high schools, a school counselor's work differentiates according to the developmental stages of their student population. Students in elementary school

are developing their understanding of the self, peers, family, and school. They are beginning to gain communication and decision-making skills as well as character values. Elementary school counselors focus on peer relationships, effective social skills, family issues, self-image, self-esteem, and multicultural awareness. In addition, school counselors assist students in developing interests regarding the world of work to increase students' career awareness (ASCA, 2002).

When describing middle school, the word transition is often used. During the middle school years, physical and psychological changes occur. Middle school students are searching for their own unique identity, and they look more toward their peers than to their parents for acceptance and affirmation. Middle school counselors teach students skills to help them through this changing time. To ease the transition, school counselors assist students in working to connect school with home life and they emphasize the importance of peer and adult relationships (ASCA, 1997).

In high school, students are evaluating their skills, strengths, and abilities as they begin to plan for their future. High school is a time of both excitement and frustration. School counselors help to ease students' decision-making process with regards to their future by providing them with support, encouragement, and career guidance. Counselors at the high school level network with post-secondary schools and maintain a library of career and post-secondary options. It is important that students receive accurate information as well as concrete experiences in order to be productive and successful (ASCA, 1997).

School counselors have many duties and responsibilities. They are most often the only individuals in the school who have formal training in both mental health and

education (ASCA). School counselors are team players, and they understand the importance of sharing responsibilities within the school system, but they cannot be fully effective when they are taken away from vital counseling tasks to perform noncounseling functions. For instance, in many schools, the school counselor, rather than an administrator, is in charge of developing the master school schedule. This large responsibility diminishes the school counselor's ability to provide direct services to students (ASCA). Additionally, school counselors are often the individuals in charge of testing. In high school, a school counselor may take on the sole responsibility of being the testing coordinator for the Advanced Placement exams. As a result, this counselor becomes too busy with test coordination to assist his or her students.

In addition to creating the master school schedule and fulfilling the role of test coordinator, school counselors are also asked to serve as the principal when he or she is absent. This may alter students' perception of the school counselor's role. Rather than seeing the school counselor as someone who is in the school to provide supportive services, students may view the school counselor as a disciplinarian. School counselors are not disciplinarians. They provide counseling to students before and/or after discipline, and they help students to better their behavior to prevent discipline in the future (ASCA). Lastly, school counselors are often in charge of registration and scheduling. It is appropriate for school counselors to help a student choose his or her classes in order to ensure that the student's classes coincide with their interests and ability level. However, it is a misuse of a counselor's time to enter students' classes into the computer scheduling system. Counselors spend hours and hours working on students' schedules. Often, counselors close their doors or go to another office so that they can

spend time entering data into the computer to ensure that schedules are completed on time.

Transformed School Counseling Roles

Since the 1960s, professional school counselors have been taught the three “Cs” as a way to define their role in the schools. The three Cs: counseling, coordination, and consultation, enable the school counselor to provide a comprehensive guidance program (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994). In addition to the three Cs, Gysbers and Henderson (1994) introduced the roles of guidance, assessment, program management, and professionalism. However, these roles are now too limiting for they “no longer provide enough breadth and depth of scope for professional school counselors to be effective” (Erford, 2003, p. 5). The Education Trust, a non-profit organization that works towards the high achievement for all students, is a leader in school counseling transformation. The Education Trust is working to educate school counselors and their stakeholders about the importance of placing school counselors at the center of school reform. Borders and Drury (1992) report that “school counseling interventions have a substantial impact on students’ educational and personal development” (p. 495). Interventions, such as classroom guidance and individual and small group counseling, directly contribute to student success.

The Education Trust implemented the Transforming School Counseling Initiative (TSCI) with the goal of developing new programs “to prepare graduates to serve as student advocates and academic advisors who demonstrate the belief that all students can achieve at high levels on rigorous, challenging academic course content” (Martin, 2002, p. 148). Due to their school-wide perspective, school counselors are in an ideal position

to assess the barriers that hinder academic success for all students (Martin, 2002). The new vision encourages school counselors to work as leaders, advocates, collaborators, counselors and coordinators, and data utilizers (Erford, 2003).

As leaders, school counselors are engaged in systemwide change to ensure student success. They help all students gain access to rigorous academic preparation that will lead to increased academic achievement, and ultimately, greater opportunities.

Additionally, school counselors work as leaders to close the existing achievement gap between poor or underachieving students, students of color, and their more advantaged peers (Bowers & Hatch, 2002). School counselors strive to remove the barriers that may be hindering students from succeeding. For instance, school counselors teach students how to help themselves by providing students with organizational skills, study skills, and test-taking skills. They work as resource brokers to identify all available resources inside and outside of school. School counselors also remove barriers to learning by educating parents and guardians about the importance of enrolling their children in demanding classes that will lead to college. When working in the school system, school counselors offer staff development training for school personnel and encourage administrators to re-evaluate the existence of low-level and unchallenging courses (House & Martin 1998).

In addition to being a leader, school counselors are also advocates. They advocate for the success of every student by working to ensure that students' needs at every level of education are addressed. They organize community activities to provide support for high standards for all students and advocate for exposing students to experiences that will broaden their career awareness and knowledge (Erford, 2003). School counselors support, promote, and believe in every student's ability to achieve in

school. By minimizing barriers and promoting equity, school counselors will help more students complete school prepared to choose from a wide range of post-secondary options, including college (Bowers & Hatch, 2002).

Administrators, teachers, and parents are three of the primary stakeholders vital to supporting the school counselor. These stakeholders influence the roles that school counselors fulfill. For instance, most often the school counselor is supervised by the principal. If the counselor's principal does not have a complete understanding of the school counselor's role, the school counselor may be expected to perform noncounseling functions. In this case, it is the school counselor's responsibility to educate the principal. Likewise, teachers can be hesitant to invite the school counselor into their classroom for guidance lessons. Too often teachers feel as though guidance lessons take away from academic time. Hence, school counselors need to work collaboratively with teachers to incorporate guidance lessons that relate to the academic topics that are being covered in class. School counselors need to educate teachers about the positive effects guidance lessons have on academic success.

It is important that school counselors work with all stakeholders, inside and outside of the school system, to encourage collaboration, and thus, a team effort to work toward equity, access, and academic achievement for every student. By encouraging teaming and collaboration, school counselors develop a sense of unity among students, staff, parents, and community members. School counselors consult with teams to problem solve in order to respond to concerns that may be present in the school, such as equity and cultural diversity issues. Furthermore, school counselors collaborate with staff in developing staff training, parent/guardian workshops, and community activities in

response to the academic, social, emotional, and developmental needs of students (Erford, 2003). Overall, effective working relationships with stakeholders enhance the educational opportunities for students and their families (Bowers & Hatch, 2002).

Working as a counselor is another important role for the school counselor. It is imperative that school counselors conduct brief counseling sessions with students individually, in groups, and with their families. Borders and Drury (1992) report that “school counseling interventions have a substantial impact on students’ educational and personal development” (p. 495). Unfortunately, too often noncounseling tasks, such as lunch duty, leave the school counselor with no time to provide counseling services to students. In addition to being a counselor, school counselors are coordinators. They coordinate resources for students, families, and staff in order to enhance student achievement.

Lastly, school counselors act as data utilizers. They assess and interpret student needs in order to identify barriers to learning, recognize differences in culture, and develop goals for the school’s comprehensive counseling and guidance program (Erford, 2003). School counselors also use data to implement systemic change. “Systemic change occurs when policies and procedures are examined and changed in light of new data” (Bowers & Hatch, 2002, p. 23). This change occurs as a result of the involvement of all critical players in the school system. School counselors are in a unique position to lead the school in system change, for they have ability to use local, regional, and national data to demonstrate the need for change, such as the existence of an achievement gap (House & Martin, 1998). School counselors have access to data about student placement,

student course-taking patterns, and students' academic success or failure (Bowers & Hatch, 2002). They use this data to ensure equity and access for every student.

In addition to the five school counseling roles of leader, advocate, collaborator, counselor and coordinator, and data utilizer, school counselors are being asked to adhere to the national standards for school counseling programs. Developed by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), the national standards are the "essential elements of a quality and effective school counseling program" (Campbell & Dahir, 1997, p. 3). The national standards were created in order to outline the goals and define the mission of school counseling programs in education reform. The content of the school counseling programs focus on three developmental areas: academic, career, and personal/social. "Each of these areas of student development competencies encompasses a variety of desired student learning competencies, which in turn are comprised of specific knowledge, attitudes, and skills, which form the foundation of the developmental school counseling program" (Campbell & Dahir, 1997, p. 11).

Need for study

Over the years, much research has been done to illustrate how stakeholders view the school counselor's role. Stakeholders are those individuals who play an important role in the school system, and thus, an important role in supporting school counselors. For instance, administrators are stakeholders who encourage counselors and teachers to work cooperatively. They support and assist with the development and implementation of the school's comprehensive counseling and guidance program. Furthermore, parents and guardians are stakeholders who work as partners with school personnel to help their students achieve success. For example, parents or guardians often serve on committees,

such as the Parent and Teacher Association (PTA), in order to take part in decisions that affect their children. In addition to administrators and parents, teachers also serve as stakeholders. Teachers work as partners with school counselors to develop and infuse guidance activities into class instruction. It is necessary for teachers and counselors to work together in order to help each student attain achievement (Bowers & Hatch, 2002). Lastly, students are stakeholders. Students are the main recipients of school counseling services. In other words, they are the primary beneficiaries of the individual counseling, group counseling, and classroom guidance provided by the school counselor. The school counselor assists students in attaining the attitudes and skills to be successful.

Various stakeholders' perceptions of the school counselor's roles and functions have been studied over time. However, students' perceptions have not been assessed to the degree that other stakeholders' perceptions have been assessed. For instance, a study conducted by Ibrahim, Helms, and Thompson (1983) looked at how administrators, parents, and the business community view the school counselor, but did not look at how students view the school counselor. The study proclaimed that "students were not included in the sample group because of the cost and complexity of drawing a sample group of students" (p. 597).

The purpose of this study was to look at high school students' perceptions of the roles of school counselors and the functions associated with those roles. Knowing the perceptions of students regarding the roles and functions of the school counselor is important because it helps counselors better understand how to address student needs. An investigation was conducted of high school students' perceptions of the five school counselor roles: leader, advocate, collaborator, counselor and coordinator, and data

utilizer, and the key functions related to these roles. The research questions of interest included: (1) What school counselor roles do students perceive to be important to their academic success, career development, and personal-social growth? (2) What school counselor role-related functions do students perceive to be important to their academic success, career development, and personal-social growth? (3) Do students' perceptions of school counselor roles and functions differ by grade level?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Clearly, the perceptions that stakeholders have of the school counselor's role are extremely important. This chapter will review literature on administrators', teachers', and parents' perceptions of the roles of school counselors.

The Traditional and Transformed Roles of School Counselors

For many years, school counselors have been taught to define their role by the three "Cs:" counseling, coordination, and consultation. However, as Erford (2003) explained, these three roles are too limiting because they do "not provide a basis for serving all students" (p. 5). As a result, the roles of the school counselor have been broadened so that a school counselor's work is more inclusive, and thus, helpful to more students (Erford, 2003). Today, school counselors strive to be leaders, advocates, collaborators, counselors and coordinators, and data utilizers. These five roles enable school counselors "to create supportive pathways that allow all students to succeed" (Erford, 2003, p. 8).

Administrators' Perceptions of School Counselor Roles

Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, and Marshall (2001) examined the perceptions of future administrators regarding the role of the school counselor. At most schools, the school counselor's role is determined by administrators. Hence, the purpose of the study was to examine the perceptions of students in two educational administration graduate programs in order to identify potential barriers that could interfere with establishing counseling programs. "Knowing the perceptions of future administrators regarding the role of the school counselor is important because it helps counselors anticipate areas of agreement

and conflict when they attempt to gain administrative support for the counselor's roles” (p. 90).

Participants of the study completed an inventory based on state and professional standards of practice for school counselors. The 15-item survey asked participants to rate the importance of specific tasks on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from not significant to significant. The survey consisted of 20 items. Fifteen of the items were directly related to standards for counseling, while the remaining five items were noncounseling tasks often performed by counselors. One hundred educational administration students were asked to respond to the survey, and only 86 returned usable forms. Participants rated the five noncounseling tasks (registration, testing, record keeping, discipline, special education assistance) as the five least important duties of the school counselor. Nevertheless, the future administrators viewed these tasks as important aspects of the school counseling program. On the other hand, participants rated direct crisis response, providing a safe setting for students to talk, communicating empathy, helping teachers respond to crisis, and helping students with transitions, as the most important tasks of the school counselor.

The study by Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, and Marshall (2001) concluded that many misperceptions of the role of the school counselor still exist. Although discipline was not considered to be one of the most important tasks of the school counselor, one third of the participants rated it as an important or highly important task. In addition, more than half of the participants rated record keeping as a significant duty. Clearly, school counselors need to be aware of how their supervisors view the school counselor's role so that they can work collaboratively with school principals to provide the best services to students.

As Wagner (1998) expressed, students' needs are better able to be met as a result of collaboration and support among school personnel.

Administrators and school counselors often do not agree on the school counselor's roles (Shoffner & Williamson, 2000). Administrators view the school as an organized whole, whereas counselors view the school as student-centered. School counselors and school principals are trained separately and do not have many opportunities to learn about the responsibilities, roles, and perspectives of each other. Shoffner and Williamson (2000) examined an innovative seminar, developed at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, designed to help students in school counseling and school administration develop a better understanding and appreciation of one another in their respective professions. The purpose of the seminar was to create more collaborative and cooperative efforts once the students finished their programs and began working in the schools. The participants attended 8-biweekly meetings. Each meeting involved discussion of roles, perspectives, expectations, standards, points of conflicts, and collaborative problem solving using case studies. The participants felt that the problem-solving and the case studies discussions were the most helpful and informative aspects of the seminar. They also stated that hearing perspectives from counselors-in-training and principals-in-training was invaluable. Overall, the purpose of the seminar was met, participants developed greater appreciation and respect for the roles of principals and school counselors.

To better understand the relationship between counselors and administrators, Ponc and Brock (2000) conducted a qualitative research study. Using personal interviews and shadowing experiences, the researchers explored two overarching

questions: (1) What are the relationships among school counselors and principals in exemplary guidance and counseling programs? (2) How do the relationships among school counselors and principals support these programs? Four elementary schools located in a Midwestern, metropolitan district were chosen for this study due to the fact that developmental and comprehensive school guidance and counseling programs had been implemented in the district for over a decade. Five veteran counselors, four principals, and two assistant principals participated in the study. They were each interviewed for approximately one and one-half hours. Different questions were asked of the counselors and the administrators. The questions for the interviews were developed through a review of professional literature as well as insight from counselor educators, school counseling interns, and practicing school counselors and principals. Additionally, the researchers shadowed the participants to take note of school counselors and principals working together as a unit.

The researchers identified components conducive to building relationships between school counselors and administrators. The components are as follows: the role of the school counselor should be clearly defined, mutual trust and clear communication need to be developed, and support strategies for working with teachers and administrators need constant maintenance. “These interrelated components served to promote guidance and counseling programs deemed beneficial and valuable to students, parents, and school communities (Ponec & Brock, 2000, p. 215).

In regards to defining the role of the school counselor, Ponec and Brock (2000) highlighted the importance of communicating the school counselor’s role to students, staff, and the school community. This can be done through newsletters, parent-teacher

conferences, and staff meetings. The school counselor and principal need to not only discuss the guidance and counseling needs within the school, but they also need to determine how the school counselor can fulfill the needs. Ponec and Brock (2000) also emphasized the importance of evaluating guidance and counseling programs. The evaluation process should be reviewed on a yearly basis, and it should include students, staff, and parents.

In this study, the researchers observed established routines of communication between counselors and principals. The communication was frequent whether in written or oral form, and typically focused on the needs of students and staff. School counselors and administrators were observed often partaking in hallway and doorway conversations throughout the day to maintain a “pulse” of the building. In other words, the principals and counselors continually looked for possible frustrations or successes that teachers and students were experiencing.

Lastly, Ponec and Brock (2000) identified additional strategies that support guidance and counseling programs. The researchers state that “the strategies utilized by counselors and principals to support effective school guidance and counseling programs are the outgrowth of personal and professional relationship building” (p. 216) In other words, the relationships between administrators and counselors can help or hinder guidance and counseling programs. Counselors need to be visible, dependable, caring, and knowledgeable. They need to develop rapport with students and staff, acquire accountability with the community, and promote an understanding of guidance and counseling programs. Similarly, principals need to be open and supportive as they interact more with school counselors to provide suggestions for the development and

implementation of counseling programs. Working together, counselors and administrators are able to implement effective guidance and counseling programs that meet the needs of students and promote academic achievement.

When it comes to hiring school counselors, principals are the most influential (Beale, 1992). As a result, it is beneficial to know the criteria that administrators value when selecting school counselors. Beale (1995) surveyed Virginia public school principals to better understand how school counselors are chosen. The researchers compiled a master list of items used to select counselors using employment applications and earlier survey instruments. The list was reviewed by six principals for completeness and clarity. As a result, fifteen items were identified and subsequently used in the questionnaire given to participants to determine the importance of each item (Essential, Very Important, Moderately Important, Not Considered). In addition to the fifteen items, the participants were asked to list interview questions they ask counselor applicants, if they would hire an applicant who did not have prior teaching experience, and to specify the extent to which guidance personnel are involved in the selection process. Before distributing the questionnaire to the participants, it was reviewed by two counselor educators and twelve graduate students (Beale, 1995).

Of the 1,000 questionnaires sent to public school principals, 709 were completed and returned. The results show that out of the 15 items used when selecting counselors, principals considered the personal interview, character references, former employer's recommendation, and internship supervisor's grade as the most critical. These four items were rated as essential or very important. Out of these four items, the personal interview was considered to be essential by the largest number of respondents. In regards to

academic success, fewer than 50% of the principals viewed undergraduate and graduate grade point averages and National Teacher Examination test scores as important in the selection process. Furthermore, the reputation of the graduate school that the applicant attended was of little relevance. Lastly, teaching experience and school counseling experience were seen as at least very important by 50% or more of the participants. The results show that counseling experience was in fact viewed as more valuable than teaching experience (Beale, 1995).

As stated above, the participants were asked to identify questions that they typically ask school counselors during interviews. After reviewing the participants' answers, the researchers placed the questions into three broad categories: personal, professional, and situational. The following are examples of a personal and a professional question: If someone were to recommend you for this position and I asked them to describe four qualities that will make you successful, what would they say? What is your counseling philosophy and what are your counseling priorities? In regards to a situational question, most principals stated that they like to pose a specific situation and ask applicants what they would do if they were the school counselor. Most of the incidents posed by the principals involved crisis intervention, abuse and neglect, parent-teacher conflicts, at-risk students, and legal and ethical issues.

Of the 709 principals who responded, 392 (55%) stated that they would consider hiring an applicant for a school counselor position when the applicant did not have previous teaching experience. The study reports that high school principals were more likely to consider nonteacher applicants as compared to both elementary and middle school principals. Moreover, 75% of the principals surveyed stated that guidance

supervisors were very involved in selecting counselors. Similarly, two thirds of the participants indicated that their guidance directors were moderately or highly involved in the decision-making process. On the other hand, principals reported that school counselors had little or no direct input in the selection of their colleagues.

Overall, this study showed that nonintellective variables, such as personal interview, character references, recommendations, and personal experience, are valued more highly by principals when selecting school counselors as compared to intellective variables, such as grade point average and reputation of graduate school attended (Beale, 1995). In addition, the study revealed that principals consider the personal interview as the most important aspect of the decision-making process. As a result, applicants for counseling positions should be prepared to present themselves well in an interview setting. Furthermore, principals still believe that counselors should have teaching experience. This may be due to the fact that principals regard counselors as “upgraded teachers” rather than specialists in counseling (Nugent, 1981).

Olson and Allen (1993) examined principals’ perceptions of school counselor effectiveness with and without teaching experience. The purpose of their study was to extend previous research findings using a larger sample of school counselors. The need for counselors to have prior teaching experience was not supported by this study. For instance, there were no significant differences between principals’ perceptions of teacher and nonteacher counselors’ ability to effectively conduct guidance lessons. In addition, both teacher and nonteacher counselors equally received positive comments regarding their professionalism and efficiency. The researchers hope that the data obtained from this study as well as from similar studies will encourage principals to select more school

counselors with diverse backgrounds and talents in addition to school counselors with teaching experience (Olson & Allen, 1993).

Administrators' perception of the school counselor's role is extremely important, and as Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, and Marshall (2001) reported, misperceptions of the school counselor's role still exist. Therefore, it is imperative to enhance the relationship between school counselors and administrators to aid administrators in developing a better understanding of the roles of the school counselor. Ponec and Brock (2000) highlighted the importance of clear communication and support strategies between school counselors and administrators. Shoffner and Williamson (2000) demonstrated that school counselors and administrators develop greater appreciation and respect for one another given the opportunity to discuss their roles, standards, perspectives, and expectations.

Furthermore, school counselors can develop a better understanding of how administrators perceive their role by understanding what administrators value when selecting school counselors. Beale (1995) stated that administrators value nonintellective variables, such as personal interview and character references. Moreover, administrators perceive school counselors with and without teaching experience as equally effective. Clearly, the relationship between school counselors and administrators is essential. It is important for school counselors and administrators to understand each other's role in order to work collaboratively to meet the needs of all students and to provide the best services.

Teachers Perceptions of School Counselor Roles

It is not only important for administrators to have an understanding of the school counselor's roles, it is necessary for teachers to understand them as well. Davis and Garrett (1998) stated that teachers' perceptions of the school counselor's role are barriers

that prevent school counselors from successfully providing services. Many teachers view the school counselor as someone who sits in his or her office all day drinking coffee, interrupts their class with a note to see a student with little or no explanation, or is another administrator. Consequently, teachers are hesitant to send their students to the counselor for fear of losing valuable instruction time. As Davis and Garrett (1998) explained, their reluctance is a legitimate concern for teacher accountability is measured by grades and test scores.

However, school counselors rely on teachers for student referrals. Hence, the relationship between the school counselor and teacher is one of importance. Davis and Garrett (1998) outlined four effective strategies for bridging the gap between counselors and teachers. These methods help the counselor develop rapport with staff while improving their professional status as competent counselors. The researchers stated that it is beneficial for counselors to take the time to meet each staff member face-to-face. Too often, school counselors are simply introduced to the staff during a staff meeting without time spent on role definition. In order to do this, the school counselor can visit teachers during their planning periods. This is valuable time for teachers, so the visit should be brief and concise.

Secondly, when the school counselor receives a referral from a teacher, it is helpful for the counselor to talk with the teacher to gain a comprehensive profile of the student. "Teachers can add valuable insight and often achieve a sense of empowerment when they know that they have the school counselor on their side, working with them to help the student" (Davis & Garrett, 1998, p. 55). Talking with the teacher can also aid the counselor in determining whether the concern is home-based, school-based, or both.

Furthermore, the researchers reported that it is useful for the school counselor to sit in on a class to observe classroom dynamics and student behavior. They have found that teachers respond well to having the school counselor observe class, for it demonstrates the counselor's commitment to working with the teacher to meet student needs.

Lastly, Davis and Garrett (1998) emphasized the importance of enlisting teachers as co-facilitators. Students sometimes feel more comfortable talking with their teachers regarding concerns rather than the school counselor. Therefore, the school counselor can capitalize upon this relationship by asking the teacher to help facilitate the relationship between the counselor and student. The researchers found that most teachers do want to help, and asking the teacher to attend the counselor's initial session can help the student transition from one trusting relationship to another. Additionally, this provides the teacher with an upfront view of what school counselors do.

Idol and Baran (1992) stressed the importance of identifying areas that might cause conflict between professionals within the school setting as well as clearly articulating mutually understood roles and responsibilities. Idol and Baran (1992) stated that conflict may occur when both school counselors and special education teachers are expected to provide consultation services. Both professionals consult with classroom teachers and parents. As a result, the researchers emphasized the use of collaborative consultation, which is an interactive process that enables teams of people with diverse expertise to work together to develop a solution to an identified problem. Collaborative consultation is used in many school systems today. School counselors along with special education teachers, classroom teachers, parents, and administrators, meet to discuss and develop plans of action to best assist students who are not performing well in school.

Shoffner and Briggs (2001) discussed the use of an interactive CD-ROM that is designed to prepare school professionals to solve problems collaboratively. From using the CD-ROM, the school professionals-in-training (school counselors, administrators, and teachers) “learned how to draw on each others’ perspectives and strengths” (Shoffner & Briggs, 2001, p. 199). The participants felt better able to handle a situation in school by combining the knowledge and intervention strategies of the various professionals.

Although school counselors may become frustrated with teachers, and vice versa, there are proactive strategies that school counselors can use to establish their role with teachers. These efforts will help teachers develop a more accurate and complete understanding of the school counselor’s roles, and ultimately, provide more effective services to students (Davis & Garrett, 1998). Like Idol and Baran (1992), Parr (1991) identified a few common dilemmas that may occur between school counselors and teachers. Parr (1991) stated that teachers sometimes displace negative feelings towards counselors because they view the counselor as a safer scapegoat to displace their frustration as compared to a principal. Additionally, some teachers envy counselors because they work with individuals and small groups, whereas teachers must manage a large classroom. Lastly, teachers sometimes expect counselors to work magic. In other words, teachers want the counselor to “fix” a student. In this situation, school counselors need to help teachers understand that problems are often multifaceted and complex. Therefore, solutions take time (Parr, 1991).

Despite the tensions that may occur between school counselors and teachers, school counselors and teachers develop strong and supportive relationships. Teachers often look to counselors to make their work with students and parents more effective.

The school counselor is a consultant, collaborator, and colleague, as well as an ally who understands the demands of the classroom. They serve as a source of information when making decisions (Pelsma, 2000). Furthermore, teachers are vital in integrating affective, humanistic education into the curriculum. They are the “fast-line” helpers in the counseling program (Herring & White, 1995). As stated above in this section, teachers provide counselors with student referrals and comprehensive profiles. Clearly, “school counseling programs are unsuccessful without the support and acceptance of teachers” (Herring & White, 1995, p. 55).

Ginter and Scalise (1990) conducted a study designed to conceptualize the role of the elementary school counselor. A sample of 313 public elementary school teachers in Louisiana completed a questionnaire regarding their perceptions of counselor functions. The questionnaire required the teachers to indicate on a 7-point scale the various counseling techniques and procedures that would be of help to them. Eleven descriptors were provided on the questionnaire. However, the participants were asked to only select 7 descriptors that they considered to be most important.

The findings suggested that teachers view school counselors as fulfilling the dual role of a helper and a consultant. As a helper, the school counselor identifies and resolves problems through individual and group counseling, interprets test results, assesses children’s concerns, makes referrals, and conducts classroom guidance activities. In the consultant role, the school counselor provides professional advice and expertise through classroom assessment, home visits, curriculum planning, and role-playing techniques. Ginter and Scalise (1990) stated that when counselors and teachers agree on role expectations, the counselor is more likely to be seen as a resource for teachers and

will be asked to perform various helper-consultant tasks. In general, shared expectations have a positive effect on the communication between teachers and counselors.

Furthermore, teachers are better able to present the role of the counselor to both students and parents. Lastly, the findings from the study by Ginter and Scalise (1990) can be used for instructional purposes in undergraduate and graduate programs that prepare teachers and administrators. This will help to increase awareness of the perceived role of the school counselor. Likewise, the results of this study can be used to assist school counselors in better understanding how they are perceived by teachers so that they can assess their skills as both a helper and a consultant.

Even with the numerous attempts at role definition, confusion and conflict still exist. Ribak-Rosenthal (1994) conducted a study to assess the reasons why teachers, school counselors, and school administrators enter their respective positions as well as the reasons these professionals think their co-workers enter their respective positions. The Reasons Individuals Give for Becoming Administrators, Counselors, or Teachers (RIGBACT) Questionnaire was developed. Three forms were created, and each form was exactly the same except for the initial statement which varied depending upon the group being assessed. The questionnaire used a Likert-type scale with four responses (strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree), and consisted of three items within each of the following categories: Stimulating Work (mentally challenged, problem solving, changes in job), Interpersonal Satisfaction (feel you have helped, well being of others, help others), Economic Security (paid enough, sure of job, gain prestige), Responsible Autonomy (authority over others, make own decisions, use leadership

abilities), and Comfortable Existence (good place to work, lead enjoyable life, good life away from work).

Both administrators and teachers agreed that counselors enter their profession because they are motivated to help. Additionally, teachers agreed with the statement that counselors want to be mentally challenged. However, a third of the administrators disagreed with this statement. Ribak-Rosenthal (1994) attributed this finding to the perception administrators have of counselors. Administrators see counselors as administrative assistants who perform clerical tasks and noncounseling duties, which are not mentally challenging. Furthermore, teachers expressed greater dissatisfaction with their job compared to what administrators and counselors thought teachers would express. About two thirds of the teachers indicated that they saw individuals in their profession as motivated to change jobs. Moreover, administrators and counselors agreed with the statement that teachers enter their profession to improve education to a greater degree than did teachers. In fact, one third of the teachers disagreed with the statement.

Overall, Ribak-Rosenthal (1994) emphasized the importance of clarifying the school counselor's role when working with teachers. Counselors can communicate what they do through monthly newsletters, distributing the American School Counselor Association role statement, and making presentations at staff meetings. Ribak-Rosenthal (1994) also stated that it may be beneficial for the counselor to post their schedule and develop a guidance services handbook. Counselors can enhance their relationship with teachers by leading teacher support groups and helping teachers to better their communication skills. As Rice and Smith (1993) stated, many teachers have had little or no training in communication. Teachers need to communicate effectively to their

students in order to enhance student learning. In addition, school counselors need to demonstrate how helping students with developmental concerns can not only enhance academic performance, it can improve classroom environment as well. Therefore, counselors should assist teachers with curriculum development and with creating and presenting guidance lessons in the classroom. By implementing these strategies to enhance counselor-teacher relationships, counselors will “gain support for appropriate role functions within the school” (Ribak-Rosenthal, 1994, p. 163).

Similar to the study by Olson and Allen (1993), which examined principals’ perceptions of school counselors with and without teaching experience, Quarto (1999) examined teachers’ perceptions of school counselors with and without teaching experience. It has been assumed that school counselors who have prior teaching experience will be more effective. However, as Olson and Allen (1993) demonstrated, this is not always the case. A total of 152 teachers representing all levels from seven different states participated in the study by Quarto (1999). The participants’ perceptions were assessed using the Teachers’ Perceptions of School Counselors Questionnaire (TPSCQ).

The results of the study revealed that teachers perceived type of prior work experience to be a significant factor in a school counselor’s effectiveness. The participants rated counselors with prior teaching experience to be the most effective carrying out counseling functions as compared to a counselor with prior community health experience. Quarto (1999) speculated that teachers perceive counselor functions as impacting them as well as students. Therefore, a former teacher would know how to help a student in a way that would also help the teacher. In addition, counselors with

prior teaching experience are more likely to have an understanding of the factors that contribute to academic problems. However, one may question why principals do not perceive a difference in school counselor effectiveness, based on prior or no prior teaching experience, compared to teachers who do perceive a difference.

Quarto (1999) stated that teachers may be in a better position to evaluate counselors due to their day-to-day, intimate contact with counselors, which provides them with first hand knowledge of the school counselor's role. Principals are not as likely to have the same daily contact. On the other hand, it could be argued that teachers have not received training in evaluating school personnel, which administrators have received. Thus, administrators are better able to take on a broader perspective of the role of the school counselor, whereas teachers' perceptions are likely to be biased towards counselors with teaching experience.

Overall, the relationships between school counselors and teachers are just as important as the relationships between school counselors and administrators. Ginter and Scalise (1990) suggested that teachers perceive school counselors as both helpers and consultants. Nevertheless, role confusion still exists (Ribak-Rosenthal, 1994). Effective strategies for bridging the gap between school counselors and teachers have been emphasized along with areas of conflict and tension that may arise. Understanding these factors will assist in developing collaborative relationships between school counselors and teachers, ultimately helping school counselors and teachers gain a better understanding of each other's roles.

Parents Perceptions of School Counselor Roles

Like administrators and teachers, parents serve as important stakeholders.

Unfortunately, Chapman and DeMasi (1991) stated that the 12th Annual Gallup Poll reported that when budgets are tight, the school counselor position is one of the first things to be cut. Some parents want to end school counseling and other student-focused programs because they are nonacademic, detract from subject instruction, and invade family privacy (Kaplan, 1997). Campbell (1993) stated that many parents have negative associations with regards to school counseling due to past contact with educators of their children as well as their own school experience. As a result, increased parent awareness of the school counselor's position and services is imperative.

Research has shown that the most effective college advising involves the student, school counselor, and parents as partners. However, Orfield and Paul (1994) reported that only 17 percent of parents meet with their student's high school counselor. Nevertheless, parents and school counselors need to collaborate and work together to ensure the best outcome for their students. Chapman and DeMasi (1991) identified three reasons why counselors and parents should work together during the college advising process. First of all, parents do not always have the most current and comprehensive knowledge of college admissions. Therefore, it is beneficial for them to work with the school counselor who has up-to-date resources and information on college options. Next, a student may become very confused and conflict may arise when he/she is receiving different information from the school counselor and his/her parents. Collaborating can reduce conflicting information. Lastly, school counselors provide one of the earliest interventions in regards to postsecondary planning. In other words, school counselors

begin to work with students to discuss college options most often before they receive recruitment information from colleges. As a result, it is to the parents benefit, and ultimately, the student's benefit to collaborate with the school counselor.

A study conducted by Chapman and DeMasi (1991) asked 268 parents from New York state to complete the Parent Survey on High School Guidance Counseling, which assesses respondents' perceptions of school counselor effectiveness, respondents' satisfaction with services provided, and the nature of the services students receive from the school counselor. In addition to assessing parent perception, 428 students completed the same questionnaire. The researchers assumed that the students would have more accurate information on the rate of their contact with the school counselor as compared to their parents. The data from the parents was compared to the data from the students, which was used as the standard.

Parents reported that their children had an average of 11 contacts with the school counselor during their last two years of high school, and the students reported that they had an average of 12.5 contacts. Even though these two numbers are similar, parents overestimated the amount of contact that their child had due to personal and interpersonal concerns as well as the amount of contact their child had as a result of academic counseling. Parents also tended to underestimate the amount of contact with regards to testing. Concerning initiation of contact, parents significantly overestimated their influence in regards to initiating student contact with the school counselor, and they underestimated the extent to which school counselors initiated student contact. Therefore, parent perception of school counselor effectiveness may not be based on an

accurate assessment of school counselor and student interaction (Chapman & DeMasi, 1991).

In general, the majority of parents gave school counselors low ratings on overall effectiveness. Chapman and DeMasi (1991) reported that 90% of the parents used college advising services offered by the school counselor, but they rated the information that they received from the counselor as moderate. Parents stated that they were somewhat or not at all satisfied with the school counselor's work with their children. However, they were more positive about the school counselor's overall contribution to the school's educational program (Chapman & DeMasi, 1991).

In Greencastle, Indiana, two elementary, two middle, and two high school counselors wanted to talk with parents and/or family members about the educational and career planning needs of their children (Evans & Hines, 1997). The counselors decided to go to the parents instead of waiting for the parents to figure out their schedules in order to find a time to meet with them. Evans and Hines (1997) stated that parents' work schedules often make it difficult for them to set and keep appointments. As a result, the counselors developed a program called Lunch With School Counselors (LWSC). This program provided an opportunity for parents working in five of the area's largest industries to have lunch with school counselors.

The counselors made about 10 "lunch" visits per month to the employee-parents throughout the school year, including evening visits to accommodate parents who work evening shifts. The counselors brought a variety of materials to the parents, such as parenting tips, school activity schedules, career information, and postsecondary financial aid information. The parents were able to learn how to help their child succeed

academically. This program increased the amount of communication between employee-parents and counselors. The counselors felt that their increased visibility and friendliness would encourage parents to talk with them in the future (Evans & Hines, 1997).

As Kaplan (1997) explained, some parent groups strongly oppose school activities that take time away from academics. Such activities include teacher advisory, homeroom classes, classroom guidance, and school counseling programs. These parents reject affective curriculum, which addresses feelings and attitudes, and enforce cognitive curriculum, which addresses knowledge and skills. In addition, some parents do not agree with guidance lessons because students may be taught values that differ from the values taught at home.

Despite this, research conducted in schools supports the use of counseling and guidance programs to promote student learning. Guidance and counseling reinforces emotional and behavioral self-management to improve classroom learning and academic achievement (Kaplan, 1997). Additionally, Sylwester (1995) emphasizes that classroom activities with high personal meaning, such as guidance lessons, enhance learning. These lessons bring together real life emotion and curriculum. Therefore, although some parents perceive school counseling programs as impinging on their students' education, they in fact enhance and support student learning (Kaplan, 1997).

School counselors can implement proactive strategies to develop greater parent involvement and support for school counseling programs, and ultimately, a better understanding of the school counselor's role. Kaplan (1997) stated that school counselors need to listen carefully to parent concerns without defensiveness in regards to the school or the school counseling program. Furthermore, parent advisory groups

encourage parents to express their concerns while becoming more knowledgeable about school counseling programs. Many school counselors create parent counseling committees that meet monthly with the school counseling department in order to collaborate on projects that benefit the school. The parents on the counseling committee become school counseling advocates who educate uniformed parents.

Van Horn and Myrick (2001) advocate for the use of technology to maintain open communication between school counselors and parents. For instance, e-mail provides a direct channel of communication. A parent can e-mail the school counselor with a concern about his/her son or daughter. The counselor can respond with a few suggestions of how to help the problem and with resources that the parent can use to assist their child. Not only does e-mail save the counselor time, it provides parents with a timely response. In addition, counselors can disseminate information using a web page. A guidance and counseling web site can include a listing of activities/seminars that are offered by the counseling department for both students and parents. A calendar of events including important dates and a variety of parenting resources would also be beneficial to incorporate into the web site. Van Horn and Myrick (2001) emphasized the fact that computer technology has affected all aspects of life, and it continues to increase in use. School counselors can use this medium to better the services they provide, and thus, their relationship with parents.

Researchers Conroy and Mayer (1994) also studied the importance of maintaining communication between school counselors and parents. They state that parent education can be an effective way to promote parent involvement. A two year parent education program held in Bahama, North Carolina, proved to be quite successful. In the first year

of the program, multi-week small group sessions were led by the school counselor and special education teacher. The group discussed such topics as understanding your child, developing responsibility, winning cooperation, and instilling courage. During the second year of the program, a series of monthly Parent Nights were held. The parents had the opportunity to discuss issues and concerns with one another, listen to a speaker, and receive written information. In addition to the small group sessions and Parent Nights, the school counselor maintained a collection of books available for parents to checkout.

“A majority of parents participating in the multi-week parenting course indicated that the program improved their parenting skills” (Conroy & Mayer, 1994, p. 64). All of the parents who completed the evaluation stated that they would recommend the program to a friend. Many of the parents reported that their yelling had decreased, their use of encouragement had increased, and their children were more cooperative and responded better to requests as a result of the information they learned from the sessions. In regards to the Parent Nights, the parents stated that they were pleased with the opportunity to attend a monthly parent education meeting. Many of the parents commented that they made attempts to use the ideas presented in the workshops.

Clearly, the school counselor’s role as a consultant with parents is important. As Conroy and Mayer (1994) explain, by educating parents, counselors are not only increasing parent involvement, they are meeting the developmental needs of students as well. Additionally, counselor and parent collaboration helps to prevent school problems that interfere with student academic achievement. In the education program discussed by Conroy and Mayer (1994), the overall evaluation of the parent education programs was

positive. Consequently, it is likely that the parents perceived the school counselor as helpful and informative.

Similar to the importance of collaboration between school counselors, administrators, and teachers, collaboration between school counselors and parents is imperative. In general, parents do not have a thorough understanding of the school counselor's roles. As Chapman and DeMasi (1991) demonstrate, parent perception of school counselor effectiveness may be based on an inaccurate assessment of student and counselor contact. As a result, it is important for school counselors to be proactive using tools, such as technology and parent education programs, in order to provide parents with a better understanding of school counselor roles and functions.

Summary

Overall, much research has been done on administrators, teachers, and parents' perceptions of the school counselor's role. The research cited in this chapter demonstrates the diverse perceptions that school personnel have of the school counselor. The final article reviewed in this chapter is by Ibrahim, Helms, and Thompson (1983). The researchers conducted a study to assess the role and function of the secondary school counselor and to obtain recommendations for counselor education. Rather than assessing only administrators or teachers' perceptions, the researchers looked at the perceptions of secondary school administrators, secondary school counselors, parents, and members of the business community.

The participants completed a questionnaire that consisted of major counselor roles and functions as well as sub-roles described by the American School Counselor Association. They were required to indicate the perceived importance of each function

from very important to unimportant. In addition to ranking the counselor functions, participants were asked to respond to four open-ended questions. The questions were: (1) What other areas did they see as counselor functions? (2) What other functions should counselors be fulfilling to help students? (3) What did they expect of secondary counselors? (4) Recommendations for counselors' training and education.

The parents perceived other areas of counselor functions to include assisting in course selection, acting as an ombudsman in cases of student-teacher conflict, assisting in selections of institutions of higher education, and providing financial aid and scholarship information. Additionally, the parents considered the counselor's attitude toward the student to be crucial. Parents expected the counselor to be caring, encouraging, and positive to the students. The business community and parents stated that counselors should provide career counseling and placement services for noncollege bound students. Members in the business community also stated that counselors should be aware of job market trends and job opportunities, and counselors should encourage students to "develop a realistic perspective toward life and the world of work" (Ibrahim, Helms, & Thompson, 1983, p. 600). Both counselors and administrators reported that the school counselor should be more active with course selection and should coordinate work with vocational and special education personnel.

In regards to the question of what other functions should counselors fulfill, the participants stated that counselors should have a closer relationship with students. The respondents want to see more counselor-student interaction. Parents were the only group of respondents that answered the question about expectations of secondary school counselors. They stated that counselors should assist students in course selection, inform

parents of problems, and provide individual counseling when needed. The last question asked participants to recommend training and education for counselors. Many of the parents and members of the business community stated that counselors should have “hands on” experience in work settings. Parents also reported that counselors should take classes in sociology and psychology. Furthermore, they should have an understanding of college and university entrance requirements, scholarships, and financial aid.

In general, the four groups of participants agreed that the roles and functions identified in the questionnaire were important components of the school counselor’s role. However, administrators consistently perceived the functions of program development, pupil appraisal, staff consulting, and research as of greater importance than did counselors. Moreover, counselors and administrators considered counseling, parent help, and public relations as more important than did parents and the business community. On the other hand, parents and the business community rated educational and occupational planning and referral as higher in importance as compared to administrators and counselors.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

Administrators, teachers, and parents’ perceptions of the school counselor’s role have been thoroughly studied over the years. Students are the main recipients of the school counselor’s services, and yet, their perceptions of the school counselor’s roles have not been researched to the same degree as the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents. The purpose of this study was to assess high school students’ perceptions of the roles of the school counselor. In addition, this study assessed high school students’ perceptions of the functions associated with the school counselor roles.

Functions are an operationalization of roles. The research questions were as follows: (1) What school counselor roles do students perceive to be important to their academic success, career development, and personal-social growth? (2) What school counselor role-related functions do students perceive to be important to their academic success, career development, and personal-social growth? (3) Do students' perceptions of school counselor roles and functions differ by grade level?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to assess high school students' perceptions of the school counselor's role. Students are the primary stakeholders that school counselors serve, and yet, more research has been done on administrators, teachers, and parents' perceptions of the roles of school counselors. This chapter will describe the research questions, sample, instrument, setting, and data analysis employed in the study.

Research Questions:

The research questions for the study were as follows:

Research question 1: What school counselor roles do students perceive to be important to their academic success, career development, and personal-social growth?

Research question 2: What school counselor role-related functions do students perceive to be important to their academic success, career development, and personal-social growth?

Research question 3: Do students' perceptions of school counselor roles and functions differ by grade level?

Participants:

Participants consisted of students in the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades from two high schools in an urban community. The questionnaire was administered to 223 high school students. However, three of the returned questionnaires were unable to be assessed. As a result, 220 questionnaires were analyzed, yielding a response rate of 98.7%. Of the 220 questionnaires, 72 were completed by ninth grade students, 74 were

completed by tenth grade students, 33 were completed by eleventh grade students, and 41 were completed by twelfth grade students.

Setting:

One of the high schools used in the study has about 3,000 students, the largest enrollment in its county. The racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school consists of 32% African American, .2% American Indian, 14.1% Asian, 25.6% Hispanic, and 28.1% White. Furthermore, 21.3% of the student population participates in Free and Reduced Meals System (Montgomery County Public Schools, 2004).

On the other hand, the other high school used in this study has an enrollment of approximately 2,000 students. The racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school consists of 13.7% African American, .1% American Indian, 11.3 Asian, 9% Hispanic, and 66% White. Additionally, 6.6% of the students receive free and reduced meals (Montgomery County Public Schools, 2004).

Procedures:

Students were asked to participate in the study during a non-academic class. It is important to note that students were assessed during a non-academic class rather than during an academic class. In high school, enrollment in academic classes is determined by ability level. As a result, a sample gathered from students in their academic classes would most likely be unrepresentative of high school students as a whole. On the other hand, all students in high school have non-academic requirements. Therefore, by assessing students during their non-academic classes, a more representative sample was obtained.

Questionnaires were given to school counselors in two high schools. The questionnaire, which is presented in Appendix A, was a part of the on-going data collection process conducted as a part of the counseling program in each school. The school counselors distributed the questionnaire to the students as they read directions out loud. The directions that were read to the students are presented in Appendix B. Students did not write their name on the questionnaire to ensure confidentiality. After the students completed the questionnaire, they were collected by the counselors. The counselors then gave the completed questionnaires to the investigator. Furthermore, to ensure that the number of participants in each grade level was similar, the school counselors distributed questionnaires to two non-academic classes for each grade. For instance, all tenth grade students are required to take health. Therefore, the counselors distributed the questionnaires to two health classes to obtain the tenth grade sample.

Instrumentation:

Fitch, Newby, Ballesterro, and Marshall (2001) developed an inventory to assess perceptions of the school counselor's role. The survey consisted of 15 standards from the American School Counselor Association and the Kentucky Educational Professional Standards Board. The questionnaire also included five noncounseling tasks that school counselors often perform. The participants rated the importance of the standards using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = not significant, 5 = highly significant). The present study used a survey similar to the one developed by Fitch, Newby, Ballesterro, and Marshall (2001). The investigator and a counselor educator developed the instrument using the decision matrix presented in Appendix C. The survey consisted of 15 functions based on the five school counselor roles identified by Erford (2003). Each role was assessed according to

the three categories of development: academic, career, and personal-social, as emphasized by the National Standards for School Counseling Programs (Campbell & Dahir, 1997). Consequently, each role had three corresponding functions. The decision matrix in Appendix C depicts the organization of the three categories of development, five roles, and corresponding functions influenced by the American School Counselor Association National Model (ASCA). The participants rated the importance of the functions using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = not important, 5 = extremely important). The survey also asked the participants to rate the importance of five noncounseling functions similar to the ones used by Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, and Marshall (2001). For this study, the noncounseling functions were categorized under the term manager.

Four school counselors and two counselor educators reviewed the questionnaire to ensure that school counselor roles were represented accurately. In addition, a pilot test of the survey was conducted with high school students to provide feedback with regards to clarity and relevance of items. The investigator met with seven high school students: one ninth grader, two tenth graders, two eleventh graders, and two twelfth graders. The students provided the investigator with relevant suggestions. The students stated that the directions would be better understood if the sentence, “Do not base your rating on personal experience you have had with a school counselor,” came after the sentences, “Please rate the importance of each function using the scale below. Simply rate each item according to your perception of a school counselor’s role.” Therefore, the directions would tell the participant what to do and then what not to do.

The students also advised the investigator to make sure that each item did not exceed three lines. The students stated that an item that is more than three lines becomes

difficult to comprehend. In addition, the students suggested putting a space between the function and example to make it easier to read. With regards to the content of the questionnaire, the students felt that it was extremely important to add items addressing the school counselor's role in preparing students for college. The original questionnaire only addressed the school counselor's role in career knowledge and preparation. As a result, the school counselor's role in college knowledge and preparation was added to a few of the career items.

Data Analysis:

The questionnaires were analyzed with SPSS statistical software. All responses were entered into a data file that was stored on a mainframe hard disk to ensure confidentiality. For each of the 20 items on the questionnaire, means and standard deviations were calculated. In addition, means were calculated for each school counselor role by averaging the means from the three items that corresponded to each school counselor role. An overall mean was also calculated for the five noncounseling functions. Each research question was explored using the following data analyses:

Research question 1: Question 1 was tested by comparing the overall means of the five school counseling roles to determine which roles were rated as the most important by participants.

Research question 2: Question 2 was tested by comparing the means and of each function to determine which functions participants rated as the most important.

Research question 3: Question 3 was tested by calculating an overall mean for each grade level. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare the

means according to grade. A post hoc pairwise comparison using a Tukey test was conducted to determine where the significant differences between means existed.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This study investigated high school students' perceptions of the roles of school counselors and the functions associated with those roles. A 20 item questionnaire was administered to students at two urban high schools. The questionnaire instructed the students to rate the importance of 15 school counselor functions based on the five school counselor roles: leader, advocate, collaborator, counselor and coordinator, and data utilizer. Each role was assessed according to the three categories of development: academic, career, and personal-social. Furthermore, the students rated the importance of five noncounseling functions that school counselors often perform (e.g. test administration, registration). These noncounseling functions were categorized under the term manager for this study. Both the counseling and noncounseling functions were rated according to a 5-point Likert scale (1 = not important, 5 = extremely important).

Three research questions were posed for this study: (1) What school counselor roles do students perceive to be important to their academic success, career development, and personal-social growth? (2) What school counselor role-related functions do students perceive to be important to their academic success, career development, and personal-social growth? (3) Do students' perceptions of school counselor roles and functions differ by grade level?

Results for the Research Questions

Research Question 1:

What school counselor roles do students perceive to be important to their academic success, career development, and personal-social growth?

The overall means of the five school counseling roles were calculated in order to determine the school counseling roles that the participants rated as the most important. Table 1 presents the means and standard deviations of students' ratings of the school counselor functions, which are categorized by the five school counseling roles. The students rated the school counselor roles in the following order from most important to least important: counselor/coordinator (M = 3.8, SD = 1.2), leader (M = 3.6, SD = 1.1), collaborator (M = 3.5, SD = 1.2), data utilizer (M = 3.4, SD = 1.1), manager (M = 3.4, SD = 1.2), and advocate (M = 3.4, SD = 1.1).

Research Question 2:

What school counselor role-related functions do students perceive to be important to their academic success, career development, and personal-social growth?

The means of each school counselor function were compared to determine which functions the participants rated as the most important. Table 1 presents the means for the role-related functions. Students rated the following five functions as the most important: assisting all students in choosing college or career paths that are right for them (M = 4.0, SD = 1.1), assisting in registration and scheduling (M = 4.0, SD = 1.1), maintaining school records and files (M = 3.9, SD = 1.2), starting new programs to help all students obtain knowledge about college or careers (M = 3.8, SD = 1.1), and providing all students with a safe place to talk about problems with academics (M = 3.7, SD = 1.2). In contrast, the students rated the following five functions as the least important: administering achievement tests (M = 2.8, SD = 1.2), assisting in maintaining order in the school through disciplinary intervention (M = 3.0, SD = 1.2), bringing local business people into the school to help all students learn more about jobs and careers (M = 3.3, SD = 1.1),

helping all students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers ($M = 3.4$, $SD = 1.1$), and gathering information on student academic progress to make sure that all students are selecting challenging classes ($M = 3.4$, $SD = 1.1$).

Research Question 3:

Do students' perceptions of school counselor roles and functions differ by grade level?

The overall means for each grade level according to role were determined. The means and standard deviations of ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students' ratings of school counselor functions are presented in Table 2, Table 3, Table 4, and Table 5.

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare the means by grade. Out of the 20 items in the questionnaire, four presented significant differences between means at the .05 level. Statistical information is presented in Table 6.

A post hoc pairwise comparison using a Tukey test was conducted to determine where the differences existed. Table 7 presents the multiple comparisons for questions six, nine, eighteen, and nineteen, and Table 8 highlights the multiple comparisons for the four questions that presented significant results. With regards to question six (assisting in maintaining order in the school through disciplinary intervention), significant differences were found between tenth graders' ratings of the importance of the function and twelfth graders' ratings of the importance of the function. By comparing the means for question six, the results suggest that tenth graders ($M = 3.1$, $SD = 1.2$) rated the function (assisting in maintaining order in the school through disciplinary intervention) as significantly more

important than twelfth graders ($M = 2.6$, $SD = 1.1$). Similarly, significant differences were found between the ratings of eleventh graders and twelfth graders on question six. Eleventh graders ($M = 3.5$, $SD = 1.1$) rated the function (assisting in maintaining order in the school through disciplinary intervention) as significantly more important than twelfth graders ($M = 2.6$, $SD = 1.1$).

Question nine asked students to rate how important it is for school counselors to help all students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers. Significant differences between means were found for tenth graders and twelfth graders. The mean for tenth graders' rating of the function was 3.5 ($SD = 1.1$), whereas the mean for twelfth graders' rating of the function was 2.9 ($SD = 1.1$). Consequently, tenth graders perceived the function (helping all students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers) to be significantly more important than twelfth graders.

Significant differences were found between tenth graders and twelfth graders with regards to their perceptions of the importance of question eighteen (gathering information on students who need after school jobs and finding ways to get these students part-time work). The students in twelfth grade ($M = 3.0$, $SD = 1.1$) perceived the function (gathering information on students who need after school jobs and finding ways to get these students part-time work) to be significantly less important to the role of the school counselor than students in tenth grade ($M = 3.7$, $SD = 1.2$). Furthermore, twelfth graders ($M = 2.3$, $SD = 1.1$) also rated the noncounseling function of administering achievement tests (question 19) as significantly less important when compared to tenth graders ($M = 3.0$, $SD = 1.3$).

CHAPTER 5

Summary of the Study

Administrators, teachers, and parents' perceptions of the school counselor's role have been studied over the years. Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, and Marshall (2001) looked at future administrators' perceptions of the school counselor's role and concluded that many misperceptions of the role of the school counselor still exist. This study followed a similar format to the study conducted by Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, and Marshall (2001), but it assessed the perceptions of students regarding the role of the school counselor.

This chapter will present the three research questions along with a discussion of the findings. In addition, implications for school counselors, limitations of the study, and directions for future research will be discussed.

Research question 1: What school counselor roles do students perceive to be important to their academic success, career development, and personal-social growth? The results suggest that students perceived counselor/coordinator and leader to be the two most important roles for school counselors.

Research question 2: What school counselor role-related functions do students perceive to be important to their academic success, career development, and personal-social growth? The results suggest that students perceived the following to be the two most important role-related functions for school counselors: assisting all students in choosing college or career paths that are right for them and assisting in registration and scheduling.

Research question 3: Do students' perceptions of school counselor roles and functions differ by grade level? The results suggest that tenth graders perceived the

noncounseling function of assisting in maintaining order in the school through disciplinary intervention as more important compared to twelfth graders. Eleventh graders also perceived this function as more important compared to twelfth graders. Furthermore, tenth graders perceived the noncounseling function of administering achievement tests as more important than twelfth graders. With regards to the advocate role, tenth graders perceived the function of helping all students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers as more important than twelfth graders. Lastly, tenth graders perceived the data utilizer function of gathering information on students who need after school jobs and finding ways to get these students part-time work as more important compared to twelfth graders.

Discussion of the Findings

The students assessed perceived the most important school counselor roles as counselor/coordinator and leader. In fact, the students rated the roles in the following order from least to most important: advocate, manager, data utilizer, collaborator, leader, and counselor/coordinator. It might be expected that noncounseling functions would be rated low in importance due to the fact that they are functions that counselors often perform but are not necessarily school counseling functions. However, it is interesting that the students rated advocate as the least important role. This may be in part a result of the fact that students do not fully understand the advocate role. The three functions listed under the advocate role on the questionnaire are as follows: encouraging all students to select classes that will challenge them, helping all students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers, and bringing specialists from the community into the school to help students who are having personal

problems that interfere with their school work. These three functions that define the advocate role may be unfamiliar to students. For instance, students may think that counselors would not want to encourage students to select challenging classes for fear that they may struggle rather than find the class stimulating and challenging.

Additionally, students may perceive it to be another school personnel's responsibility rather than the school counselor's to act as a resource broker to provide students with career information and personal assistance from individuals in the community.

Therefore, school counselors may need to make an effort to demonstrate to students the importance of the advocate role. As school counseling reform efforts continue and the new counseling roles of counselor/coordinator, leader, advocate, collaborator, and data utilizer are advanced, it is important for school counselors to focus on these roles.

It is reassuring to know that the students rated the counselor/coordinator role as the most important. The functions that the school counselor performs as a counselor/coordinator are probably the most familiar to students, and thus, they received the highest ratings. This emphasizes the importance of providing students with a safe place to talk about academic and personal/social problems as well as assisting students in choosing college or career paths. These results are comparable to the findings by Ginter and Scalise (1990). In this study, teachers viewed the school counselor as fulfilling the dual role of a helper and a consultant who resolves problems through individual and group counseling, assesses concerns, and provides professional advice and expertise.

With regards to the importance of the various school counselor functions, the students perceived the following as the five most important functions: assisting all students in choosing college or career paths that are right for them, assisting in

registration and scheduling, maintaining school records and files, starting new programs to help all students obtain knowledge about college or careers, and providing all students with a safe place to talk about problems with academics. Interestingly, two of the five most important functions are noncounseling functions. The other functions are from the counselor/coordinator and leader roles.

These results are similar to a student's experience. Students in high school typically first see their school counselor for registration and scheduling. Often the high school counselor is the one who maintains students' records and files in order to assist students. During high school, the school counselor provides the student with college and career knowledge to set them on the path that is right for them. In addition, students seek assistance from their school counselor when they are having difficulty with academics.

Students rated the function of assisting all students in choosing college or career paths that are right for them as the most important. Consequently, students most likely feel that it is important to go to the school counselor for college or career advising. In fact, Chapman and DeMasi (1991) stated that it is very important for counselors, students, and parents to work together during the college advising process. However, the results from Chapman and DeMasi (1991) reported that parents rated the information that they received from the school counselor regarding college advising as moderate. The parents stated that they were somewhat or not at all satisfied with the school counselor's work. Nonetheless, Chapman and DeMasi (1991) stated that parent perceptions of the school counselor may not be based on an accurate assessment of counselor and student interaction.

On the other hand, the five least important functions consist of the following: administering achievement tests, assisting in maintaining order in the school through disciplinary intervention, bringing local business people into the school to help all students learn more about jobs and careers, helping all students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers, and gathering information on student academic progress to make sure that all students are selecting challenging classes. Similar to the five most important functions, two of the five least important functions are noncounseling functions. The other functions are from the collaborator, advocate, and data utilizer roles.

These results suggest that students perceive the noncounseling functions of administering achievement tests and assisting with discipline to be unimportant and possibly a misuse of the counselor's time. On the other hand, the students rated three vital functions to be low in importance. These three functions involve the school counselor taking the initiative to help students make community contacts and to gather data. Students most likely rated these functions low in importance because they are not accustomed to school counselors encouraging challenging classes or acting as resource brokers as previously mentioned.

Although this study identified the five least important school counseling functions, the means of the five least important functions ranged from 2.8 to 3.4. These numbers indicate that students perceived these functions to be of importance. In fact, none of the functions had an average rating of 1.0 (not important). All of the functions, except the noncounseling function of administering achievement tests ($M = 2.8$), received an average rating of 3.0 (important) or above. Nonetheless, a rating of 2.8 indicates

importance. This result is similar to the results found by Fitch, Newby, Ballesterro, and Marshall (2001). Although future administrators rated the five noncounseling tasks as the five least important duties of the school counselor, they still viewed these tasks as important aspects of the school counseling program.

This study assessed whether or not students' perceptions of the roles and functions of school counselors differ between grades. Although students' ratings were fairly similar, a few significant differences did exist. Both tenth and eleventh graders rated the noncounseling function of assisting in maintaining order in the school through disciplinary intervention as more important when compared to twelfth graders. A common misperception of the school counselor's role is that school counselors are disciplinarians. Unfortunately in some cases, they are. It is likely that the twelfth graders perceived discipline to be of lesser importance compared to tenth and eleventh graders because twelfth graders typically spend a lot of time with their school counselor as they prepare for college or a career. Consequently, they most likely have a better understanding of the high school counselor's role.

Significant differences between ratings were also found between tenth and twelfth graders for three more functions. Tenth graders rated the advocate function of helping all students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers as more important than twelfth graders. This finding is interesting for one may expect that twelfth graders would have found it more important than tenth graders for school counselors to help students make career contacts. During twelfth grade, students are working towards developing their career knowledge as they make college or career plans, and tenth graders are focusing on finding their interests through

course requirements and extracurricular activities. This finding may also be a result of students' unfamiliarity with the advocate role and functions as previously stated.

Again, tenth graders perceived the data utilizer function of gathering information on students who need after school jobs and finding ways to get these students part-time work as more important compared to twelfth graders. This finding may be due to the fact that tenth graders are focusing more on finding their interests while twelfth graders are preparing for the next stage in their life. Lastly, tenth graders rated the noncounseling function of administering achievement tests as significantly more important than twelfth graders. Similar to the discipline function, school counselors are often required to administer achievement tests despite the fact that it takes them away from their counseling duties. As stated previously, twelfth graders seem to have a better understanding of the school counselor's roles. Hence, they rated the noncounseling function as less important compared to tenth graders. In fact, the twelfth graders rated administering achievement tests as the least important function.

These findings are important for they provide school counselors with information that may influence their work. As stated above, tenth graders rated the following functions as more important compared to twelfth graders: assisting in maintaining order in the school through disciplinary intervention, helping all students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers, gathering information on students who need after school jobs and finding ways to get these students part-time work, and administering achievement tests. Two of these functions are noncounseling functions. As a result, tenth grade school counselors may need to focus on helping tenth graders develop a better understanding of the roles and functions of school

counselors. In addition, these findings indicate that tenth grade counselors may find it beneficial to assist students in making community connections to help students gain career knowledge and part-time work.

Implications for School Counselors

As Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, and Marshall (2001) concluded, misperceptions of the school counselor's role still exist. The findings from this study are similar to those of Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, and Marshall (2001). Although students rated the manager role as less important compared to the data utilizer, collaborator, leader, and counselor/coordinator roles, students did rate two noncounseling functions in the top five most important functions. Yet, the overall means for the various roles were similar. In fact, all of the overall means for the various roles were 3.4 or above, indicating that students rated the roles as important. Thus, even though students rated a few of the noncounseling functions as highly important, they also rated the five school counselor roles as important. It is reassuring to know that students perceive the transformed roles as significant.

Nevertheless, school counselors may need to continue to focus on promoting the five counseling roles, especially the advocate role, which appears to be the role that is most unfamiliar to students. School counselors may need to make sure that they are not spending time doing noncounseling functions that take them away from assisting their students. School counselors "need to be trained on how to respond when they are assigned inappropriate duties" (Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, & Marshall, 2001, p. 96). In doing so, school counselors will be able to devote their time and skills to being a leader,

advocate, collaborator, counselor/coordinator, and data utilizer, which is consistent with efforts to transform the role of the school counselor (House & Hayes, 2002).

Limitations of the Study

The results of this study are limited by the fact that the study assessed high school students from two urban schools in one state. Therefore, one needs to be cautious when making generalizations. Furthermore, the instrument used in the study is not a commonly used and validated instrument. It was created for the purposes of this study.

The results indicated that students perceived the advocate role to be the least important role. As previously stated, this may be due to students' unfamiliarity with the advocate role and functions. However, this may also be due to the operational definition of the advocate role. Advocate is not an easy role to define for students, and as a result, the functions associated with the role may not have accurately represented the advocate role.

Additionally, the number of participants for each grade level varied. There were more responses from ninth and tenth graders compared to eleventh and twelfth graders. Although the school counselors who distributed the questionnaires tried to control for sample sizes, they could not control for student absences, tardiness, etc. There was an untraceable response bias. Moreover, the students who participated in the study did not have an investment in the study. In other words, the students did not receive compensation for completing the questionnaire. Therefore, some students may not have taken the questionnaire seriously.

Another limitation is that the study did not assess if differences existed between the two schools with regards to student perceptions of school counselor roles and

functions. It would have been advantageous to determine how the students at each school perceived the school counselor's roles and if their perceptions were different. Lastly, school counselors distributed the questionnaires to the students, which could have altered the students' responses. Even though students were told that their responses were confidential, students may have felt inclined to answer in a favorable way because a school counselor was distributing and collecting the questionnaires.

Directions for Future Research

With regards to future research, it would be constructive to replicate this study using a larger sample that incorporates various geographical areas. Furthermore, the operational definition of the advocate role should be reassessed and possibly revised. It may also be interesting to assess current school counselors' perceptions of school counselor roles and functions and compare the results to students' perceptions. Even though school counselors have been introduced to the transformed roles, many still are involved in noncounseling functions and adhere to the three Cs: counseling, coordination, and consultation. Thus, it would be beneficial to better understand how counselors' perceive the roles and functions of their own profession.

Appendix A

Student Perceptions of School Counselor Functions

Your Grade:

9th _____ 10th _____ 11th _____ 12th _____

Below are a series of school counselor functions. Please rate the importance of each function using the scale below. Simply rate each item according to your perception of a school counselor's role. Do NOT base your rating on personal experience you have had with a school counselor.

How important is each function to the role of the school counselor? Circle your answer.

1 = Not important 2 = Somewhat important 3 = Important 4 = Very Important 5 = Extremely Important

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Gathering information on student academic progress to make sure that all students are selecting challenging classes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Bringing local business people into the school to help all students learn more about jobs and careers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Bringing specialists from the community into the school to help students who are having personal problems that interfere with their school work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <i>Example: Eating disorders specialists</i> | | | | | |
| 4. Starting new programs to help all students with any personal problems that can interfere with doing well in school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <i>Example: A program on teen pregnancy prevention for the entire school.</i> | | | | | |
| 5. Gathering information on all students who are having personal problems to make sure they get the help they need. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Assisting in maintaining order in the school through disciplinary intervention. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

How important is each function to the role of the school counselor? Circle your answer.

1 = Not important 2 = Somewhat important 3 = Important 4 = Very Important 5 = Extremely Important

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16. Starting new programs to help all students do better in school. | | | | | |
| <i>Example: after school study skills class, Saturday morning test preparation class.</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. Talking with teachers or parents about personal problems that students are unable to solve on their own. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. Gathering information on students who need after school jobs and finding ways to get these students part-time work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. Administering achievement tests. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. Maintaining student records and files. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix B

Questionnaire Directions Read Out Loud to Students

“As a high school student, you have the opportunity to participate in a study assessing your perceptions of school counselor functions. Since there is very little information on this topic, your participation is important for the advancement of research on this topic.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. You have the freedom to withdraw from this study without penalty at any time. Furthermore, your participation in this study will not affect your grades in school. Participation in this study consists of filling out a questionnaire. You can refuse to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable. Completion of the questionnaire is anticipated to take between 5 and 10 minutes. Please complete the questionnaire by circling your responses to each question. There are no right or wrong answers. Your responses will be confidential. The only identifiable information on the questionnaire is grade level. All of the information from the questionnaires will be destroyed upon completion of the study.

The following survey will ask you to rate the importance of school counselor functions. Please rate each item according to your perception of a school counselor’s role. Do not base your rating on personal experience you have had with a school counselor.”

Appendix C

Decision Matrix

The Three Categories of Development, Five School Counselor Roles, and Corresponding Functions.

| | Academic | Career | Personal/Social |
|---------------------------|--|--|--|
| Leader | Starting new programs to help all students do better in school. Example: after school study skills class, Saturday morning test preparation class. | Starting new programs to help all students obtain knowledge about college or careers. Example: College and Career Fairs, Guest Speakers. | Starting new programs to help all students with any personal problems that can interfere with doing well in school. Example: A program on teen pregnancy prevention for the entire school. |
| Advocate | Encouraging all students to select classes that will challenge them. | Helping all students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers. | Bringing specialists from the community into the school to help students who are having personal problems that interfere with their school work. Example: Eating disorders specialists. |
| Collaborator | Working with teachers, principals, and parents to help all students do well in school. | Bringing local business people into the school to help all students learn more about jobs and careers. | Talking with teachers or parents about personal problems that students are unable to solve on their own. |
| Counselor/ Coordinator | Providing all students with a safe place to talk about problems with academics. | Assisting all students in choosing college or career paths that are right for them. | Providing all students with a safe place to talk about personal/social problems. Example: fights with parents and/or friends. |
| Data Utilizer | Gathering information on student academic progress to make sure that all students are selecting challenging classes. | Gathering information on students who need after school jobs and finding ways to get these students part-time work. | Gathering information on all students who are having personal problems to make sure they get the help they need. |

Appendix D

TABLE 1

Means and Standard Deviations of Students' Ratings of School Counselor Functions Categorized by Role

| (n = 220) | | M | SD |
|--|--|------------|------------|
| Leader | | | |
| Q16 | Starting new programs to help all students do better in school. | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| Q14 | Starting new programs to help all students obtain knowledge about college or careers. | 3.8 | 1.1 |
| Q4 | Starting new programs to help all students with any personal problems that can interfere with doing well in school. | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| Overall Mean for Leader Role | | 3.6 | 1.1 |
| Advocate | | | |
| Q10 | Encouraging all students to select classes that will challenge them. | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| Q9 | Helping all students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers. | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| Q3 | Bringing specialists from the community into the school to help students who are having personal problems that interfere with their school work. | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| Overall Mean for Advocate Role | | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| Collaborator | | | |
| Q12 | Working with teachers, principals, and parents to help all students do well in school. | 3.6 | 1.1 |
| Q2 | Bringing local business people into the school to help all students learn more about jobs and careers. | 3.3 | 1.1 |
| Q17 | Talking with teachers or parents about personal problems that students are unable to solve on their own. | 3.4 | 1.2 |
| Overall Mean for Collaborator Role | | 3.5 | 1.2 |
| Counselor/Coordinator | | | |
| Q8 | Providing all students with a safe place to talk about problems with academics. | 3.7 | 1.2 |
| Q13 | Assisting all students in choosing college or career paths that are right for them. | 4.0 | 1.1 |
| Q11 | Providing all students with a safe place to talk about personal/social problems. | 3.7 | 1.2 |
| Overall Mean for Counselor/Coordinator Role | | 3.8 | 1.2 |

| | | | |
|--|--|------------|------------|
| Data Utilizer | | | |
| Q1 | Gathering information on student academic progress to make sure that all students are selecting challenging classes. | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| Q18 | Gathering information on students who need after school jobs and finding ways to get these students part-time work. | 3.4 | 1.2 |
| Q5 | Gathering information on all students who are having personal problems to make sure they get the help they need. | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| Overall Mean for Data Utilizer Role | | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| Manager | | | |
| Q6 | Assisting in maintaining order in the school through disciplinary intervention. | 3.0 | 1.2 |
| Q7 | Assisting in registration and scheduling. | 4.0 | 1.1 |
| Q15 | Assisting in special education services. | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| Q19 | Administering achievement tests. | 2.8 | 1.2 |
| Q20 | Maintaining school records and files. | 3.9 | 1.2 |
| Overall Mean for Manager | | 3.4 | 1.2 |

TABLE 2

Means and Standard Deviations of Ninth Grade Students' Ratings of School Counselor Functions Categorized by Role

| (n = 72) | M | SD |
|--|------------|------------|
| Leader | | |
| Q16 Starting new programs to help all students do better in school. | 3.4 | 1.0 |
| Q14 Starting new programs to help all students obtain knowledge about college or careers. | 3.7 | 1.1 |
| Q4 Starting new programs to help all students with any personal problems that can interfere with doing well in school. | 3.4 | 1.2 |
| Overall Mean for Leader Role | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| Advocate | | |
| Q10 Encouraging all students to select classes that will challenge them. | 3.3 | 1.1 |
| Q9 Helping all students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers. | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| Q3 Bringing specialists from the community into the school to help students who are having personal problems that interfere with their school work. | 3.5 | 1.0 |
| Overall Mean for Advocate Role | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| Collaborator | | |
| Q12 Working with teachers, principals, and parents to help all students do well in school. | 3.6 | 1.1 |
| Q2 Bringing local business people into the school to help all students learn more about jobs and careers. | 3.3 | 1.2 |
| Q17 Talking with teachers or parents about personal problems that students are unable to solve on their own. | 3.3 | 1.2 |
| Overall Mean for Collaborator Role | 3.4 | 1.2 |
| Counselor/Coordinator | | |
| Q8 Providing all students with a safe place to talk about problems with academics. | 3.7 | 1.2 |
| Q13 Assisting all students in choosing college or career paths that are right for them. | 3.9 | 1.3 |
| Q11 Providing all students with a safe place to talk about personal/social problems. | 3.6 | 1.2 |
| Overall Mean for Counselor/Coordinator Role | 3.7 | 1.2 |

| | | | |
|--|--|------------|------------|
| Data Utilizer | | | |
| Q1 | Gathering information on student academic progress to make sure that all students are selecting challenging classes. | 3.2 | 1.1 |
| Q18 | Gathering information on students who need after school jobs and finding ways to get these students part-time work. | 3.4 | 1.2 |
| Q5 | Gathering information on all students who are having personal problems to make sure they get the help they need. | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| Overall Mean for Data Utilizer Role | | 3.3 | 1.1 |
| Manager | | | |
| Q6 | Assisting in maintaining order in the school through disciplinary intervention. | 3.0 | 1.2 |
| Q7 | Assisting in registration and scheduling. | 3.8 | 1.2 |
| Q15 | Assisting in special education services. | 3.3 | 1.2 |
| Q19 | Administering achievement tests. | 2.8 | 1.1 |
| Q20 | Maintaining school records and files. | 3.8 | 1.2 |
| Overall Mean for Manager | | 3.3 | 1.2 |

TABLE 3

Means and Standard Deviations of Tenth Grade Students' Ratings of School Counselor Functions Categorized by Role

| (n = 74) | | M | SD |
|------------|--|------------|------------|
| | Leader | | |
| Q16 | Starting new programs to help all students do better in school. | 3.7 | 1.2 |
| Q14 | Starting new programs to help all students obtain knowledge about college or careers. | 4.0 | 1.0 |
| Q4 | Starting new programs to help all students with any personal problems that can interfere with doing well in school. | 3.6 | 1.2 |
| | Overall Mean for Leader Role | 3.8 | 1.1 |
| | Advocate | | |
| Q10 | Encouraging all students to select classes that will challenge them. | 3.3 | 1.2 |
| Q9 | Helping all students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers. | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| Q3 | Bringing specialists from the community into the school to help students who are having personal problems that interfere with their school work. | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| | Overall Mean for Advocate Role | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| | Collaborator | | |
| Q12 | Working with teachers, principals, and parents to help all students do well in school. | 3.8 | 1.1 |
| Q2 | Bringing local business people into the school to help all students learn more about jobs and careers. | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| Q17 | Talking with teachers or parents about personal problems that students are unable to solve on their own. | 3.6 | 1.2 |
| | Overall Mean for Collaborator Role | 3.6 | 1.1 |
| | Counselor/Coordinator | | |
| Q8 | Providing all students with a safe place to talk about problems with academics. | 3.9 | 1.1 |
| Q13 | Assisting all students in choosing college or career paths that are right for them. | 4.2 | 1.1 |
| Q11 | Providing all students with a safe place to talk about personal/social problems. | 3.7 | 1.1 |
| | Overall Mean for Counselor/Coordinator Role | 3.9 | 1.1 |

| | | | |
|--|--|------------|------------|
| Data Utilizer | | | |
| Q1 | Gathering information on student academic progress to make sure that all students are selecting challenging classes. | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| Q18 | Gathering information on students who need after school jobs and finding ways to get these students part-time work. | 3.7 | 1.2 |
| Q5 | Gathering information on all students who are having personal problems to make sure they get the help they need. | 3.6 | 1.2 |
| Overall Mean for Data Utilizer Role | | 3.6 | 1.2 |
| Manager | | | |
| Q6 | Assisting in maintaining order in the school through disciplinary intervention. | 3.1 | 1.2 |
| Q7 | Assisting in registration and scheduling. | 4.0 | 1.1 |
| Q15 | Assisting in special education services. | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| Q19 | Administering achievement tests. | 3.0 | 1.3 |
| Q20 | Maintaining school records and files. | 4.0 | 1.2 |
| Overall Mean for Manager | | 3.5 | 1.2 |

TABLE 4

Means and Standard Deviations of Eleventh Grade Students' Ratings of School Counselor Functions Categorized by Role

| (n = 33) | | M | SD |
|--|--|------------|------------|
| Leader | | | |
| Q16 | Starting new programs to help all students do better in school. | 3.7 | 1.1 |
| Q14 | Starting new programs to help all students obtain knowledge about college or careers. | 3.8 | 1.1 |
| Q4 | Starting new programs to help all students with any personal problems that can interfere with doing well in school. | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| Overall Mean for Leader Role | | 3.6 | 1.1 |
| Advocate | | | |
| Q10 | Encouraging all students to select classes that will challenge them. | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| Q9 | Helping all students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers. | 3.5 | 1.0 |
| Q3 | Bringing specialists from the community into the school to help students who are having personal problems that interfere with their school work. | 3.3 | 1.1 |
| Overall Mean for Advocate Role | | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| Collaborator | | | |
| Q12 | Working with teachers, principals, and parents to help all students do well in school. | 3.3 | 1.5 |
| Q2 | Bringing local business people into the school to help all students learn more about jobs and careers. | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| Q17 | Talking with teachers or parents about personal problems that students are unable to solve on their own. | 3.5 | 1.2 |
| Overall Mean for Collaborator Role | | 3.4 | 1.2 |
| Counselor/Coordinator | | | |
| Q8 | Providing all students with a safe place to talk about problems with academics. | 3.6 | 1.2 |
| Q13 | Assisting all students in choosing college or career paths that are right for them. | 3.9 | 1.2 |
| Q11 | Providing all students with a safe place to talk about personal/social problems. | 3.6 | 1.3 |
| Overall Mean for Counselor/Coordinator Role | | 3.7 | 1.3 |

| | | | |
|--|--|------------|------------|
| Data Utilizer | | | |
| Q1 | Gathering information on student academic progress to make sure that all students are selecting challenging classes. | 3.3 | 1.1 |
| Q18 | Gathering information on students who need after school jobs and finding ways to get these students part-time work. | 3.7 | 1.1 |
| Q5 | Gathering information on all students who are having personal problems to make sure they get the help they need. | 3.5 | 1.2 |
| Overall Mean for Data Utilizer Role | | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| Manager | | | |
| Q6 | Assisting in maintaining order in the school through disciplinary intervention. | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| Q7 | Assisting in registration and scheduling. | 4.0 | 1.0 |
| Q15 | Assisting in special education services. | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| Q19 | Administering achievement tests. | 2.8 | 1.4 |
| Q20 | Maintaining school records and files. | 4.0 | 1.2 |
| Overall Mean for Manager | | 3.6 | 1.2 |

TABLE 5

Means and Standard Deviations of Twelfth Grade Students' Ratings of School Counselor Functions Categorized by Role

| (n = 41) | | M | SD |
|------------|--|------------|------------|
| | Leader | | |
| Q16 | Starting new programs to help all students do better in school. | 3.3 | 0.9 |
| Q14 | Starting new programs to help all students obtain knowledge about college or careers. | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| Q4 | Starting new programs to help all students with any personal problems that can interfere with doing well in school. | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| | Overall Mean for Leader Role | 3.4 | 1.0 |
| | Advocate | | |
| Q10 | Encouraging all students to select classes that will challenge them. | 3.6 | 1.1 |
| Q9 | Helping all students make contacts with local business people to develop their understanding of different careers. | 2.9 | 1.1 |
| Q3 | Bringing specialists from the community into the school to help students who are having personal problems that interfere with their school work. | 3.5 | 1.0 |
| | Overall Mean for Advocate Role | 3.3 | 1.1 |
| | Collaborator | | |
| Q12 | Working with teachers, principals, and parents to help all students do well in school. | 3.5 | 1.0 |
| Q2 | Bringing local business people into the school to help all students learn more about jobs and careers. | 2.9 | 1.1 |
| Q17 | Talking with teachers or parents about personal problems that students are unable to solve on their own. | 3.3 | 1.1 |
| | Overall Mean for Collaborator Role | 3.3 | 1.1 |
| | Counselor/Coordinator | | |
| Q8 | Providing all students with a safe place to talk about problems with academics. | 3.7 | 1.2 |
| Q13 | Assisting all students in choosing college or career paths that are right for them. | 4.1 | 1.0 |
| Q11 | Providing all students with a safe place to talk about personal/social problems. | 3.6 | 1.2 |
| | Overall Mean for Counselor/Coordinator Role | 3.8 | 1.1 |

| | | | |
|--|--|------------|------------|
| Data Utilizer | | | |
| Q1 | Gathering information on student academic progress to make sure that all students are selecting challenging classes. | 3.6 | 0.8 |
| Q18 | Gathering information on students who need after school jobs and finding ways to get these students part-time work. | 3.0 | 1.1 |
| Q5 | Gathering information on all students who are having personal problems to make sure they get the help they need. | 3.3 | 1.2 |
| Overall Mean for Data Utilizer Role | | 3.3 | 1.1 |
| Manager | | | |
| Q6 | Assisting in maintaining order in the school through disciplinary intervention. | 2.6 | 1.1 |
| Q7 | Assisting in registration and scheduling. | 4.2 | 1.0 |
| Q15 | Assisting in special education services. | 3.0 | 0.9 |
| Q19 | Administering achievement tests. | 2.3 | 1.1 |
| Q20 | Maintaining school records and files. | 3.8 | 1.0 |
| Overall Mean for Manager | | 3.2 | 1.3 |

TABLE 6

ANOVA

| | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-----|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|------|
| Q1 | Between Groups | 4.056 | 3 | 1.352 | 1.214 | .306 |
| | Within Groups | 240.576 | 216 | 1.114 | | |
| | Total | 244.632 | 219 | | | |
| Q2 | Between Groups | 9.136 | 3 | 3.045 | 2.385 | .070 |
| | Within Groups | 275.846 | 216 | 1.277 | | |
| | Total | 284.982 | 219 | | | |
| Q3 | Between Groups | 1.445 | 3 | .482 | .410 | .746 |
| | Within Groups | 253.536 | 216 | 1.174 | | |
| | Total | 254.982 | 219 | | | |
| Q4 | Between Groups | 3.046 | 3 | 1.015 | .771 | .512 |
| | Within Groups | 284.611 | 216 | 1.318 | | |
| | Total | 287.658 | 219 | | | |
| Q5 | Between Groups | 3.695 | 3 | 1.232 | .933 | .426 |
| | Within Groups | 285.141 | 216 | 1.320 | | |
| | Total | 288.836 | 219 | | | |
| Q6 | Between Groups | 17.734 | 3 | 5.911 | *4.496 | .004 |
| | Within Groups | 283.975 | 216 | 1.315 | | |
| | Total | 301.709 | 219 | | | |
| Q7 | Between Groups | 5.197 | 3 | 1.732 | 1.393 | .246 |
| | Within Groups | 268.551 | 216 | 1.243 | | |
| | Total | 273.749 | 219 | | | |
| Q8 | Between Groups | 2.486 | 3 | .829 | .606 | .612 |
| | Within Groups | 295.259 | 216 | 1.367 | | |
| | Total | 297.745 | 219 | | | |
| Q9 | Between Groups | 10.823 | 3 | 3.608 | *3.152 | .026 |
| | Within Groups | 247.227 | 216 | 1.145 | | |
| | Total | 258.050 | 219 | | | |
| Q10 | Between Groups | 1.986 | 3 | .662 | .530 | .662 |
| | Within Groups | 270.072 | 216 | 1.250 | | |
| | Total | 272.058 | 219 | | | |
| Q11 | Between Groups | .282 | 3 | 9.414E-02 | .069 | .976 |
| | Within Groups | 295.463 | 216 | 1.368 | | |
| | Total | 295.745 | 219 | | | |
| Q12 | Between Groups | 6.016 | 3 | 2.005 | 1.529 | .208 |
| | Within Groups | 283.224 | 216 | 1.311 | | |
| | Total | 289.240 | 219 | | | |
| Q13 | Between Groups | 5.440 | 3 | 1.813 | 1.397 | .245 |
| | Within Groups | 280.269 | 216 | 1.298 | | |
| | Total | 285.709 | 219 | | | |
| Q14 | Between Groups | 6.517 | 3 | 2.172 | 1.950 | .123 |
| | Within Groups | 240.683 | 216 | 1.114 | | |
| | Total | 247.200 | 219 | | | |
| Q15 | Between Groups | 7.253 | 3 | 2.418 | 2.104 | .101 |
| | Within Groups | 248.183 | 216 | 1.149 | | |
| | Total | 255.436 | 219 | | | |
| Q16 | Between Groups | 7.578 | 3 | 2.526 | 2.218 | .087 |
| | Within Groups | 245.980 | 216 | 1.139 | | |
| | Total | 253.558 | 219 | | | |
| Q17 | Between Groups | 5.024 | 3 | 1.675 | 1.239 | .296 |
| | Within Groups | 291.897 | 216 | 1.351 | | |
| | Total | 296.922 | 219 | | | |
| Q18 | Between Groups | 14.297 | 3 | 4.766 | *3.469 | .017 |
| | Within Groups | 296.743 | 216 | 1.374 | | |
| | Total | 311.040 | 219 | | | |
| Q19 | Between Groups | 12.521 | 3 | 4.174 | *2.748 | .044 |
| | Within Groups | 328.075 | 216 | 1.519 | | |
| | Total | 340.595 | 219 | | | |
| Q20 | Between Groups | 1.665 | 3 | .555 | .388 | .762 |
| | Within Groups | 308.931 | 216 | 1.430 | | |
| | Total | 310.595 | 219 | | | |

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

TABLE 7

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons for Questions that Presented Significant Results

Tukey HSD

| Question | Grade (I) | Grade (J) | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|------------|------|
| Q6 | 10 | 12 | .5742 | .2232 | .050 |
| Q6 | 11 | 12 | .9542 | .2682 | .002 |
| Q9 | 10 | 12 | .5976 | .2083 | .021 |
| Q18 | 10 | 12 | .6622 | .2282 | .019 |
| Q19 | 10 | 12 | .6856 | .2399 | .022 |

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