2015

School-Wide Factors in New York State High School Counseling Program Readiness

Dianah Cantres
Walden University

Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Dianah Cantres

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee
Dr. Thomas Russo, Committee Chairperson, Psychology Faculty
Dr. Donna Dimatteo-Gibson, Committee Member, Psychology Faculty
Dr. Vincent Fortunato, University Reviewer, Psychology Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
2015

Abstract

School-Wide Factors in New York State High School Counseling Program Readiness

by

Dianah Cantres

MA, Mercy College, 2005

MA, New York University, 1995

BA, Brooklyn College, 1984

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Psychology

Walden University

July 2015

Abstract

While current accountability regimes in U.S. public education focus on the job performance of individual school professionals, research in industrial/organizational psychology has established the importance of system-wide factors for organizational outcomes. The purpose of this study was to identify school-wide factors that predict guidance program readiness in New York State high schools. This nonexperimental, quantitative study was based on a survey sample of 97 guidance counselors in New York State. Multivariariate analyses of variance showed that two school-wide independent variables—urbanization of school location and counselor-student ratio—predict scores on guidance program readiness, measured using the American School Counselor Association Readiness Survey. This instrument assesses program readiness on seven subscales—community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staff/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources—and overall program readiness. Because prior research shows that this instrument predicts guidance program effectiveness, the findings of the present research have important implications for school reform debates. Specifically, it would appear that school-wide factors significantly influence guidance program outcomes, calling into question the adequacy of accountability systems based on the job performance of individual guidance counselors and other education professionals. This research contributes to a growing body of evidence in support of the whole system paradigm of school reform, which seeks to improve both individual and system outcomes through system transformation.

School-Wide Factors in New York State High School Counseling Program Readiness

by

Dianah Cantres

MA, Mercy College, 2005

MA, New York University, 1995

BA, Brooklyn College, 1984

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Psychology

Walden University

July 2015

Dedication

I would like to dedicate my dissertation to my parents (Laura P. Cantres and Ramiro Robert Cantres) who are responsible for the lady I am today. Mom and Dad, Thank you for the gift of my intelligence. They always instilled the significance of a higher education. Even though they are no longer here, they are always in my heart with the encouragement, support, and the everlasting inner and outer strengths they lovingly provided. I thank both them and God daily.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge a few individuals without whom I may not have been able to complete my lifelong journey, desire, and dream of obtaining a doctor of Philosophy degree in Organizational Psychology. First, I acknowledge the many blessings I have received from God, which has enabled me to live that continues to amaze me and make me thankful every day. Second, I would like to acknowledge a close friend, LaRochelle Daniels-Shuler, who encouraged me and introduced me to the Walden University Doctoral Program.

Most of all, I would like to acknowledge my family—my sisters (Elsie and Millie), brothers (Ramiro, Jr. and George), nieces (Adonica, Shaquana, Anisa, and Mayaelyse), and nephews (Edwin and Anthony Jr). Thank you all for your smiles, laughter, and humor. Daryll Bowen, I also thank you for your love, support, and patience. Also, a special thanks to you Lila Mendez. You are a good friend, supporter, and spiritual advisor. Ann Fisher, I also thank you for your advice and support. I give special acknowledgements to my friends, Dr. Brian D'Agostino and George Jacob. To my dissertation chairs and committee member, Dr. Marinus van Driel, Dr. Timothy Lionetti, Dr. William Brock and Dr. Thomas Russo, I would like to give special acknowledgement and thanks.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter 1: The Problem

Introduction

Data-based school reform driven by student test scores and other educational outcomes is currently being implemented in school districts throughout the United States (Hess, 2006; O'Day, Bitter and Gomez, 2011; Nichols and Berliner, 2007; Ravitch, 2010; Reeves, 2001). Much of this reform is based on the assumption that educational quality can be improved through a management paradigm that provides positive and negative performance incentives for individual education professionals (Hanushek and Hoxby, 2005a, 2005b). This way of thinking was the basis of Mayor Michael Bloomberg's public school reforms between 2003 and 2013 (O'Day, Bitter and Gomez, 2011; Ravitch et al, 2009), an especially relevant example given the New York State focus of this research.

This assumption is part of a more general management paradigm that views the accountability of individual employees as the primary determinant of organizational outcomes (Deming, 1994, 2000; Fullan, 2010; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). By contrast, much of the industrial/organizational psychology literature explains organizational performance as the outcome of a system of interacting factors over which individual employees have no control, a picture that will become apparent from the many studies discussed in Chapter 2. This management paradigm was first developed by W. Edwards Deming (1994, 2000) and applied to public school systems by Fullan (2010) and Hargreaves and Fullan (2012). This research study examines guidance programs in New York State high schools within this theoretical framework.

In the remainder of this chapter I will provide background on the topic of guidance program readiness; articulate my problem statement, purpose, and research hypotheses; outline the theoretical/conceptual framework and nature of this study; state my variable definitions, assumptions, and the scope and delimitations of the research; and discuss the limitations and significance of the study. The chapter concludes with a summary of these elements.

Background

High school counseling programs in America have been in a state of crisis since at least the 1990s (Johnson & Rochkind, 2010). A report issued by the Gates Foundation on high school counseling identified a high level of dissatisfaction among former high school students regarding the quality of their guidance, particularly in the area of college selection (Johnson & Rochkind, 2010). In this report, former high school students complained that their counselors hardly knew them and that they felt anonymous. These former students indicated that whatever guidance they received was routine and perfunctory. They also reported that their teachers were more helpful to them than guidance counselors. Other findings of the study indicated that students who received poor counseling were likely to delay or make poor choices about their futures. Griffin (2010) suggested that this lack of adequate guidance could be attributed to several factors: (a) extremely high caseloads, (b) inadequate training to deal with the needs of today's students, (c) the expansion of counselor roles, which leads to role diffusion and role overload, and (d) lack of adequate resources.

Since at least the 1990s, high school counselors in the United States today have been asked to redefine and expand their roles in order to support academic performance

for all students (American School Counselor Association, 2006). As a consequence of the 2001 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, high school counselors' roles were recast to place a greater emphasis on supporting students' academic achievement and deemphasize the mental health aspects of counselor responsibilities. Counselors are also now being asked to ground their practices on research in the professional literature of the field, develop data-driven practices, and evaluate their programs. According to Astramovich, Coker, and Hoskins (2005), a majority of counselors are unprepared to effectively evaluate their programs. In addition, with the expansion of guidance counselor roles, counselors are expected to act as student advocates, change agents, and bridges for developing community-wide social and health programs, all in addition to providing core guidance services (Amatea & Clark, 2005).

Improving the performance of public schools requires more than improved performance of individual educators, counselors, and administrators. The whole of a system is not merely the sum of its parts (Deming, 1994, 2000; Fulan, 2010). Improving system performance requires attention to myriad interacting school-wide and district-wide factors; quality guidance programs also cannot be sustained with inadequate resources. High school counselors in urban school districts are faced with caseloads that prevent them from adequately serving their clients, and this problem is getting worse in the current climate of fiscal austerity. The New York State budget for Fiscal Year 2012 was reduced to cover a $10 billion deficit (McNichol, Oliff, & Johnson, 2011); one of the chief areas in which these cuts were made was education. As a result, the number of counselors in New York public schools was reduced and cuts made to the resources

available to counselors to work with their students, bilingual and ESL programs, and other activities.

Many districts and schools in New York and other states have failed to develop adequate programs and resources in line with requirements specified by the American School Counselors Association in 2003 (American School Counselor Association, 2003). Many counselors view their job as impossible to fulfill given the constraints of high caseloads, lack of resources, indifferent administrators, poor program structures, and a highly negative public image (Griffin, 2010). These factors have led to high levels of burnout and turnover (Culbreth, Scarborough, Banks-Johnson, & Solomon, 2005).

New York State is a microcosm of the country (US Census Bureau, 2011). It is the third-most populated state, behind California and Texas. In the 2010 US census, the state contained 19.4 million people. It has the largest city in the United States, namely New York City. In addition, it has a large suburban population that ranges from extremely wealthy, as in Westchester County and the North Shore of Long Island, to impoverished areas, such as Long Beach and Freeport, on the South Shore of Long Island. It has urban ghettos and barrios, wealthy exurban communities, and postindustrial declining cities such as Rochester. It also has vast rural areas that are sparsely populated and impoverished, as well as reservations for Native American tribes. This diversity makes New York State to a large extent a microcosm of the country, suggesting that this research has relevance beyond the local population surveyed.

New York State faces the same national climate of austerity as other states. Compared with the rest of the country, however, New York has one of the greatest funding disparities between affluent suburban and inner-city school districts (Adler

2010). The wealthiest 10% of school districts in New York spend nearly twice as much expenditure per student as those the poorest 10% (New York State Department of Education, 2011). New York also has some of the wealthiest and also some of the most impoverished school districts in the country. Because of its diversity in urbanization, wealth, ethnicity, and school district size, the state of New York provides an ideal testing ground to examine issues related to the quality of high school guidance programs.

To better understand the counseling crisis in America and New York, it is necessary to put the above realities into a broader historical context. Educational guidance and counseling in the United States began at the turn of the 20th century with the rise of the vocational education movement, which was part of the progressive education movement (Gysbers & Henderson, 2001). It was at this juncture that high schools started becoming mass institutions rather than college preparatory schools for privileged young people (Hine, 1999). The first vocational guidance counselors in the United States were teachers who took on the duties of guiding nonpreparatory students into appropriate vocational choices (Gysbers & Henderson, 2001; Schimmel, 2008). From the outset, school counselors were responsible for sorting students and tracking them into different levels in the labor force. In addition, they were responsible for dealing with marginal students who were in danger of failing, and working with them as well as their teachers and parents to become successful (Gysbers & Henderson, 2001; Schimmel, 2008).

In the 1950s and 1960s, increasing numbers and proportions of students in the United States attended college and psychological counseling became increasingly popular. As a result, high school counselors' roles expanded to include the college

application process and counseling for academic and personal problems (Schimmel, 2008). During the 1960s, the number of school counselors tripled in the U.S. and they began to be employed in elementary and middle schools as well as high schools. It was also during this time that school counseling became increasingly professionalized and that the standard state credential required for school counseling became a Master's degree in guidance and counseling (American School Counselor Association, 2006).

School counseling has gone through several metamorphoses, from a collection of informal teaching tasks to a separate profession, and from a specific function to a role with many demands (Gysbers & Henderson, 2001). However, its evolution has been highly problematic for counselors. In a landmark study by Cicourel and Kitsuse (1963), high school counselors were accused of using social class and racial criteria in assigning students to college prep and vocational programs. Though the counseling profession expanded during the 1960s, because of demographic trends, in the 1970s and 1980s school districts had to retrench and reduced their investment in counseling programs (Schimmel, 2008). Today, just as critics are demanding more accountability, administrators are managing budget cutbacks by assigning more and more administrative clerical work and other extraneous tasks to guidance counselors, preventing them from devoting sufficient time to their professional responsibilities. I am my colleagues in the profession experience this on a day to day basis, and some of the data in this research supports this picture.

Problem Statement

The research problem investigated for this study is a lack of identification of school-wide factors that impact program readiness in New York State high school

guidance programs. Identifying these factors is an important step in improving organizational outcomes in public education (Fullan, 2010; O'Day, Bitter and Gomez, 2011; Ravitch, 2010.) For example, New York City recently implemented a far-reaching program of school reform that aimed to improve system outcomes through an accountability system oriented to the job performance of individuals (O'Day, Bitter and Gomez, 2011). By contrast, the highly successful whole systems approach to school reform is consistent with industrial organizational psychology literature, but requires attention to organization-wide factors (in this case school-wide and district-wide) that impact organizational capacity and outcomes (Fullan, 2010).

This study employed a systems approach to investigate high school guidance programs in New York State. Using this theoretical framework, I collected and analyzed data on school-wide correlates of program readiness using the ASCA Readiness Survey. While much research has been done on guidance programs in New York State, this study was the first to use the ASCA Readiness Survey and to develop a research design informed by the principles of industrial organizational psychology and the whole systems management paradigm.

Purpose

This quantitative study was designed to estimate the impact of school-wide factors on high school guidance counseling programs in New York State. The dependent variable in this study was program readiness, as assessed using the dimensions of the ASCA National Model (2008); this instrument consists of seven subscales and produces an overall program readiness score. The independent variables in this study were degree of urbanization of school location, school size, and counselor-student ratio.

Research Question and Hypotheses

This study addresses the following research question and hypotheses.

RQ1: Do urbanization, school size, and counselor-student ratio predict program readiness? The dependent variable is measured by seven subscales—community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources—and overall program readiness.

$H1_0$: Urbanization has no statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

$H1_a$: Urbanization has a statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

$H2_0$: School size has no statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

$H2_a$: School size has a statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

$H3_0$: Counselor-student ratio has no statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

$H3_a$: Counselor-student ration has a statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

Theoretical/Conceptual Foundation

In this dissertation, I am concerned with two competing theories of school reform. One body of literature on school performance focuses on the contributions of individual teachers, guidance counselors and administrators to student educational outcomes (Hanushek and Hoxby, 2005a, 2005b; Hess, 2006; O'Day, Bitter & Gomez, 2011; Nichols and Berliner, 2007; Ravitch, 2010; Reeves, 2001). This management paradigm was adopted in New York City in 2003 and is being widely adopted in New York State and nationwide pursuant to No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top, and other federal and state accountability policies (Ravitch, 2010).

An alternative paradigm takes a systems approach to understanding organizations and focuses on system transformation as the path for improving both individual employee and overall organizational outcomes (Deming, 1982, 1994; Fullan, 2010; Hargreaves & Fullan 2012). Baggerly and Osborn (2006) found strong evidence that institutional factors beyond the control of individual school personnel are the primary determinant of guidance program performance. Another major external factor is the discrepancy in resources available to urban compared with affluent suburban school districts (Kozol, 1991, 2005; Adler, 2010).

Applying a systems perspective to high school guidance programs in New York State, I selected three school-wide factors—degree of urbanization of school location, size of school, and student-counselor ratio—as the independent variables for this study.

The remainder of this section addresses guidance program readiness, my dependent variable.

The ASCA Readiness Survey, the dependent variable in this study, was developed by the American School Counselors Association (ASCA), the premier association of school counselors, on the basis of nationwide research into the characteristics of program readiness (Carey, Dimmitt, Hatch, Lapan, & Whiston, 2008; Dimmitt & Carey, 2007). A number of researchers have produced assessment instruments so that school counseling programs can engage in program evaluations (Alaska State Department of Education and Early Development, 2001; Carey, Harrity, & Dimmitt, 2005; Lilley, 2008).

When researchers use the term "program readiness," they refer to a complex set of factors. Because children have different developmental needs in elementary, middle, and high school, counseling programs at those levels can have quite different goals. As noted by Dimmitt & Carey (2007), for example, counseling programs in middle school should help students with the difficult adjustment between childhood and adolescence, while high school counseling programs must focus on college selection, career, and work Although the criteria may vary, some characteristics of program readiness are found across the various school levels and the diversity of individual guidance program, and the ASCA sought to capture these broad characteristics in its Readiness Survey (see Appendix B). In this study, the focus is on high school counseling programs.

This study uses Borders' and Drury's (1992) criteria for the evaluation of effective school counseling programs, developed from an extensive review of the literature. They stated that school counseling programs should subscribe to four core principles:

1. It is a distinct and comprehensive program;
2. It is integrated into the larger educational program of the school with its own curriculum;
3. The services of the program are based upon theories and research on child and adolescent development; and
4. The program is equitable and serves the needs of all students.

According to these guidelines, counseling personnel should be professionally certified and have a minimum of a master's degree in guidance and counseling (Borders & Drury, 1992). A counseling program should have a head or a chair, depending upon its size, and be supervised by an individual who has specialized training in guidance and counseling. At the high school level, the ideal counselor to student ratio is 1:100, with a maximum of 1:300, because students need to have counselors who are available to them. Programs also need adequate facilities that include individual offices for counseling, rooms for small group counseling, and a reception area. Programs should provide a variety of interventions that involve direct service provision as well as indirect services, such as consultation and coordination.

School counselors should sponsor peer facilitation and counseling services (Borders & Drury, 1992). They are also responsible for helping the school provide an appropriate learning climate that emphasizes equity and respect for others. Programs are responsible for evaluating the quality of their services and improving service delivery. Programs should be operated within written policies; such policies should be in conformance to the ethical standards of the ASCA.

In 2003, the ASCA established the National Model for school counseling (American School Counselor Association, 2008). Noting that school counseling programs lack a consistent identity, they established four major characteristics of an adequately functioning guidance program: (a) foundation, (b) delivery system, (c) management system, and (d) accountability. The National Model changed the focus from the guidance counselor to the guidance program. These four characteristics will be enumerated below.

The program foundation consists of two aspects: (a) beliefs and philosophy and (b) a mission statement (American School Counselor Association, 2008). According to the National Model, all personnel involved in the program should come to a consensus about its guiding principles. These guiding principles should provide the basis for the development of a mission statement that aligns with the mission of the school district.

The delivery system has four aspects: (a) the guidance curriculum, (b) individual student planning, (c) responsive services, and (d) systems support (American School Counselor Association, 2008). The guidance curriculum should be systematic and integrated into the overall school curriculum. It should be directed at developing knowledge and skills to the appropriate developmental level. Individual student planning is directed toward helping students make informed and appropriate decisions about their futures. Responsive services deal with crisis management brought about by events in students' lives that may need consultation, referral, information, or peer mediation.

The management system consists of five dimensions: (a) agreements, (b) advisory council, (c) action plans, (d) use of time, and (e) use of calendars (American School Counselor Association, 2008). Agreements are negotiated with the administration at the beginning of each school year and should cover how the counseling program is organized

as well as what it should accomplish. An advisory group should be established to help facilitate and monitor the program. The advisory group should be made up of the critical stakeholders of the program, including students, parents, teachers, counselors, administrators, and community members.

Counseling programs should be data-driven; that is, decisions should be made on the basis of a careful analysis students' needs, achievement data, and other forms of related information. For each competency and result, an action plan should be developed that contains the competencies to be addressed, a description of the activity, data used to assess the competency, a timeline, a delegation of responsibilities, and an evaluation plan. The National Model mandates that 80% of the counselor's time should be spent in direct contact with students. The counselor should be protected from performing duties unrelated or tangentially related to counseling activities that take time away from student contact. Counselors should develop weekly calendars and post them so that people can remain informed of counseling activities.

The accountability component has three parts: (a) results reports, (b) school counselor performance standards, and (c) a program audit (American School Counselor Association, 2008). Results reports include process, perception, and results data. As part of the accountability system, they ensure that programs are carried out, are analyzed, and their effectiveness is assessed. Programs should have performance standards for school counselors on which they are assessed and evaluated. A program audit is used to evaluate the entire program in order to guide future action and improve results for students.

Because the ASCA has changed the direction of high school guidance and counseling programs, it is incumbent on individual programs, school districts, and states

to use those as well as other criteria, such as qualifications and training of counselors, in the evaluation of their programs. The literature has shown a deep dissatisfaction with counseling and guidance functions (Johnson & Rochkind, 2010; Nelson, Robles-Pina, & Nichter, 2008). In addition, because of conflicting demands made upon school counselors, they experience high levels of role conflict and role ambiguity (Culbreth, et al., 2005) and are susceptible to occupational burnout (Wachter, Clemens, & Lewis, 2008).

Although the National Model was promulgated almost 10 years ago, there has been little in the way of research that has evaluated programs in terms of their adhesion to the model. Nelson et al. (2008) uses the National Model as a criterion for evaluating gaps between role expectations and role performances of school counselors, while Kolodinsky, Draves, Schroder, Lindsey, and Zlatev (2009) did the same for job satisfaction. However, neither attempted to analyze issues related to program philosophy, services delivery, management, or accountability. Steen and Noguera (2010) advocated for the use of the National Model for the reduction of school counselor turnover, but no empirical study was conducted. Similarly, DePaul, Walsh, and Dam (2009) reported that the implementation of the National Model could help in the counseling of students about sexual orientation; again, they conducted no empirical research. The one study that used the National Model as a basis for empirical research was conducted by Lewis and Borunda (2006), who interviewed two counselors involved in the implementation of a program based upon it.

Nature of the Study

I selected a quantitative, nonexperimental research design suitable for assessing the association between school-wide independent variables and high school guidance program readiness. Data on the independent variables—degree of urbanization of school location, school size, and counselor-student ratio—were collected using a separate questionnaire. Program readiness was assessed using the seven subscales and overall readiness score of the ASCA Readiness Survey (American School Counselors Association, 2008).

Degree of urbanization of school location was assessed by a questionnaire item asking respondents to characterize their school as urban, suburban, or rural. Size of the school was assessed by a question regarding the number of students in the school, using six categories from 500 or fewer, up to 4000. And counselor-student ratio was assessed using four categories from "1 counsellor to less than 250 students" to "1 counsellor to 1000 students."

The dependent variables were the seven subscales of the ASCA Readiness Survey and an overall readiness score (American School Counselor Association, 2008). The subscales assess program readiness on the following dimensions: community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, and district resources.

The data consisted of surveys completed by a random sample of 97 active guidance counsellors in New York State. Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was the statistical model of choice, enabling statistical inference from categorical independent variables and multiple subscales of the dependent variable.

Definitions

The independent variables in this study have the following conceptual definitions. "Urbanization of school location" is a measure of socioeconomic characteristics associated with population density. Most urban and rural public schools serve communities that are poorer than those in suburbs. This translates into more academically needy students, such as the higher concentrations of English Language Learners in urban schools and of families with lower levels of educational attainment in rural schools, compared to suburbs. In addition, urban and rural schools on average have fewer resources per student due to the practice in the United States of funding public education largely out of local property taxes, which are higher in most suburbs than in inner city or rural school districts.

School size is a rough measure of degree of bureaucratization and the degree to which the culture of a school is impersonal. When former students say they felt anonymous to their guidance counsellors, to what extent is this the result of a general school culture that is impersonal and of a more bureaucratic organizational structure? Finally, counselor-student ratio is a measure of counselor workload and the extent to which counselors can provide individualized guidance.

Guidance readiness, the dependent variable, is a measure of preparedness of a program to meet the needs of its stakeholders. The seven subscales that assess program readiness are as follows. Community support is the degree to which the local school board, parents, teachers and students support the mission of the guidance program. Leadership is the extent to which the school principal, local district superintendent, and district's counseling leader are committed to and engaged with the school's guidance

program. Guidance curriculum is the extent to which the school counseling program operates from well-designed student learning objectives. Staffing/time use is a measure of how well staffed the program is and how much of the counselors' time is devoted to activities that benefit and develop students, as opposed to clerical tasks, crisis management, and other activities that divert counselors from their core mission. Counselor's beliefs and attitudes are the degree to which colleagues in the counseling program are subjectively disposed to meet high standards of program readiness. Counselor's skills measures the objective preparedness of colleagues to carry out the wide range tasks that comprise their job description. District resources measures the degree to which the school district provides information systems and other resources needed for program readiness. The eighth dependent variable, overall program readiness, is the sum of each respondent's scores on all seven of the above subscales.

Assumptions

This research assumes that the choice of "urban, suburban, and rural" for the urbanization of school location question corresponds to an underlying variable relevant to guidance program readiness. I believe this assumption is reasonable but could only be satisfied approximately given the complexity of urbanization. Because of urban sprawl, the boundaries between "urban" and "suburban" are necessarily somewhat arbitrary, although there is no reason to suspect measurement bias on this point.

A more serious problem is that "suburbs" vary significantly in their socioeconomic characteristics. Some, for example in the North Shore of Long Island and parts of Westchester County, are affluent communities whose well-resourced and high quality public schools make an important contribution to local property values. Others,

such as some communities in the South Shore of Long Island, have demographic characteristics similar to urban centers including high concentrations of poverty and racial and ethnic minorities. Nevertheless, the statistically significant association between urbanization and guidance program readiness suggests that the variable measured what it was intended to measure and the association would likely have been even stronger if more detailed information about the socioeconomic characteristics of school locations had been collected.

Scope and Delimitations

Regarding internal validity, the rationales for the variables chosen are as follows. Urbanization was chosen because urban and rural public school districts typically serve higher concentrations of academically disadvantaged students with fewer resources per-student than suburban school districts. This difference in resources and level of needs of the population served can be expected to have a major impact on program readiness. School size was chosen as an independent variable because small schools typically have more personal and less bureaucratic cultures than large schools, a factor likely to impact program readiness. Counselor-student ratio was chosen because there would appear to be a clear causal relationship between counselor caseload and capacity of counselors to provide individualized guidance services, a key aspect of program readiness.

Regarding external validity, guidance programs in New York State are likely to be typical in some ways and atypical in others compared to guidance programs nationwide. All states operate under uniform federal accountability policies such as No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top, as well as federal mandates for special needs students and policies for allocating federal funds. On the other hand, state education

departments vary in significant respects in their accountability and other policies, as well as in their formulas for allocating state revenues to school districts. In addition, student and staff demographics and the organizational culture of schools due to such factors as unionization of school personnel also vary by state. These between-state differences limit the generalizability of my findings from New York to guidance programs nation-wide.

Limitations

The assumption of normal distribution for the variables in the study was violated for the data collected. I initially chose a regression model for data analysis, coded categorical variables as dummy variables, and attempted to address violation of the normality assumption using post-hoc tests. It was then suggested that multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) is better suited for data containing categorical and scale variables, and is less sensitive to violation of the normality assumption. This study employs MANOVA, which minimizes but does not eliminate the violation of normality of my data.

Significance

A clash between starkly different management paradigms is currently playing out in the arena of school reform in New York and the United States as a whole. On one side is an accountability paradigm based on the notion that positive and negative incentives based on the performance of individual employees is the best pathway to improved system performance. Value added assessment, for example, arises out of such thinking (Hanushek and Hoxby, 2005a, 2005b). This paradigm also guided Mayor Michael Bloomberg in his far reaching, eleven year overhaul of the New York City

public school system. To the extent that Bloomberg's experiment in school reform was a test of the individual accountability paradigm, the results have been at best mixed (O'Day, Bitter and Gomez, 2011) and at worst a major policy failure (Ravitch et al, 2009; Ravitch 2010).

Still, American public education is clearly in need of renewal and the guidance counseling profession can play an important role in that renewal. It can only do so, however, if guidance programs are understood and managed holistically as systems that operate within larger systems (Deming, 1982, 1994; Fullan, 2010), namely schools, school districts, and a national educational system shaped by federal and state policies (Deming, 1982, 1994; Fullan, 2010). A systems approach to school reform requires a different kind of research agenda, driven by the examination of system-wide factors and their interaction. My research aims to contribute to this agenda by examining school wide factors that impact guidance program readiness in New York State high schools.

Summary

The research problem for this study is to identify school-wide factors that impact program readiness in New York State high school guidance programs. This problem bears on current debates about how to improve organizational outcomes in public education (Fullan, 2010; O'Day, Bitter and Gomez, 2011; Ravitch, 2010.) The prevailing school reform paradigm assumes that negative and positive performance incentives for individual guidance counselors and other education professionals is the best pathway to improving organizational outcomes (Hanushek and Hoxby, 2005a, 2005b; Hess 2006; O'Day, Bitter and Gomez, 2011; Reeves, 2001).

By contrast, the highly successful systems approach to school reform, consistent with the literature of industrial organizational psychology, requires attention to organization-wide factors (in this case school-wide and district-wide) that impact organizational capacity and outcomes (Deming 1994, 2000; Fullan, 2010; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). In this study, I take a systems approach to high school guidance programs in New York State. Within this theoretical framework, I have collected and analyzed data on school-wide correlates of program readiness using the ASCA Readiness Survey, empirical research that has not been done previously.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Current school reform initiatives at all levels of government in the United States are based on the assumption that the performance of a public school is the sum of the performance of all the educators, counselors, and administrators who work in the system (Fullan, 2010; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Research in industrial organizational psychology suggests that individual performance is itself impacted by multiple, interacting system-wide factors, however. This quantitative study was designed to identify school-wide factors that impact the performance of school guidance counselors through the mediating factor of guidance program readiness, and collected data from a random sample of high school guidance counselors in New York State. The school-wide independent variables tested in the study model were urbanization of school location, school size, and counselor-student ratio. The dependent variable was program readiness, as assessed using the dimensions of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Readiness Survey (ASCA, 2008).

This literature review examines research on the system-wide factors that affect guidance counselor performance. It was specifically designed to examine theories and empirical findings about the performance of school guidance counselors in the broader theoretical context of organizational systems. After presenting my literature search strategy, I discuss the theoretical foundation of this study, followed by case studies that illustrate how the relevant organizational factors play out in specific guidance programs.

Literature Search Strategy

This literature review was conducted using the following EBSCO databases: Academic Search Premier, MasterFILE Premier, ERIC, Communication & Mass Media Complete, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, PsycINFO, and PsycArticles. Keywords such as school reform, public school accountability, whole system reform, industrial organizational psychology, job satisfaction, job fit, turnover intentions, proactive behavior, organizational commitment, high school counselors, counseling, academic counseling, and career counseling were utilized. Selected books and articles generated by this search are discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

Theoretical Foundation

The prevailing school reform paradigm in the United States is based on the introduction into public education of market-type incentive systems based on student test data (Adler, 2010; D'Agostino, 2012; Fullan, 2010; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Hanushek & Hoxby, 2005a, 2005b; Hess, 2006; O'Day et al, 2011; Nichols and Berliner, 2007; Ravitch, 2010; Reeves, 2001). This management paradigm was implemented in New York City between 2003 and 2013 (O'Day, Bitter, & Gomez, 2011; Ravitch et al, 2009) and is being adopted in school districts across the country pursuant to federal and state school reform policies associated with No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top. It utilizes student test score driven accountability systems such as value added assessment (Hanushek and Hoxby 2005a, 2005b).

Research in industrial-organizational psychology indicates the limits of this individual-accountability paradigm and the need for a whole systems approach to understanding and reforming public education (Fullan, 2010). Baggerly and Osborn

(2006) found strong evidence that institutional factors beyond the control of individual school personnel are the primary determinant of guidance program performance. Other external factors affecting performance include the discrepancy in resources available to urban compared with suburban school districts (Adler, 2010; Kozol, 1991, 2005). In this chapter, I review literature on these competing theories about the relative importance for organizational performance of individual accountability vs. institutional and other external factors beyond the control of individual workers.

One symptom of poorly designed organizational systems and inadequate resources is a high level of burnout and turnover among individual workers. I review below research from industrial organizational psychology on this topic and then explore its relevance for school guidance programs. I review the various tasks of high school counselors, including academic counseling, college and career counseling, and personal, emotional, and behavioral counseling.

According to the individual accountability paradigm, counselors need to meet this ever-expanding set of expectations by taking a more proactive role in improving student achievement. I review the proactive worker literature for organizations generally and school guidance programs specifically (Aluede & Egbochuku, 2005; Amatea & Clark, 2005; Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007; Burrow-Sanchez & Lopez, 2009; Chimes & Gordon, 2008; Cross & Burney, 2005; Deemer & Ostrowski, 2010; Dodson, 2009; Farmer-Hinton & Adams, 2006; Holcomb-McCoy, 2010; Bryant & Milsom, 2005; Mitkos & Bragg, 2008; Rapp, 2005; Ryan, 2007; Steen & Noguera, 2010; Tatar & Bekerman, 2009; Wagner & James, 2006; Ware & Galassi, 2006). These studies

document the nature and origins of the gap between stakeholder expectations regarding school guidance programs and organizational outcomes.

Increased caseloads degrade the quality of counseling at the high school level (Blackburn, 2010). One study found that in large public high schools, counselors spend only 10% of their time counseling students. The American School Counselor Association (2009) has established a ratio of 250 students for every one counselor as the required ratio, while actual ratios of 450:1 or even 1,000:1 are the norm in many urban school districts. It is therefore not surprising that students who went through under-staffed college admission processes have reported the need to fall back on their own resources in order to get through the process.

The Gates Report, a 2009 survey undertaken by the Gates Foundation, found that most students starting college had found their high school counselor's advice to be "impersonal or perfunctory," and older personnel remembered their counselors as just seeing them as a "face in the crowd" (Blackburn, 2010, p. 24). Some counselors have acknowledged that they have become the weak link between struggling students and high school completion, but attributed this to budget cuts and being diverted from working with individual students in order to complete tasks that are extraneous to their core guidance mission.

The Gates Report was entitled "Can I get a little advice here?" and was administered to 600 adults up through the age of 30, asking them to review their high school counselors' performances in terms of helpfulness (Griffin, 2010, p. 80). Summarizing part of this report, Griffin (2010) writes:

> *When asked to evaluate their counselor's efficacy in helping find the right college, manage the application process, research scholarships and financial aid, and develop career awareness, most respondents gave their high school counselor a poor or fair rating. The most disappointing finding in the report was that nearly 50 percent of students said that, in relation to their experience with their school counselor, they felt like just another face in the crowd.*

Griffin (2010) noted that these results do not correspond to his impression that high school counselors are hard-working, dedicated professionals.

The gap between counselor dedication and student evaluation of the process is likely linked to high caseloads that limit the amount of face-to-face time they can give to individual students. Griffin (2010) also noted that school counselors are given too many duties to do easily, including completing college application forms, managing transcripts, responding to grading and discipline issues, and more. Griffin (2010) also argued that counseling training is most likely inadequate for counselors to provide adequate services to their students. Finally, Griffin (2010) suspected that in many cases the counselor is made into the scapegoat of horror stories about the college application process, a problem undoubtedly reinforced by the negative portrayal of counselors in popular culture as complacent bureaucrats. This, too, Griffin (2010) attributed to inadequacy of systemic resources to fully support counselors in their work.

Many students, reviewing their experience in guidance counseling with regard to college admissions, have stated that their guidance counseling was fixated on grades and matching grades to colleges, and little else. In one study, most stated that meetings were impersonal and perfunctory, and not helpful (Johnson, Rochkind, & Ott, 2010). Johnson et al. (2010) pointed out, however, that the Gates Report indicated that most students had at least one high school advocate encouraging them to attend college, and that all but 3%

of the surveyed schools had some sort of guidance counseling procedure in place. Nonetheless, 67% of students gave guidance counselors a fair review, while 33% gave them poor reviews and 33% stated that guidance counselors did not provide students with enough information to help them apply for funding for college (Griffin 2010). Johnson et al. (2010) argued that institutional as opposed to professional factors are the likely cause of these outcomes, given that counselors are saddled with high caseloads, bureaucratic responsibilities that have increasingly reduced the time they spend advising students, and a general climate where public schools "seem to assume that counselors can juggle a whole roster of duties and still effectively assist hundreds of students in planning their future" (p. 76).

To redress this issue, Johnson et al. (2010) argued that schools must first address the two-tiered college application system wherein qualified students are given all the help they need and students with less competitive grades are shunted, with minimal advice, to lesser institutions, and mostly on the basis of whether or not they can pay for college. Improving student-counselor ratios is most likely the best and fastest way to improve the overall quality of guidance in this area.

Insofar as research has shown that most advisory programs offered by school counselors do not include instruction on getting through the financial aid system and other aspects of the college admission process, these areas could be improved as well. Whether or not school counselors should become more specialized, focusing solely on college admissions is still another question that the profession must ask itself, especially in light of the accountability demands placed upon the counseling job.

Today, according to Fitch and Marshall, “School counselors are being challenged to redefine their role to better support the overall academic performance of students.” (Fitch and Marshall, 2004, abstract). This new emphasis is based on the American School Counseling Association role statement, which emphasized the fact that school counselors are educators focused on coordinating school-wide efforts to improve the academic outcomes of all students. This can be done through individual or group counseling, consultation with all stakeholders involved, and coordination of counselor interventions with various additional services related to social and health problems. This means that school counseling at all levels has been drawn into the framework of individual accountability, and school counselors are as responsible for outcomes as teachers or administrators.

Given this challenge, Fitch and Marshall (2004) studied a best-case scenario of high school counseling at high-achieving schools. They examined the activities of counselors in 63 high-achieving schools in Kentucky, relating activities to student test scores. High-achieving schools were selected based on effective schools research, which has indicated that schools with autonomous school leadership, that recognize academic achievement, with strong professional and staff development, cultures of belongingness, parent and community support, and strong social system support perform better than schools without these traits. The results indicated that in high-achieving schools counselors spent more time than counselors in low-achieving schools on program management and coordination, and aligning their programs with professional standards.

Overall, it is apparent that school counselors at high-achieving schools, while continuing to undertake the essential tasks of counseling with regard to individual

students, had support that enabled them to attend to the assessment and evaluation aspects of their practice, creating a feedback loop which allowed for continued refinement and improvement of practice (Fitch & Marshall, 2004).

In addition to having to deal with the demographic and policy changes in secondary education today, school counselors are also being held accountable for student outcomes in new ways. As a result, in addition to doing their jobs, school counselors must demonstrate the impact and effectiveness of their counseling. This is primarily due to the effects of NCLB on all aspects of education. The NCLB accountability system entailed a shift from simply reporting on services provided to proving that the services resulted in positive change. Studies have shown a certain degree of resistance to evaluation of this nature by counselors, probably because their excessive caseloads and the inadequacy of training and other needed resources make it virtually impossible for them to achieve the results that policy-makers are demanding.

While training in evaluation methods does not address the sources of the problem, it can to some extent ameliorate the stress of the accountability process. Astramovich, Coker, and Hoskins (2005) described the degree to which the METHODS program evaluation training for 28 counselors in schools in the Southwest U.S. helped provide the necessary skills. The program provided not only a general orientation to the accountability system, but trained counselors in the specifics of utilizing data in program evaluation. A survey of participants found that over half had never received any program evaluation training previously, even though over two-thirds were well aware of the pressure on them to provide evaluation of their programs.

In assessing the usefulness of such evaluations, many expressed concern that quantitative measures would be used to evaluate a mainly qualitative art. Overall results showed that the idea that programs need to be evaluated remains problematic for most school counselors and that only through pre-service training will this resistance be overcome. The fact that under half of the counselors saw themselves as having an evaluative role in the school also indicated the degree to which their training has underprepared them for the accountability climate of NCLB. Thus, when it comes to program readiness evaluation, school counselors remained a work in progress.

In numerous ways, then, the job performance of school counselors is under attack. Due to the shifting nature of educational policy, it has also become difficult to assess the performance of high school counseling or to determine why high school counselors suffer from such a high attrition rate. To this end, factors derived from the industrial organizational psychology literature, ranging from job satisfaction to proactive behavior to organizational citizenship behavior to organizational commitment, may be helpful in determining the nature of the problems currently limiting the effectiveness of high school counseling.

Industrial Organizational Psychology and Job Performance, Job Fit, Role Congruence, Job Satistifaction, and Turnover Intention. Industrial organizational psychology has developed a number of constructs to explain job turnover through the mediation of job description, job fit, expectation matches, and role conflict and ambiguity. Dawley, Houghton, and Bucklew (2010), for example, examined the mediating role of job fit on the relationship between the employees' perception of supervisor support and perceived organizational support.

Perceived organizational support (POS) entails the degree to which an employee feels that the organization cares about them and values their contribution to the company. The research has also uncovered a number of antecedents to POS, including employee perception of organizational justice, the presence of office politics, the degree to which they are allowed to participate in decision-making, and the support of their direct supervisor. Good POS has been strongly related in the research to improved performance, job satisfaction, and reduced turnover. Job fit as a construct refers to the "perceptions of comfort or compatibility within the environment of the organization, while personal sacrifice entails the perceived material or psychological value of benefits that would be lost upon leaving a job" (Dawley et al., 2010, p. 240).

The study was rooted in social exchange theory, with an emphasis on the concept of reciprocity, which has been widely used in the organizational psychology literature to clarify the relationship between POS and turnover intentions. While the study was undertaken with a sample of manufacturing employees, the relevance of the constructs to school counseling is clear. The role of personal sacrifice by the employee as a mediator between perceived organizational support and turnover intention was also studied. The study found that perceived supervisor support is related to perceived organizational support, and that both relate directly to turnover intentions. Job fit, moreover, does mediate this relationship, as does personal sacrifice. The study therefore deepened the perception of perceived organizational support by uncovering additional mediating factors involved with the notion of job fit. Job fit, as expressed by a match between expectations and job reality, was therefore found to be an important construct in the organizational psychology literature on job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

Proactive Behavior. One of the constructs receiving a great deal of attention in industrial organizational psychology is worker proactive behavior. Proactive behavior emerges when workers initiate on the job "without the constant need for close supervision" (Belschak, Den Hartog, & Fay, 2010, p. 267). Given the fact that so much of the research on school counselors exhorts them to be more proactive in their leadership roles in schools, this construct clearly has relevance to the study. Part of a change in workplace values, valuing taking the initiative over passive acceptance of protocols or job descriptions, proactive behavior as a construct appears to be related to organizational citizenship behavior.

Proactive behavior, however, is more future or change-oriented, and entails self-starting and take-charge behaviors. These behaviors would include suggesting ideas for new improvements, self-started problem solving efforts, initiating a change process, building one's networks, and selling change ideas to superiors.

Proactive behavior as a construct has emerged as having three different foci: taking initiative, challenging the status quo, and taking charge of a process. Whether or not these foci have discriminant validity, or simply measure the same thing, remains an issue. Belschak et al. (2010) distinguished between organizational, interpersonal, and personal proactive behavior, associating the former with organizational commitment, the second to team, and the third to career commitment.

The degree to which these proactive behaviors are incited by the transformational leadership of a superior was also examined. They also brought into the equation the degree to which employee learning, performance proving, or performance avoiding goal orientation is related to proactive behaviors.

Over 2,500 employees of companies in the Netherlands were surveyed using appropriate scales. The results indicated that the foci of proactive behavior are distinguishable, and that different forms of proactive behavior may lead to different attitudes, with pro-social forms of proactive behavior most closely linked to team commitment, and self-focused or personal proactive behavior most often related to career. Insofar as a number of studies of school counseling stress the importance of counselors beginning to take more proactive approaches to their jobs, and taking initiatives in forging new alliances with other stakeholders to improve the relevance of their work, these kinds of measures derived from industrial organizational psychology are pertinent to the study.

While acknowledging that promoting proactive behavior among employees may make them go-getters, Bolino, Valcea, and Harvey (2010) also pointed out that proactive behavior at work can have its downside, with negative consequences for both the employee and the organization. Again, among the proactive behaviors encouraged by current developments in industrial organizational psychology are seeking feedback, demonstrating initiative, building networks, taking charge, helping others, expressing voice, and redefining one's work. While studies have repeatedly found that employees who engage in these behaviors are more likely to become integrated into their organizations, improving their effectiveness as well as their commitment to the organization, too much proactive behavior can become harmful. For example, seeking feedback is advantageous if one happens to be performing well, but can damage one's career if at present one is underperforming.

Proactive behaving employees have also been found to experience more stress and role-overload at work, resulting in turnover. Bolino et al. (2010) articulated the negative side of proactive behavior by distinguishing it from organizational citizenship behavior, which appears to be more encompassing, and includes passive as well as active behavior.

Because proactive behavior is particularly rooted in personality, a proactive person can come to be identified by a supervisor as "overzealous, impulsive, cavalier, or even volatile," as well as engaging in unflattering behavior such as ingratiation, insubordination, trouble making, or other derogatory behavior (Bolino et al., 2010, p. 328). Proactive behavior as a construct also runs counter to conservation of resource theory (COR), which argued that employees are generally motivated to obtain and protect resources, which can be any goal or object with instrumental or symbolic value. Any loss of COR leads to stress. This resource-based view of a firm sees it as a bundle of nonreplaceable and noninterchangeable resources, and resource dependency theory describes how organizations depend upon various resources, and need to manage them carefully to in order to succeed.

Proactive behavior, through what is termed as the initiative paradox, where organizations encouraging initiative nonetheless punish employees for initiatives considered misguided, may disturb the careful equilibrium by which resources are maintained and protected. On a personal level, the degree to which employees spend too much of their resources in proactive behavior will lead to stress, both for themselves and for other employees less inclined to participate in proactive behavior. It may do this not only by infringing upon the resources of passive employees but by encouraging proactive

behavior by employees who lack the resources to behave in such a way, resulting in the expedience of unethical, self-serving, or other harmful behavior. Overall, then, Bolino et al.'s (2010) research cautioned against an overzealous support of proactive behavior for its own sake, insofar as most workplaces continue to be dominated by a concern for preserving resources.

De Stobbeleir, Ashford, and de Luque (2010) explored yet another downside of proactive behavior, namely how other stakeholders can develop negative evaluations of the feedback-seeking behavior under the proactivity rubric. The problem was examined in the context of managerial review of employee performance histories, measuring manager response to employee feedback-seeking behavior. The study was based on attribution theory, which examined how people construct subjective evaluations of either discretionary or prescribed behavior, or implicit person theory, which states that managers generally rate employees according to expectations of types.

The research also indicates that managers generally distinguish between feedback-seeking behaviors that are motivated by performance enhancement and feedback-motivated behaviors by impression management, taking a more positive view of the former versus the latter. The theory has also found that managers tend to view feedback seeking more negatively among employees with a history of average performance, as opposed to employees with a history of superior performance, regardless of the actual nature of the feedback requested, with the research explaining this by means of a performance history that forms a halo effect.

Three hundred nineteen MBA former students from an MBA program at a southwestern USA university were surveyed online with scales for each variable

constructed by the researchers (De Stobbeleir et al., 2010, p. 363). The results found that general attributes of a person, in this case the performance history, do serve as cues that shape the manager's evaluation of a proactive behavior such as feedback seeking. While employees with positive performance histories interpret feedback seeking positively, it is evaluated negatively in persons with average performance histories. Thus, "feedback requests in the face of a history of weak performance may lead managers to question the value of asking for feedback, because the behavior does not improve performance" and may actually cause the manager to view the feedback-seeking employee even less favorably than if he or she had not sought feedback. In sum, while proactive behavior is generally supported by the organizational psychology research, a number of studies find negative side effects of the behavior.

Industrial Organizational Psychology and School Counselors. Baggerly and Osborn (2006) investigated the degree to which school counselors expressed career satisfaction and commitment to their work, and 1,280 school counselors in Florida were surveyed. The study was based on organizational psychology studies, which have strongly linked job satisfaction and commitment to the employer and to the work. This research has also linked job satisfaction with extrinsic job factors, supervision variables, higher productivity, and supervisory leadership styles. At present, the ASCA has outlined the duties of school counselors as counseling students, presenting guidance lessons, consulting with teachers and principals over student programs, and designing individual student academic programs for at-risk students.

It was not the job of counselors, according to their guidelines, to register students, administer achievement tests, do clerical record-keeping, or to discipline students.

Studies based on the construct of duties, using this model, have found that when counselors are able to concentrate on appropriate duties, student outcomes improve, while student outcomes decline and counselor job satisfaction deteriorates when they have to spend too much time on inappropriate duties. Studies have also found that school counselors at all levels are spending too much time on inappropriate duties. One study from Florida found that counselors are spending so much time administering achievement tests that they have little time left for their appropriate duties.

Self-efficacy is an important personal variable in this regard, as when counselors move outside of their comfort zone in terms of self-efficacy their job satisfaction rate drops. Studies have shown that, at present, school counselors' sense of self-efficacy is highest for classroom guidance, individual counseling, small group counseling, and consulting with teachers. Likewise, it falls off steeply with regard to coordinating SATs, disciplining students, and doing other miscellaneous school duties. Research on high school level school counselors has also reported a trend toward counselors becoming overly busy in general, with their duties spread around too many different activities, resulting in less satisfaction with most of the activities and the job of the counselor in general. The overall climate of role conflict and lack of clarity about their roles appeared then to be taking a toll on overall school counselor job satisfaction.

The study, using the Florida School Counselors Survey 2000, found that having appropriate duties, high self-efficacy, and positive district and peer supervision predicted positive career satisfaction and commitment, while stress resulting from being assigned inappropriate duties was a major reason for a negative evaluation of career satisfaction and commitment. Overall, then, appropriate counseling duties emerged as a critical factor

in determining school counselor job satisfaction, with counselors being assigned duties they deemed inappropriate being a major reason for dissatisfaction and lack of commitment. Nonetheless, 75% of counselors reported still wanting to continue their careers, though Baggerly and Osborn (2006) argued that schools still need to clarify roles and undertaken commitment interventions to improve this number. While the results confirm that when counselor duties are limited to those areas countenanced by the ASCA, counselors' self-efficacy and job satisfaction is highest, and any other duties are deemed inappropriate, resulting in job satisfaction.

The degree to which this finding makes room for the changes sweeping through schools as a result of accountability was not addressed, as it would seem to restrict counselors to more traditional roles and training. Insofar as Baggerly and Osborn (2006) foresaw more stress from being asked to expand their practice into other areas once deemed inappropriate, they recommended stress management training to help counselors adjust to the changing context of counseling, or even to combat the compassion fatigue that often sets in for counselors. The theory of Work Adjustment also provides an explanation for the fact that counselors feel their needs are met when they correspond to occupational re-enforcers, especially contact with supervisors. Thus, they recommended that "school counselors become proactive in developing strategies to obtain more supervision from peers and district supervisors" through various means (Baggerly & Osborn, 2006, p. 10).

Case Studies

Insofar as organizational psychology research argues that the job description of any position relates to turnover intentions through the mediation of various stakeholders

expectations and perceptions, the various dimensions of the high school counselor job, as outlined by the literature, as well as expectations and perceptions of various stakeholders with regard to those roles, are explored by many researchers (Aluede & Egbochuku, 2005; Amatea & Clark, 2005; Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007; Burrow-Sanchez & Lopez, 2009; Chimes & Gordon, 2008; Cross & Burney, 2005; Deemer & Ostrowski, 2010; Dodson, 2009; Farmer-Hinton & Adams, 2006; Holcomb-McCoy, 2010; Bryant & Milsom, 2005; Mitkos & Bragg, 2008; Rapp, 2005; Ryan, 2007; Steen & Noguera, 2010; Tatar & Bekerman, 2009; Wagner & James, 2006; Ware & Galassi, 2006).

General Job Description. Akos, Schuldt, and Waldendin (2009) examined problems with how school counselors were assigned to their posts, comparing high school with middle school practice. The study found that while middle school counselors were assigned according to grade level, high school counselors were assigned alphabetically. The study was based on the four-component mandate by the ASCA, which states that a comprehensive school counseling program should be characterized by certain traits in the foundation, delivery system, management system, and accountability component. Akos et al. (2009) noted that little research has focused on the role that the management system plays in ensuring counseling quality.

The management system involves the use of calendars, the use of data in planning, the role of advisory boards, and the interrelations between counselors and other stakeholders. It is up to the school's principal and counselors to work together to decide how counseling chores should be divvied up, and the degree of specialization involved in counseling assignments. Various schools have assigned counselors to students based on their grade level, alphabetical listing, standards domain, academy or pathway enrollment,

or combinations. Some studies have found that grade level assignment helps counselors focus on the planning needs of students in one grade, while others have found that counselors work best when they work with a range of students from different grades.

Akos et al. (2009) conducted a case study of 28 middle schools and 22 high schools to determine how school counselors are in fact assigned in the school, and their perception of the effectiveness, equity, and advantages or disadvantages of each different type of assignment. The School Counselor Assignment Questionnaire was utilized in the study. The study found that while grade level was the basis of assignment in middle school, alphabetical assignment was more common in high schools, involving looping or staying with students over time. Looping has been identified in the research as having advantages, including stability of care, increased understanding of students, and better relationships between all stakeholders. Studies have also found that parents and teachers perceive alphabetical-based looping as being more effective.

At the same time, grade level assignment has been found to find favor among a number of counselors, as it allows counselors greater possibilities in terms of helping students transition through the particular demands of each grade level. Overall, Akos et al. (2009) found that the school management of counseling in the studied high schools is uncertain and more work needs to be done to clarify which type of assignment system is most beneficial both to counseling practice and student outcomes.

Stakeholder perceptions of general job description. Amatea and Clark (2005) studied the perceptions of 26 school administrators, many from the secondary school level, about the roles and responsibilities of school counselors. The study was undertaken in the context of the changing nature of schooling, with a focus, for example, on schools

that learn reforms, on creating student-centered learning with input from all stakeholders. In this context, school counselor roles have expanded, with counselors now becoming not just guidance counselors but student advocates, change agents, and bridges for developing community-wide social and health programs.

In terms of reform, counselors have also been enlisted to eradicate tracking practices, develop college aspirations in students, and using data to assess the validity of various intervention programs. In spite of or perhaps because of these changes, the research has not had much to say about administrator perceptions of the school counselor role, a gap that Amatea and Clark (2005) sought to fill. The results found three different sets of values embedded in administrator perceptions, including primary work activities valued, extent of counselor-staff work role coordination, and type of specialized knowledge required. Only 12% of respondents felt that school counselors should take the lead in improving the overall pedagogy of the school and become actively engaged in staff development. Many more saw counselors as general go-betweens among staff and other stakeholders with a role in school change. School counselors were also given the responsibility of negotiating the ways in which the school responded to the increasing diversity of the student body. All expected school counselors to have a degree of specialized knowledge about social, psychological, and academic needs of students, as well as the appropriate interventions to undertake to address any problems experienced by students.

While these results demonstrated strong feelings about the changing nature of school counseling, they lack specifics. Overall, the results found that administrators had a somewhat fuzzy perception of the role of school counselors, and that role expectations

need to be more clearly defined. Too many high school administrators, possibly because of the tradition of compartmentalization of studies at the high school level, still tended to see counselors as involved in one-on-one counseling of students in trouble, working independently of others (a finding which suggested that more advanced school counseling practice may develop at the elementary school level first, then migrate upward). Amatea and Clark (2005) suggested developing counselor leadership programs as one way to do this.

Nelson et al. (2008) investigated the way guidance personnel in Texas felt deflected from their core professional responsibilities. The "School Counselor Activity Rating Scale" was administered to a population of suburban school counselors. The study was undertaken based on research which has increasingly found that school counselors are being asked to do too many jobs that have nothing to do with counseling, and that in daily practice counselors are losing sight of their overall purpose. This negative momentum at the workplace runs counter to the theoretical call for developing a more comprehensive counseling program, putting many counselors in a difficult position. The ASCA National Model was the benchmark for describing the new demands to be placed upon counselors by NCLB-based reform.

Studies have also found that, at present, there remains a performance gap between the roles outlined for counselors by ASCA and the actual roles being performed by school counselors on the job. This gap was the topic of the Nelson et al. (2008) study. The results found that, generally speaking, most counselors are reporting that they do much less actual counseling, consultation, curriculum, and coordination activities than they would like. At present, counselors complained that they are asked to do too many

ancillary or clerical tasks unrelated to counseling. This gap, according to job satisfaction theory, insofar as it creates a gap between expectations and practice, as well as a second gap between extrinsic and intrinsic job features, would appear to seriously compromise counselor job satisfaction.

Some variables, moreover, emerged. More experienced counselors tended also to do more face-to-face counseling, while younger counselors do much less. Hispanic counselors had also adopted a policy of preferring more face-to-face student advisement than Caucasian counselors. This difference was considered related to awareness that Hispanic students often need more counseling than mainstream students. Overall, however, Nelson et al. (2008) confirmed a general job description gap that would seriously undermine the job satisfaction of high school counselors.

The introduction of reform models of school counseling has resulted in changing perceptions and expectations of the school counselors' role. The recognized ASCA Model Program has outlined a new, broader job description for school counselors, responding to NCLB and involving counselors more deeply in accountability processes. The RAMP model calls for comprehensive, data-driven counseling. At the same time, whether or not institutional factors help or hinder school counselors in contributing to this process as prescribed remains an issue. The fact that as of 2006 only 10 high schools nationwide had received RAMP designation would appear to indicate the difficulty of implementing the model.

Dodson (2009) compared administrator perceptions of high school counselor roles in schools that had implemented the RAMP model and schools that had not implemented the model. The existence of a model without extensive implementation has caused some

confusion regarding expectations of the high school counselor's role. The ASCA model reinforces the notion that school counselors are educators, not mental health professionals, and that they serve all students. It also reinforces that they are not social workers and that they must advocate for academic and career advancement for all.

The Administrator Questionnaire was utilized to obtain responses from 60 administrators in RAMP and non-RAMP schools. The results showed that in both kinds of school, administrators had similar variability in perception of what are appropriate roles of guidance staff, but that administrators in RAMP schools had high expectations for counselor collaboration with teachers in curriculum guidance, discipline, management of study hall, and interpreting the data in student records. All administrators appeared to have absorbed the ASCA mandate that counselors are to work with all students, not just problem students. Dodson (2009) therefore demonstrated that the ASCA/RAMP framework has begun to change administrator perceptions and expectations of the roles of school counselors.

It is increasingly expected that school counselors have skills to make productive use of correlational data and regression analysis to better track student achievement growth over time, and monitor their progress. For this reason, Ware and Galassi (2006) demonstrated counselor use of Microsoft Excel to calculate with data the growth patterns of student academic achievement over time. The data used consisted of the correlation coefficient of student achievement, measured in end-of-grade scores, and sense of belonging in school. Ware and Galassi (2006) demonstrated how to develop regression lines for these data. The use of data was also helpful, it was argued, to alert counselors to ways in which they can reduce the ethnic achievement gap.

While consisting primarily of a how-to in the use of data by counselors, Ware and Galassi's (2006) tutorial in effect demonstrated the fact that, at present, most counselors do not make use of data or fail to use it productively to make decisions about interventions for at-risk students. Ware and Galassi (2006) proposed that data-driven counseling could be more effective in addressing the needs of all students.

Helping at-risk students through academic counseling. While school counselors have always assisted struggling students, since the passage of NCLB counselors have been thrust into the front lines of ensuring that no at-risk student is in fact left behind in terms of student outcomes. As a result, Amatea and West-Olatunji (2007) found that counselors are beginning to take a proactive leadership role in serving as a cultural broker between all of the stakeholders involved in a child's problems, partnering with the teaching staff to try to get them to develop more culturally responsive instruction and developing, in general, a more family-centric school environment in which parents play a role.

Amatea and West-Olatunji (2007) examined this emerging role in particular regard to counselors helping students from low-income backgrounds. The fact that these students generally have many more social and psychological issues than mainstream students brings counseling into other fields in their service. Also, in most low-income students at-risk students are often placed with new, inexperienced teachers, leaving counselors to pick up the slack and advocate on behalf of the needs of at-risk students.

Given the high turnover rate of teachers in low-income schools, counselors also can begin to take on a stabilizing role. How counselors work with low-income students has also been an understudied area of research, meaning that little is known about how

their duties and responsibilities extend around the student. Amatea and West-Olatunji (2007), in studying a group of such counselors, found that all had training in multicultural counseling, had mindsets attuned at all times to alternative courses of action, and were skilled in "block blaming, redirecting problem solving and managing a group problem-solving effort" (p. 3). As a result of these skills, counselors in many low-income schools have moved from simply providing crisis intervention after the problem has occurred to working with all stakeholders to keep students on track to success, avoiding problems along the way. They not only serve as a cultural bridge between teacher and student, they are also pedagogical partners with teachers, and are the central figures in bringing parents into school more often.

Blocking blaming was found by Amatea and West-Olatunji (2007) to be a particularly important skill in expediting all of these changes, insofar as teachers often implicitly blame parents for student failings, resulting, combined with previous negative experiences with the school system, in parents staying away. Amatea and West-Olatunji (2007) listed a variety of programs that counselors can undertake to assume a leadership role in all of these areas in low-income schools. As they discussed elementary and middle school, the degree to which a parent-centric approach to improving student outcomes will transfer to the high school level remains a question.

Steen and Noguera (2010) proposed changes to counseling that would directly involve counselors in meeting the needs of low-income or at-risk students by having them take charge of involving families in their children's education, partnering with others to provide enrichment education and collaboration with health agencies to improve children's health. The proposal is based on a growing awareness that at-risk students

experience a multilayered causality for their problems, and that a multicomponent approach must be developed in order to address their problems. This would also require school counselors to move away from a narrow focus on academic achievement and address social, familial, psychological, and behavioral issues, which contribute to at-risk student academic problems.

Steen and Noguera (2010) also argued that such a comprehensive or systemic approach would reduce counselor turnover by giving their jobs more meaning and creating an organizational climate that not only supports their services but where their job is a central linchpin of at-risk student help. The example of counseling in effective schools is cited as schools where counselors already take a central role in fostering and supporting at-risk students to improve outcomes. The expansion of the role proposed for counselors is again based on the ASCA National Model and its comprehensive vision of a revived school counseling that would involve counseling in educational reform, instead of leaving it in a marginal position.

The purpose of Steen and Noguera's (2010) commentary was to outline the specific ways in which counselors will expand their duties under a comprehensive model, addressing familial, social, and psychological as well as academic needs for at-risk students. Throughout their study the underlying emphasis on improving the self-efficacy and intrinsic value of counseling was apparent, all of its recreating the counselor job as one less likely to experience high rates of attrition.

Stakeholder perceptions of helping at-risk students. To the extent that school counseling is a face-to-face profession and involves interaction with a number of stakeholders, the views of stakeholders as to the competence and professionalism of

counselors appears to be particularly important in the study of school counseling. A number of variables emerge, with student, counselor, principal, teacher, and parental perceptions of counseling effectiveness being most important. Aluede and Egbochuku (2005) examined high school teachers' perceptions of and beliefs about school counseling practice at their schools, focusing upon the degree to which personal characteristics of teachers influenced their beliefs. The study was based on research which has found that teachers and counselors have mutual interests, with a majority of teachers believing that counselors should participate in teacher discussions and confer with teachers over professional issues.

Other studies have found that both counselors and teachers make use of classroom guidance activities to develop positive self-concepts in students. The idea that counseling programs cannot succeed without the support of the teachers in the schools has become axiomatic in the research. Other studies have found that teacher participation often either makes or breaks a school's counseling program. Where the role of the teacher ends and the counselor begins, in helping struggling students, remains a topic of debate. More progressive research has called for teamwork between the teacher and counselor in helping students.

The Teachers Beliefs about School Guidance and Counseling Programs Inventory was administered to 216 teachers at a secondary school in Nigeria. The results found that teacher beliefs and perceptions of school counseling are consistent without reference to demographics. Aluede and Egbochuku (2005) felt that these results might be unique to Nigeria, where the limited development of counseling programs means that every school is free to develop their own system of counseling, meaning that teachers were more likely

to favor them simply for existing. The study found, however, that the apparent support of all teachers for counselors was in fact based on the fact that most teachers felt that counselors did not have any unique role to play in school and were simply there to duplicate others' roles when case studies backed up. Thus, it was apparent that teachers' perceptions on the roles of counselors are dependent upon the degree to which the counseling program has been developed at a particular school.

In further exploring this issue, Aluede and Egbochuku (2009) later found that most teachers in secondary schools felt that the counseling programs in their schools made a positive contribution to instruction. They sent surveys, consisting of the Teachers Opinions about School Counseling Programs Inventory, to all the secondary level teachers in the Benin metropolis of Nigeria. At the same time, most teachers felt that provision of career information was the primary task of school counselors. This does not represent best practice, with counselors in the U.S., for example, at least perceiving that counselors also had important test administration and college placement duties, not to mention helping special needs or at-risk students. All of the research along this line still finds that, for many teachers, the role of the school counselor remains somewhat vague. With regard to whether or not counselors should reveal to teachers any perceptions provided them by students about teachers, the teachers did not want to hear about that information.

Overall, Aluede and Egbochuku (2009) found that teachers had a limited understanding of the role of school counselors and that a school-wide guidance policy needed to be created so that teachers appreciated more precisely the uniqueness of the role of school counseling. Outside of the U.S., moreover, it is still possible to find

teachers who believe that school counselors have no unique role to play in secondary schools. These findings were last found in the U.S. for example, back in 1990, when a survey at that time found that most teachers did not believe that school guidance programs made a positive contribution to the instructional program of the secondary school.

Ryan (2007) studied the perceptions of high school counselors as to whether or not what they do on the job can in fact raise student achievement levels, and what they needed to do in order to reach that end. The research is informed by advances in learning studies, which have found that both cognitive and emotional factors contribute to learning and must be taken into account in best practice teaching, particularly with the teaching of adolescents. Brain science further indicates the physiological importance of emotional needs as being understood for the brain. On the basis of these ideas, British school districts have published a new Counseling Support Strategy, outlining the values of best practice counseling.

In a survey of over 20 counselors in a British school district, Ryan (2007) found that most counselors felt that raising achievement levels in adolescents was a complex phenomenon made more complicated by the fact that their practice of working with the individuality of the student often put them at odds with the current pedagogical paradigms in local schools. While empathizing with teachers forced to teach to the test and measure student advances quantitatively, most counselors also reported that this kind of evaluation is not applicable to counseling, and that counseling itself may not have any positive short-term impact on quantitative results. Counselors were also reluctant to claim

any credit for demonstrated improvements as there, at present, is no mechanism in place to prove that the counselors were responsible for gains.

Most of the counselors reported being willing to move outside of the school to address all of the emotional needs holding some students back academically. All counselors felt that if they could improve the student's attendance rate that might be a measurable result that would indicate the degree to which they contributed to academic achievement gains. Counselors were also attuned to the fact that helping an adolescent improve themselves, in their search for an identity, was critical to student success. Overall, then, Ryan (2007) found that most counselors felt that they had contributed to student success but did so in a holistic manner that went beyond quantitative measures to explore all of the emotional, behavioral, societal, and family factors that were negatively influencing student achievement.

Tatar and Bekerman (2009) investigated the extent to which school counselor and teacher views of the issue of high school students' problems converged or diverged, based on their encounters with the students. A questionnaire was administered to 38 high school counselors and 38 homeroom teachers at a school in Israel in order to measure the results. The study was based on research that has found that most teachers blame families for learning problems in students, as opposed to teacher or institutional factors, while counselors tend to take a person-centered approach and believe that becoming more self-assertive and self-expressive can help students overcome such problems.

Both the teachers and counselors similarly identified the learning problems of the target students. Teachers, however, based their perceptions on direct observation, while counselors based their opinions on reports from teachers. Counselors tended to blame

student problems on the individuals themselves, whereas teachers were more likely to frame the problem in the context of a learning disability. As a result of the gap between viewpoints, Tatar and Bekerman (2009) recommended a collaboration in which counselors introduced social-emotional learning programs in classrooms. Play therapy was used for younger at-risk students, middle schools were restructured to focus on the educational experiences of marginalized students, and counselors worked to facilitate friendships between students who share disabilities. Most importantly, the results found that, by and large, counselors, in spite of a call for a more comprehensive counseling model, continue to attribute problems to the intra-psychological sphere, while teachers attribute problems to the interpsychological sphere. The fact that both teachers and counselors also saw talk as a solution stood at odds with comprehensive theory, which has found that problems beyond the immediate responsibility of the student must be addressed to resolve his or her learning difficulties (Tatar & Bekerman, 2009). With regard to counselor job satisfaction, it was suggested that more collaboration between teachers and counselors would reduce the limits of practice that currently inhibit the development of comprehensive counseling in the target schools.

College and career counseling. High school-level counselors are charged with helping students think about both attending and applying to college. Whether or not school counselors are performing all of the tasks required for a student to navigate the college admissions process has been questioned (see above). Bryan, Holcomb-McCoy, Moore-Thomas, and Day-Vines (2009) developed a profile of the student who was more likely to seek out the help of a school counselor in navigating the college admissions process. The study reviewed the Educational Longitudinal Study database developed by

the National Center for Education Statistics to determine whether or not all students are availing themselves of this service by school counselors. The results found that, generally, female African American students were more likely to seek help from counselors in applying to college, but that students from large low-income schools with fewer counselors were less likely to seek help. The results also indicated that some counselors had fewer postsecondary aspirations for students, resulting in fewer students coming to help them with the college admission process. These results confirmed more general studies, which have found vast disparity in the college-admission process participation of students.

Among low-income students, the lack of parental involvement means that these students above all others should seek school counselor help, and yet they do not do so. The research has also found that school counselor involvement in college admissions improves the odds of a successful outcome. These results have to be interpreted as indicating that, at present, school counselors are not being proactive enough in helping all students apply to college. Also, counselors need to speak directly to parents more about college aspirations, and themselves improving their own level of college aspirations for all students. As college admission counseling is one of the core jobs of the high school-level school counselor, the results of this study unfortunately suggest that a large number of school counselors are not doing their job. Bryan et al. (2009) warns that "school counselors must be mindful of the covert and overt messages that they send to students about their college readiness and abilities" and work to create school and counseling climates that encourage college aspirations (p. 12).

Chimes and Gordon (2008) compared official school counselors' versions of the value of mailings, school visits, and websites in the college application process. The official version provided by the counselor was deconstructed by the student who found many faults with many of the current practices of the college admission process. For example, while the counselor naturally recommended school visits as one of the best ways to determine if one wishes to attend school there, the student in the application process found that the tour was misguided, filled with misinformation, did not visit important places, and was generally not sufficient for him or her to make a decision.

Again, while the counselor found that college websites were adequate, the student felt that most websites were underutilized and confusing. Other areas of the process also demonstrated gaps between counselor and student perceptions. Overall, Chimes and Gordon (2008) concluded that "the ways in which students learn about colleges is a messy affair, full of miscommunication and misplaced efforts" (p. 30).

Cross and Burney (2005) described Project Aspire, a program implemented to help rural, poor, academically gifted middle and high school students prepare for college by organizing offerings of advanced placement courses at their schools, and training and preparing school counselors to work with students to improve their performance in the college admission process. The counselor training component of the program sought to enhance counselors' knowledge of Advanced Placement courses, help counselors help students deal with the stress of high academic expectations, develop the study and organization skills needed to succeed, and provide better career and academic counseling.

Conversations with 21 counselors working in 14 rural high schools were analyzed to determine the extent to which the training improved the overall performance of

counselors in the process. The results found that counselors had to be convinced that such students could handle Advanced Placement courses, with some feeling that there was no reason to offer this kind of course. Counselors also reported parental resistance to the rigors of the SAT and other college admission processes. Many counselors reported that they did not have enough time to do their jobs, in addition to adding on these new responsibilities. Many counselors seemed to hold views in accordance with the school culture's general attitude about student achievement. Others put more importance on grades than on course content, indicating that they were used to playing the system.

With regard to college, counselors reported that with rural poor students they essentially had to take the place of the students' parents and go out of their way to do all of the steps necessary to ensure an effective process was carried out. In general, the counselors agreed that "the most effective strategy included providing individual attention, pointing out specific opportunities, assuring the student that financial aid can be obtained, encouraging goal settings and assuring the student of the counselor's own high expectations" (Cross & Burney, 2005, p. 154).

In addition to college counseling, high school guidance counselors must be prepared to help graduates who wish to proceed immediately into the workplace, or pursue a specialized path of education. To do this, they also need to have some basic understanding of the labor availability or shortages in various industries. Rudel, Moulton, and Arneson (2009) studied the degree to which high school guidance counselors could work toward improving the pipeline of candidates in nursing by better understanding the nursing shortage and its implications for graduates. Rudel et al. (2009) focused in particular on the role of counselors in helping youth make the decision to become a nurse.

This entailed gaining a sense of what counselors know about the nursing profession, and if their professional wisdom was helpful or not in recruiting any students to nursing. At present, the research into this precise topic indicated that high school counselors have some, but not a great deal of influence in directing graduates into nursing. Graduating high school students in other studies reported having little sense of what nursing entailed, and the varieties of opportunities made possible by nursing. Thus, while those guidance counselors who raise the possibility of entering nursing tended to have positive views of the field, thus far it has been found that high school guidance counselors do not do much counseling directing students into nursing.

A survey was prepared and administrated to 52 guidance counselors, with results indicating that while counselors believed nurses enjoyed their jobs, they also experienced frustrations. They regarded parents and peers as having the most influence on this decision by graduates, and that generally counselors simply "do not have time to conduct career counseling to the extent they would prefer" (Rudel et al., 2009, p. 274). Overall, counselors expressed frustration at the limits placed upon their time by other duties, and as a result also expressed being frustrated with the relatively superficial nature of their career counseling practices. As a result, Rudel et al. (2009) concluded that, at present, high school students thinking of becoming nurses cannot rely on high school counselors for constructive advice on how to proceed to nursing and what nursing, in terms of all of its various opportunities, entails.

Stakeholder perceptions of counselor college admission counseling. Farmer-Hinton and Adams (2006) described a college-bound counseling program developed for African American students at a high school in the Midwest. The school counselors run

the program and take on a number of roles to ensure higher college admission rates among the students. Farmer-Hinton and Adams (2006) surveyed the counseling staff to determine how they provided the norms and resources that were required by the program, what they believed the strengths and weaknesses of the program were, and if the program resulted in improved outcomes. The study was theoretically grounded in social capital theory, entailing social connections that enable students to achieve success, often lacking in African American students. Counselors often devote more time to the college admission needs of African American students by way of compensating for lack of social capital derived from their parents and social connections. Research has shown that counselors can indeed compensate for lack of social capital among at-risk and disadvantaged students. The research was also based on new mandates that have reformulated the counselor's role as an institutional change agent responsible for creating a general school culture of college aspirations and expectations.

This is especially true in college preparatory schools. Studies have also shown that the degree to which counselors can fulfill these roles is often limited by factors of school size and resources. The counselors reported a wide range of duties, ranging from initial exhortation to convince students that college was possible, to arranging their college preparatory curriculum, to organizing college tours, and to helping students with the application process. The results also found that students benefited from this school-based social capital, with 61% of the graduating class accepted into colleges before graduation.

Given that a number of students will enter the college system through community colleges, Mitkos and Bragg (2008) felt it important to examine high school counselors'

views and perceptions of the idea of community college. Studies have found previously that counselors tend to concentrate on four-year colleges and often overlook opportunities available for students at community colleges, possibly because they do not value the level of academic standards upheld at community colleges. Some studies have suspected that school counselors in fact hold skewed perceptions of community colleges, though looking more deeply into the issue it has also been found that these negative perceptions may be indirect, that is, transmitted to them through denigrating commentary by other stakeholders.

For this reason, Mitkos and Bragg (2008) examined seven school counselors' perceptions of community colleges at one high school in the Midwest using a survey developed by the researchers. The results found that personal experience had a profound impact on counselor perceptions of community colleges, but that they also reported hearing a great deal of denigrating commentary about community colleges by colleagues in their school, including the faculty and the administration. The study also found that lack of advisement about attending community colleges as an option was also caused by the inconsistent counseling practice of the respondents.

With regard to those who did advise about community colleges, most saw them as a low cost alternative, and Mitkos and Bragg (2008) suggested that this emphasis on low cost may have inadvertently devalued the community college in students' minds. In terms of academic quality, most perceived community colleges as being a last resort college option, though some acknowledged that local community colleges had improved in this area. Overall, then, Mitkos and Bragg (2008) detected, with regard to this area of college advisement, several lacunae in current high school counselor practice.

Holcomb-McCoy (2010) surveyed 22 high school counselors concerning their activities related to further involving parents in the college readiness activities of students of color. The study was based on research that has linked parental involvement in the college admission process to positive outcomes, ranging from student grades to student aspirations to go to college. The research has also found that parents without college experience fare much less well in involving themselves in a process they do not understand, and therefore need guidance in how to help their children apply to college. For this reason, studies have also found that African American and Latino students often depend much more on school counselors for help in the application process, and, indeed, that school counselors provide these students with compensating degrees of social capital lacking in their parents' world.

At present, disseminating information about college and assisting students in applying to college is one of the leading roles of high school counselors. Holcomb-McCoy (2010) detailed the roles that counselors play in the college decision and application process. Utilizing data from research conducted by the College Board, they noted that counselors at five high schools from disadvantaged neighborhoods saw collaboration with parents in the college application process as part of their role but acknowledged not devoting adequate time to parent conferences. It merits investigation whether this was related to excessive case loads, a factor examined in this study through the counselor-student ratio variable.

In assessing counselors' explanations for why parents of color do not participate in the process, many suggested that they resisted the assimilationist premises of the process itself, and were put off by the assimilationist perspective of many counselors. As

a result of this, Holcomb-McCoy (2010) recommended applying a critical theory perspective to the practice of high school counselors in the college application process, to determine what aspects of the process itself work against the participation of parents of color.

Rapp (2005) studied whether or not 122 high school counselors had correct perceptions of the availability of merit scholarships from 18 universities in the Midwest. The study found that colleges rely on academic factors more than on extracurricular involvement in awarding merit scholarships. Research has found that the high school counselor is the most important source of information about such arcane matters as merit scholarships. In particular, they ranked GPA, ACT/SAT scores, and class rank as the three most important variables for offering merit scholarships, and extracurricular activities of secondary importance. High school counselors correctly perceived the importance of academic over extracurricular activities, but tended in practice to attribute more importance to nonacademic variables in the process, meaning that their practice was misaligned with the reality of merit scholarship granting procedures. A high degree of variability in personal practice of high school counseling led Rapp (2005) to call for a formal mechanism to provide accurate communication to students about the qualifications for merit scholarships.

Deemer and Ostrowski (2010) reviewed the perceptions of a population of high school students engaged in a graduation project administered by school counselors at their school. Some graduation projects are state-mandated as part of the NCLB initiative to link outcomes and going to college. The project described entailed students working with various stakeholders, from teachers to school counselors, to make sure that their

coursework was on track with college admission requirements. The study was theoretically rooted in educational psychology, combining motivational research with career development research.

The theory also emphasizes mastery goals, involving choice, autonomy, and collaboration. It is also important for students to meet proximal goals en route to completion of overall goals. Mastery goals, in this theory, are believed to be superior motivators to performance goals, which involve simply reaching basic benchmarks and have been linked to less favorable learning styles. Career development theory likewise has found that students will work harder when they are doing work that matters to them personally and has real-world value and consequences. Increasing this kind of relevance in learning has been linked to increased rates of postsecondary enrollment. Solution-focused group counseling has been found to be helpful in transferring student success in such learning experiences to their broader life goals.

The graduation project studied was built on this theoretical foundation. Students who participated in the project reported a high level of completion, and that the project generally encouraged them to explore college and career options. Students also reported receiving adequate support from counselors, but stressed that counselors should perhaps help them focus more on mastery goals. The focus group held by counselors did however provide them with a sense of belonging, which motivated them to continue. Overall, Deemer and Ostrowski (2010) found that counselors involved in a graduation project received acceptable grades in student evaluations.

It has been suggested that school counseling can be improved if counselors are allowed to work with nonschool mental health professionals in responding to the mental

health needs of certain special needs students (Brown, Dahlbeck, & Sparkman-Barnes, 2006). This idea is based on a change of paradigm which finds that more collaboration is needed if school counselors are going to be able to address the complicated in- and out-of-school needs of students. A number of programs forming such partnerships have already emerged in response to findings that less than one-third of students needing mental health service need the help they need.

To determine the degree to which such collaboration is viable, Brown et al. (2006) surveyed 53 counselors and administrators in middle and high school settings in the Midwest region of the U.S. as to their thoughts about this form of collaboration using the School Counselor Roles and Responsibilities Survey, a 25-item scale designed by the researchers. The respondents generally were concerned about the effect of collaboration on the definition of school counseling, favored the increased opportunity for dialog, had questions about procedures, and worried about turf wars. The results also found that administrators generally were more positive about such collaboration, while counselors themselves worried over time and caseload duties and whether or not they were properly trained for such interaction.

Nonetheless, school counselors tended to see themselves as already acting as mental health professionals in ways that have not yet become apparent to principals, possibly because principals do not fully comprehend the kind of training most school counselors were mandated to receive. The fact that most respondents were supportive of hiring nonschool mental health professionals to work alongside of school counselors indicated to Brown et al. (2006) a general growing awareness of the need to address mental health issues as a way of addressing academic failure issues. The fact that 75% of

respondents generally defined the school counselor as already involving some kind of mental health work further reinforced the perception that such a change would be an easy transition. Overall, then, both administrators and counselors, albeit with some definitional differences, acknowledge that the school counselor role is changing, in this case in ways that will entail collaboration with nonschool mental health professionals.

Herbert, Trusty, and Lorenz (2010) surveyed high school counselors regarding the quality of career consultation with students with disabilities. The study found that most of the time services are inconsistent and ineffective with career assessments and interventions lacking in best practice insofar as providing students with encouragement to develop self-efficacy and self-determination. Recent efforts to provide a more systemic approach, including involving the student more in the process, have also been developed by the research. In this context, school counselors focusing on rehabilitation have been mandated to participate in the IEP process, even though they often lack the skills to do so and have been found to lack the knowledge of the duties of other stakeholders to improve the process by their participation.

Herbert et al. (2010) surveyed 433 vocational rehabilitation counselors at the high school level to develop data on the particular skills and lack of skills involved in current practice. The results found that high school counselors are most responsible in most schools for providing career guidance to students with disabilities. The results also found that most counselors need additional training in relevant disability legislation with regard to their full range of duties. An array of assessment tools was discovered, and school counselors were also found to link up students to shadowing and on-the-job training as well as computer-assisted career guidance system use. Career portfolios and assistance

with job seeking skills are also considered. All of the counselors surveyed felt that the current counseling services provided to students with disabilities were useful, but that improvements could be made. More collaboration between all stakeholders was called for by over half of the respondents (Herbert et al., 2010).

Dealing with social, family, and mental health issues. School counselors at all levels are of course mandated reporters, mandated by law to report suspected child abuse. To determine the extent to which school counselors are in fact reporting child abuse, Bryant and Milsom (2005) surveyed a sample of school counselors in one Midwestern state using questionnaires. The focus was on their behavior and the factors that influenced their making a report, as well as their perceived barriers to reporting. The general results found that while most counselors felt that they had referred the majority of suspected abuse cases, high school counselors generally reported less abuse than elementary or middle school counselors.

Over 200 counselors were surveyed using sections of the School Counselor General Information, Training in Child Abuse Reporting, and Child Abuse Reporting Experience scales. The results found that school counselors individually report about four cases of child abuse per year, with higher percentages for low-income children in elementary schools. This meant that school counselors generally report more cases of child abuse than teachers do, most likely because they are in a position to suspect more cases of abuse due to their close relationship with children. Overall, most counselors reported most of the cases they suspected, but most abuse is identified by physical signs as opposed to other emotional signs, suggesting to Bryant and Milsom (2005) that perhaps school counselors need some additional training on reporting. The minimal role

of sexual abuse in their reporting likewise suggested (compared with statistics as to the prevalence of this form of abuse) the need for more training.

Lack of evidence, concern that the department of child services would not investigate the case, and previous negative experiences between reporters and child protection workers hindered reporting. The fact that fewer high school counselors report abuse is attributed by Bryant and Milsom (2005) to the fact that at the high school level, the one-on-one nature of counseling is replaced by a more administrative and impersonal process. The fact that high school counselors tend to know their students less well would also tend to make it less likely that students would confide in them. Finally, older students tend to be more skilled in hiding abuse. The fact that high school counselors tend to become focused on college and career issues would also tend to take attention away from abuse, with one high school counselor for that reason noting that she had made less than five reports in the past 12 years.

Substance abuse is also a growing problem among high school students, and school counselors have a role to play in identifying problems and referring students to proper care. Students report that the school counselor is, in fact, one person they would confide to with regard to a substance abuse problem. Whether or not school counselors are capable of responding appropriately to such input remains to be seen. The research on the degree to which school counselors have been trained or are capable of handling substance abuse problems is limited (Burrow-Sanchez & Lopez, 2009).

In one study of counselors working with elementary school students with parents who were abusing substances, 70% reported that they had not received enough training to prepare them to work with such students. Another survey of counselors in New York

found that only 47% had taken any kind of drug education or drug counseling course. In another study, while counselors felt prepared to address alcohol and marijuana use issues, they reported feeling inadequately prepared to address problems related to more serious drugs. In yet another study, 46% of counselors reported that their school district did not provide formalized training and had no formalized procedures for dealing with such problems.

To clarify these issues, Burrow-Sanchez and Lopez (2009) surveyed a population of high school-level school counselors to determine their level of training for working with students with substance abuse problems, and whether or not their training matches their perceptions of the most serious, important, and most common problems in their schools. Some 289 high school counselors were surveyed using a 36-item survey developed by the researchers. The results indicated that counselors reported widely differentiated levels of training in this area. In terms of responding to the problem, they recommended consultation with parents or teachers, followed by referral. Counselors reported that their ability to identify students with substance abuse problems was limited, resulting from not having taken a single course on substance abuse in graduate school.

Counselors reported themselves to be ill equipped to screen students, and most indicated that they do not have the time to be trained in this area. While 38% of counselors felt they needed more training in screening, 37% indicated that they needed more training in individual substance abuse interventions. Most counselors felt that their jobs were being consumed by bureaucratic tasks, in any case, making it difficult to receive the type of training they needed. Though the counselors appeared to know which substances were most abused by students, whether or not they were even aware of more

serious problems remained a question. Overall, Burrow-Sanchez and Lopez (2009) found that high school counselors, by their own admission, are ill-prepared to adequately address the needs of substance abusing high school students.

Yet another issue has come under the purview of the school counselor, addressing sexual orientation among students. Acknowledging that at present there does not seem to be in place a framework for addressing the issue of sexual orientation of students (related to bullying, harassment, and other issues), DePaul, Walsh, and Dam (2009) argued that school counselors are ideally placed to be the advocate of this issue given their training in child and adolescent development, their system-wide perspective, and their avowed commitment to the issue of student diversity.

School counselors are also trained in bully prevention programs, and therefore are aware of the negative impact that bullying can have on students as well. DePaul et al. (2009) proposed a whole-school plan of action that involved student education, prevention policy, and intensive intervention when problems develop. The plan involved creating a school climate where gender diversity is accepted, with school counselors playing a part by using proper language to describe sexual orientation diversity, encouraging faculty to participate in positive programming, and coordinating positive school climate.

Targeted interventions entail organizing professional development on the issue for the faculty, creating alliances of support in the school, and partnering with community organizations. Insofar as the ASCA National Model for counseling includes responsive services such as individual or group counseling and crisis interventions, these too should be included in a framework. DePaul et al. (2009) also called for psycho-educational

initiatives by counselors to help parents and other stakeholders better understand the issue. Assuming at present that few counselors have the skills or capacity to carry out these plans, DePaul et al. (2009) presented a framework based on the developing assumption that school counselors can play a central role in managing school responses to complex social issues.

Today, school counselors are even being asked to become involved in preventing various diseases experienced by students, including diabetes. Wagner and James (2006) therefore examined whether or not K-12 school counselors felt that their training in the prevention of diabetes was sufficient for them to carry out the duties expected of them with regard to seeking to prevent the onset of the disease among the student population. A standardized measure of school personnel knowledge about diabetes was used on a population of K-12 school counselors, 40% of whom had worked directly with students with diabetes. The study found that most counselors had only a basic level of knowledge about diabetes and that they had received no specific training about the disease. That being said, those counselors who had received some training in diabetes prevention had more positive perceptions about their ability to help prevent diabetes in students. They also reported having a better sense of the psychosocial impact of living with diabetes, and were able to counsel students in social and family consequences of the disease as well.

In sum, Wagner and James (2006) found, through surveying counselors, that, though they are increasingly being expected to man the front lines of prevention of diseases, school counselors at present are not well prepared to support the needs of students with diabetes or to effectively participate in any diabetes prevention programming addressed to the general student population.

Case Studies of Industrial Organizational Psychology Deficits in Current School Counselor Practice. High school counselors appear to be struggling with carrying out their duties in the context of an expanding job description (Lewis & Borunda, 2006; Mitus, 2006; Rayle, 2006; Taylor & Karcher, 2009; Wilkerson & Bellini, 2006). At the same time, the change in counseling has resulted in the emergence of several problems directly related to industrial organizational psychology issues, such as job satisfaction, turnover, and burnout. Culbreth, Scarborough, Banks-Johnson, and Solomon (2005) surveyed a population of school counselors using the Role Questionnaire to determine the extent to which role conflict, role incongruence, and role ambiguity were deteriorating the quality of counselor job satisfaction.

Organizational psychology would find that counselors would need to negotiate the tensions created by role conflict in their jobs in order to survive at work. Role conflict entails incongruence with role demands and a gap between expectations and reality. Role ambiguity results when one's role is not articulated clearly, resulting in one not being sure what to do at work, while role incongruence itself exists when "there are too many roles to be fulfilled without necessary support or when an individual is caught between the expectations of two groups" (Culbreth et al., 2005, p. 59). The study determined the degree to which role stress compromised counselor effectiveness by specifically examining correlations between training, perceptions, certification, prior experience, and participation in peer counseling, with job outcomes.

The group of counselors with the highest levels of role conflict and ambiguity were high school counselors, with all counselors at that level reporting role stress, lack of matches between job expectations and job duties, doubts over the adequacy of their

training, and negative comments on the availability of supervisor or peer feedback. Job perception match also emerged as the most significant variable in determining school counselor job satisfaction. Culbreth et al. (2005) called for more training, supervision, and guidance of school counselors to reduce these gaps. That being said, the overall study found that school counseling as a profession continues to experience negative outcomes from core organizational psychology issues.

Affective commitment is another construct extracted from the organizational psychology research, and is said to be related to reduced turnover rates and improvement in the quality of counseling. Affective commitment has been found to be especially important in the counseling field. As such, this construct is studied as an organizational factor that could reduce turnover based on the rationale that implementing organizational change to improve affective commitment may be a better way than changing counselor characteristics to improve retention rates. According to Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian, (1974), affective commitment is a measure of employee identification and involvement with organizations, and includes both an employee's socialization tactics as well as the socialization knowledge or contents that he or she gains from becoming more committed, through social means, to the organization.

Affective commitment processes can also improve employee performance proficiency, knowledge of who the important stakeholders are, how to play politics in the organization, learning the language of the organizational culture, and understanding and internalizing organizational goals. Mitus (2006) examined the extent to which efforts to improve the affective commitment of a population of rehabilitation counselors improved their commitment to their agency and reduced their turnover rate. He focused on the

degree to which the Socialization Content Model predicted affective commitment among newly hired counselors, and then whether knowledge developed in various areas impacted the affective commitment of newly hired rehabilitation counselors. The results found that newly hired counselors felt that they were in fact learning about the organization and thus becoming committed to it, and that they were making particular progress in learning the agency's language and performance proficiency standards as opposed to its politics.

Thus, those counselors who felt that they knew more about the organization felt more committed to the organization, and were less likely to report turnover intentions. As a result, Mitus (2006) provided some proof that socialization develops affective commitment among counselors. This finding, based on organizational psychology ideas, is applicable to the recent reforms of school counseling, calling for more counselor involvement in leadership and collaboration with other stakeholders, both of which represent a completely new kind of socialization for school counselors compared to their traditional practice.

Kolodinsky, Draves, Schroder, Lindsey, and Zlatev (2009) surveyed a population of 155 school counselors in Arizona to determine those aspects of their job that lead to job satisfaction or job-related frustration. They also studied the degree to which current practice was aligned with the comprehensive curriculum-based guidance program implemented by the state of Arizona. This plan undoubtedly was developed based on the ASCA National Model of school counseling, which has attempted to shift counseling from a service activity to a more comprehensive and programmatic approach focused on student outcomes. In short, school counseling has experienced a paradigm shift, and it

therefore becomes necessary to determine the extent to which the shift has improved or made worse the condition of the high school guidance counselor. The study was also based on previous research into the job satisfaction of school counselors, most of which found satisfactory results.

This line of research began to report a growing level of stress in the profession soon after the passage of NCLB. That said, counselors who undertook appropriate duties reported satisfaction, while counselors who continued to deliver traditional and now deemed inappropriate services reported increased dissatisfaction. Job stress and job satisfaction studies have also found differentiation in satisfaction for counselors based on extrinsic or intrinsic factors, with counselors who feel that what they do matters to others being more likely to be satisfied on the job.

Other studies have found that when counselors can maintain a balance between their working and personal lives, they also feel more satisfied with their work. Using a previously designed survey for K-12 school counselors in Arizona, the results found that in terms of the organizational psychological factor of job satisfaction, most counselors are satisfied with their work. Less satisfaction was expressed with working with district administrators, spending too much time in nonguidance activities, responding to crises during a typical school day, and utilizing excessive time in providing system support.

Many counselors complained about the increased level of data-entry required by the job, no doubt related to the paradigmatic shift in the profession. Insofar as two of these negative factors involved the reported complaint that counselors are being forced to spend more time on bureaucratic assessment-related tasks and less on counseling, these results demonstrate a clear deterioration of the counseling job. The fact that most

counselors felt that direct contact with students was the most satisfactory part of their job also spells trouble for a profession where direct contact with students is being squeezed out by other mandates. Overall, then, the findings indicated that the linking of counseling to standards was theoretically intended to give greater purpose to counseling and thus improve counselors' intrinsic satisfaction with the job.

At present, while the profession has not been completely compromised, the increased nonguidance demands placed upon counseling by the new systemic and data-driven approach have in fact eroded job satisfaction among school counselors.

Student Characteristics Related to Organizational Psychology and Counselors. In addition to counselors themselves dealing with organizational issues, the research has also begun to adapt some aspects of general organizational research to school life in order to explain student success or failure. For example, Uwah, McMahon, and Furlow (2008) examined the degree to which the relationship between student perceptions of school belonging, their educational aspirations and academic self-efficacy, and constructs derived from organizational factors such as self-efficacy and organizational commitment relate to student success. The study was grounded in concern over the continuing achievement gap between white and black students, especially at the high school level, and the multiple hypotheses put forward to explain the gap, including those imported from psychosocial, cultural, and ecological studies of organizations.

From this point of view, Uwah et al. (2008) argued that interventions to improve academic achievement among African American youth in particular must combine psychological and environmental factors, addressing problems not only in the student but also in the school climate and environment for learning (or lack of it) in a particular

school. School belonging was defined as the extent to which students perceived themselves to be welcomed and valued as members of the school community. School belonging, entailing building strong relationships with all stakeholders, has been linked to greater satisfaction with school, a construct parallel to job satisfaction. The identification-participation model is relevant in providing a grounding for this line of research, arguing as it does that only students who feel that they are respected members of the community do well. Academic self-efficacy involves one's confidence in one's academic abilities. The Psychological Sense of School Membership Scale and other scales were used to measure these constructs in a population of African American students.

The study found that feeling encouraged to participate in school events and to have educational aspirations is a significant predictor of academic self-efficacy. As a result, Uwah et al. (2008) made recommendations to counselors about the importance of addressing these factors to students in counseling. The implications of their recommendations were that at present counselors are not directing enough attention to the importance of sense of belonging and academic self-efficacy in particular as it relates to the success of African American students. Uwah et al. (2008) concluded that "professional school counselors must view building a sense of community within their school as an academic intervention, and they must work to create the kind of learning environments that support the academic, career and social success of all students" (p. 11).

Resiliency has been defined as the ability to thrive even in challenging circumstances. It has emerged as a much-studied construct in the organizational psychological literature, insofar as resiliency, especially in school, has been found to be enough to lift an at-risk student to achievement (Taylor & Karcher, 2009). Taylor and

Karcher (2009) divided resiliencies in the school context into environmental and individual processes, with the former including protective factors in the student's family life or support systems, and the individual factors being those related to personality and drive, including insight, relationships, morality, and initiative.

The role that school counselors can play in fostering resilience in at-risk students is discussed with Taylor and Karcher (2009) placing the counselor at the center of these efforts. Arguing that encouraging resiliency in these areas requires of a counselor a degree of cultural sensitivity, Taylor and Karcher (2009) examined whether or not a population of school counselors emphasized different elements of resiliency in addressing the needs of ethnic minority students as opposed to mainstream students. The Survey of Resiliencies Addressed by School Counselors was made use of to obtain the study's data. The results found that five of six resiliencies were addressed differently by counselors, depending upon both the age and ethnicity of the subject. The results found that high school counselors addressed the resiliencies of relationships, morality, and courage less than elementary school counselors did, meaning that their focus on character development shifted over time. Taylor and Karcher (2009) attributed this change to the possibility that counselors in high schools devote more of their guidance to career development, personal, and affective domains recede.

That being said, and noting the heightened risk of substance abuse and teenage pregnancy among high school students, Taylor and Karcher (2009) wondered if promotion of character development strategically focused on relationships would not be useful for high school as well as elementary school students. The study also found that counselors established fewer connections with white students primarily because they

emphasized relationships and paid less attention to initiative, courage, and morality. They spent more time focusing on these issues in schools with large ethnic student bodies. The lack of attention paid to connectedness, which involves the ability to develop connections with others, with ethnic students is concerning to Taylor and Karcher (2009) because it would appear to erode relationship resiliency, which has been found in the research to be an important factor for student success. Overall, then, Taylor and Karcher (2009) found that counselors in fact counsel different students differently, possibly based on perceptions of the different needs of different ethnic groups.

Professional Efficacy. Rayle (2006) examined whether or not there was a correlation between high school counselors' sense that their job mattered (professional efficacy), and their level of job stress and job satisfaction. The study was based on research into the rising demands on school counselors and their effect on counselor job satisfaction. The three constructs studied have been examined and are related in the organizational psychology literature covering a number of different fields. Mattering in particular is defined as "an individuals' personal, intrapersonal perceptions that they are important to others and make a difference in others' lives" (Rayle, 2006, p. 3). Studies of businessmen have found that when they felt they mattered to others, they had more job satisfaction.

The School Counselor Mattering Scale, the School Counselor Job Stress Assessment, and several job satisfaction questionnaires were administered to a population of 388 K-12 school counselors. The results found that mattering to others at work and to students accounted for 35% of the variance in job satisfaction among school counselors. Mattering was not found, however, to mediate the relationship between job stress and job

satisfaction. Disaggregated, the results also found that high school counselors experienced the greatest amount of job satisfaction and job stress. This was due, the study indicated, to the fact that while elementary level counselors dedicate up to three-quarters of their time to actual counseling, high school counselors are not able to devote so much time to actual counseling as part of their daily working lives.

Counselors who had been teachers before becoming counselors also reported less job satisfaction. Counselors who were actively revamping their jobs according to the ASCA model of reform were also found to feel that they mattered more. Whether or not these reforms would make way for high school counselors being able to dedicate more of their time to actual counseling of students is unclear, though doing so would improve counselor job satisfaction. High school counselors however also reported the lowest level of mattering to others, possibly linked to their current state of role ambiguity and stress related to it. Rayle (2006), however, argued that the poor outcome for high school counselors was attributable to their increased involvement in administrative work, at the expense of being able to spend face-to-face counseling time with students. As such, the study demonstrated areas of opportunity for improving the working lives of high school counselors using constructs developed by the industrial organizational psychology research.

Counseling and Burnout. Wachter, Clemens, and Lewis (2008) examined the degree to which counselors having to become involved in crisis situations in counseling youth contributed to their burnout. They focused in particular on the stresses resulting from a counselor decision to involve administrators and parents or guardians in addressing a crisis situation, and whether or not that line of action in particular leads to

counselor burnout. The research has found that crisis intervention is one of the key job descriptions of counselors, and that such efforts are only helpful if the counselor collaborates with other stakeholders, implying that the counselor has already established good relationships with stakeholders at work.

The ASCA National Model has emphasized the role that counselors must play in terms of organizational collaboration and working with administrators to address crisis situations. Nonetheless, studies have also found that counselor crisis intervention can contribute to counselor burnout, theoretically composed of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. These failings in turn lead to a degeneration of interactions with others at work, and end with low job satisfaction, chronic absenteeism, and refusal to perform certain tasks at work. The description and theoretical formulation of burnout of course derives from the organizational psychology research.

Among all professions, school counselors have been found to be particularly susceptible to burnout. To better explain the origins of burnout, Wachter et al. (2008), made use of individual psychology, which argues that individuals work toward goals as a way to overcome weaknesses and strive for superiority. Adlerian personality theory, based on the concept of lifestyle, or how an individual perceives their environment, is typical of this approach. Lifestyle represents the active creation of convictions and beliefs that form the basis of a way of living. A major goal of this approach is the need to be safe and to belong. Also, one adopts a lifestyle to present a pleasing or controlling image to the world. Wachter et al. (2008) sought to apply this model to school counselors to determine if the theory offered insight as to why counselors suffered so much burnout.

K-12 Counselors from across the U.S. were surveyed with regard to lifestyle, their control and perfectionism subscale, and any positive associations among the discouragement subscales such as expectations and self-esteem, using the Stakeholder Survey, the Kern Lifestyle scale, the Burnout Measure, and demographic questions. The major finding was that the perfectionism subscale was directly related with greater levels of school counselor burnout, and the Self-esteem subscale was positively associated with greater levels of burnout. The relationship between Adlerian lifestyle themes and burnout also suggested that personal experiences of how counselors emotionally respond to situations affect them in terms of burnout.

Wachter et al. (2008) suggested that high perfectionism and high self-esteem may relate to burnout insofar as the profession is marked by a great deal of role confusion and conflict as well as tasks that one may feel compromises one's self-esteem, thus causing a counselor to feel more stress in such situations, leading to burnout. In this way, Wachter et al. (2008) gained insight into the degree to which the interaction of personal and organizational factors leads to counselor burnout.

Wilkerson and Bellini (2006) studied demographic, intrapersonal, and organizational factors associated with burnout in a population of school counselors. Three subscales of the Maslach Burnout Inventors-Educators Survey, an organizational psychology survey especially adapted to educational contexts, was made use of, measuring emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion entails physical and emotional depletion, while depersonalization involves lack of empathy and emotional distance from clients.

Personal accomplishment describes the feeling that one has lost one's competence for one's job and is no longer satisfied at work. The scales were developed in the context of the psychological study of work stress. Previous studies had found that counselors who were younger, had poorer locus of control, inadequate coping skills, and lacked a sense of personal congruence to the job had more burnout. Organizational factors that have been found to contribute to counselor burnout were role conflict, role ambiguity, professional job overload, and other factors such as lack of decision-making ability, financial security, and counselor-stakeholder relations.

Some 22 male and 56 K-12 school counselors, 43 of which worked at the high school level, were surveyed using demographic questionnaires, the Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations, separating task-oriented versus emotion- or avoidance-oriented coping, the Role Questionnaire, and the Maslach, Jackson, and Leitner Burnout Scale. The results found that the population of counselors had a fairly healthy profile with only the EE subscale indicating potential for burnout. Thus, demographic, intrapersonal, and organizational factors were found to provide for a great deal of variation in terms of predicting counselor burnout. In general, years of experience had a negative correlation with burnout, while emotion-oriented coping, counselor-teacher professional relationships, and role ambiguity had the most positive associations with burnout. Counselors who fail to cope with poor teacher relationships and suffer role ambiguity on the job are much more likely to burnout than those who have greater success in these areas. Overall, Wilkerson and Bellini (2006) concluded that a number of organizational factors contribute to the high burnout rate of high school counselors.

Case Studies of Efforts to Improve Performance of High School Counselors.

Lewis and Borunda (2006) interviewed two school counselors to conduct a finely grained assessment of the degree to which systemic reform is helping or hurting the school counselor profession. The reforms, as noted, involve a wholesale transformation of the profession from a service to an integral element in a system-wide effort by a school to ensure that all students meet annual yearly progress benchmarks and improve their scores on standardized tests. These school counseling models have been promulgated by the Comprehensive Development Guidance Programs, the national Standards for School Counseling Programs, and the ASCA National Model. Some of these models promote the idea of school counselors taking leadership positions in their schools in creating a culture of achievement for all students. Participatory leadership by school counselors would entail them taking a stand regarding program development, their professional identity, and their accountability measured in terms of student outcomes.

Theoretically, in the organizational psychology research, involving counselors in such leadership would enhance the intrinsic value of the job and improve job satisfaction. Using the model of critical pedagogy, Lewis and Borunda (2006) interviewed two counselors about what is working and not working in the context of these changes. One counselor described how he adopted a method of focusing on student self-esteem, believing that self-esteem would lead to better grades and college aspiration, as well as the challenges faced by system resistance. A second story described how a data-driven counselor proposed reducing teacher-student ratios in math classes as a way to improve student math scores, with positive results. The counseling department in this case played

a leadership role in supporting reform, and also helped to create a campus climate in which students were expected to learn and go to college.

A third counselor reported how he changed his job by working at the reactive end of the downward spiral of gang-affiliated students to working with the Dean of Students in a leadership role to construct a learning community throughout the school, developing a student-based movement which reduced the degree to which students of color were drawn into the world of gangs.

While the case studies demonstrated a great deal of effort in trying to make their job relevant in a changing paradigm, it is clear from testimony that all counselors felt that their job had become much more meaningful, and they took pride in the fact that they contributed directly to improved student outcomes. The fact that a deepening of the intrinsic value of the job through participatory leadership was improved is in accord with findings in the job satisfaction literature. Though school counseling will continue to be in evolution for some time, personal case studies of special initiatives undertaken by a few counselors strongly indicate that once transitional tensions are overcome, the school counseling profession will be much more closely aligned with organizational psychology job satisfaction, promoting best practice.

Dahir and Stone (2009) also examined the degree to which accountability, as mandated by NCLB, has changed the nature of school counseling. The ASCA has likewise encouraged counselors to link their practice to standards as to what students should know and be able to do in the context of standards regimes. The Transforming the School Counselor Initiative of the Reader’s Digest trust also encouraged counselors to

take more of a leadership and advocacy role in the use of data, and supporting higher levels of student achievement.

With regard to eliminating the achievement gap between student demographics, Dahir and Stone (2009) also found that school counselors in this context are ideally located to help all students achieve their best. At present, research indicates that few counselors have moved beyond "bean counting" data collection, simply reporting totals of different types of activities, to actual data-informed practice whereby they can demonstrate their effectiveness by data showing student achievement improvement. As a result, they undertook research into efforts by school counselors to make better use of data to align their counseling programs with the accountability expectations of NCLB as well as the ASCA National Model. They asked if student achievement levels improved as a direct result of school counseling. Some 175 school counselors were involved in an action research plan that sought to measure this link by gathering and analyzing student achievement data. Though the purpose of the study was to outline the procedures for such research, Dahir and Stone (2009) argued that linking counseling to broad achievement goals not only will enhance counselor roles, but also their purpose will become much clearer, suggesting that enhanced job satisfaction would be a side-effect of such reform.

Recent reform to school counseling models such as the ASCA National Model has provided an impetus to improve the function of the school counselor at the high school level. In the context of the culture of accountability following NLCB, school counselors are not being held accountable for student achievement and educational attainment. A primary role of the school counselor is to bridge school counseling and student academic achievement between all involved stakeholders. These efforts are based

on the enhanced capacity of counselors to collect, analyze, and disaggregate data to identify those needs that must be addressed for students to be prepared to attend college.

Camizzi, Clark, Yacco, and Goodman (2009) studied an intervention where counselors made best-practice use of data to identify low-income students with college potential, selected them for transition counseling, and developed a program to help them get into college. The program was also based on the concept of comprehensive school counseling programs, with roots in the 1970s, whereby the counselor helped the students to "acquire developmentally appropriate competencies in the academic, career and personal/social domains" (Camizzi et al., 2009, p. 3). The program described by Camizzi et al. (2009) also involved counselors receiving additional training on data disaggregation at a local university. The results of the implementation of the data-driven problem was that the number of targeted students enrolling in advanced coursework was increased, their GPAs increased, and applications by low-income students for financial aid for college also increased. Therefore, data-driven counseling reform was helpful in identifying capable but previously overlooked students in the college application process.

Nonetheless, it remains a problem that a gap persists between the preferred and actual practice of most school counselors. In addition to this gap resulting in less than adequate counseling being offered in high schools, this gap is likely to weigh heavily on counselors and degrade their job satisfaction, even leading to turnover. The extent to which departure in practice from best practice also contributes to stress must also be considered. Overall, then, the gap between preferred and actual practice is dangerous for counselors in terms of organizational psychological factors. Scarborough and Culbreth (2008) suggested that most closely applying the National Model for School Counseling

Programs published by the ASCA might help to structure counseling in a way that would close the gap. Moreover, these standards, by placing counselors at the center of student achievement, would also appear to increase the intrinsic factors of the job, and prevent principals from assigning counselors to undertake noncounseling activities.

Indeed, studies have repeatedly found that most school counselors do not spend their time in ways they would prefer, resulting in lack of job satisfaction. Past experience, student-to-counselor ratio, amount of time spent in nonguidance–related activities, and an unsupportive organizational culture have all been cited as reasons for this problem. Organizational culture has been found to have a negative impact on counselor self-efficacy, with 49% of counselors in one study reporting that their roles were dictated from above with little input by them. To provide more insight into these issues, Scarborough and Culbreth (2008) surveyed 600 K-12 counselors as to their preferences for spending time at work, and which variables they believed most negatively influenced their job description, using the School Counselor Activity Rating Scale, the Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale, and the School Climate scale, along with demographic factors. The results again found gaps between what counselors do at work and what they want to do.

Counselors in particular reported wanting to spend less time on nonguidance-related activities, and more time on interventions associated with positive student outcomes, as outlined by the ASCA comprehensive school counseling program. For Scarborough and Culbreth (2008), this response provides empirical support for comprehensive counseling programs. High school counselors were, again, much more likely to spend too much time not doing what they preferred to do, suggesting to Scarborough and Culbreth (2008) that comprehensive models have not yet been

implemented at that level. That said, experienced counselors appear to have found a way to spend more time doing what they preferred on the job, as did counselors who had incorporated the National Standards for School Counseling Programs into their practice. Counselors also felt that school culture providing them with support and reinforcement for their self-efficacy helped them spend more time doing what they wanted to, and less so in cultures that did not support self-efficacy and provide social support.

School counselors were more likely to be doing what they preferred to do if they had the support of the organization as a whole. These results provide empirical support for the role that administrators play in ensuring that counselors develop self-efficacy and a sense of doing their job effectively at work, an important precedent to retention. Overall, then, Scarborough and Culbreth (2008) found that a number of constructs derived from organizational psychology provide a basis for closing the current gap between theory and practice in the high school counselor position in particular, and that counselors can close the gap even more by adopting the National Model for School Counseling, which incorporates variables such as social support and organizational culture supporting job satisfaction as part of a more comprehensive model of counseling.

Programming to improve counselor job satisfaction. Several studies have emerged seeking to make use of insights from industrial organizational psychology to remedy the problems currently compromising the high school counselor job (Dahir & Stone, 2009; Scarborough & Culbreth, 2008). Skills training targeting specific skills may be one way to improve counselor performance. Schaefle, Smaby, Packman, and Maddux (2006) studied whether or not counselors trained in specific skills in fact made use of those skills in counseling sessions. If mastery of skills differed based on the counselor's

adherence to a counseling theory, if skill mastery was related to counseling goal attainment, and if mastery of skills was also related to the counselor's social influence.

The Skilled Counseling Scale was used to measure these factors in a group of counselors in training. Previous research has found that training in very specific skills was helpful as counselors transferred what they learned into actual sessions. As such, the study makes use of performance assessment from organizational studies to address the gap between theory and practice in current counseling. The theoretical bases for treatment studied were behavioral therapy, cognitive therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, dynamic therapy, rational-emotive therapy, and drug therapy. A focus was placed on goal attainment because studies have found that it is an important mediator between skill learning and application. Studies have shown that when counselors make use of expert methods this also enhances client satisfaction with counseling and subsequently improves their overall social influence.

Some 105 graduating students of counseling were measured with the Skilled Counseling Scale, the Goal Attainment Scale, and the Counselor Rating Form. The results found that the use of skills resulted in improvements of scores on practice within two years, and that the theoretical orientation of the counselor had no negative impact on this outcome. Most of the counselors also felt that they had achieved their goals and that their clients believed they had achieved their goals. They also felt that their social influence increased as a result. Thus, Schaefle et al. (2006) found that through targeted skills training it was also positive to bring about results improving variables related to job satisfaction and retention.

Conclusion

This review examined the degree to which industrial organizational factors could be used to understand the job performance of high school guidance counselors. At present, studies indicated there is a wide gap between expectations and performance. Evidence is strong that institutional factors, more than individual counselors' goals and skills, are the primary reason for the gap between expectation and performance (Baggerly & Osborn, 2006). Industrial organizational psychology was found to be useful in addressing the broader issues that contribute to job performance, including job fit, job congruence, job satisfaction, proactive behavior, and turnover intention.

The principles of industrial organizational psychology have a sound basis in research and have been applied to many fields. Case studies of the various tasks of high school guidance counselors and how they are currently performing these duties were then reviewed, including a general appraisal of their work, followed by an examination of the degree to which they are performing well in academic advising, college and career advising, and helping students with a host of personal, emotional, and social problems (Aluede & Egbochuku, 2005; Amatea & Clark, 2005; Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007; Burrow-Sanchez & Lopez, 2009; Chimes & Gordon, 2008; Cross & Burney, 2005; Deemer & Ostrowski, 2010; Dodson, 2009; Farmer-Hinton & Adams, 2006; Holcomb-McCoy, 2010; Bryant & Milsom, 2005; Mitkos & Bragg, 2008; Rapp, 2005; Ryan, 2007; Steen & Noguera, 2010; Tatar & Bekerman, 2009; Wagner & James, 2006; Ware & Galassi, 2006).

The general impression provided by these studies is that school counselors are stretched thin, having to perform many different disjointed tasks, and with little time to

fully implement all duties. Stakeholder perceptions, including counselor perceptions, further reinforce this feeling, leading to the conclusion that the job description of the school counselor is one of the primary reasons for job satisfaction problems. In addition, a new model of high school counseling reframed by the accountability regime following NCLB has called for counselors to become proactive, central personnel in helping all students reach their achievement goals. This is a noble goal, but one that has put additional strain on high school counselors and that creates its own set of problems for the organization as a system (Lewis & Borunda, 2006; Mitus, 2006; Rayle, 2006; Taylor & Karcher, 2009; Wilkerson & Bellini, 2006).

Many of the gaps uncovered between stakeholder expectations and counselor performance were then addressed explicitly in terms of factors derived from industrial organizational psychology, with insight provided on how to close the gap. Finally, the study closed with a number of case studies of how to improve the performance of high school counselors by addressing factors such as job satisfaction, job fit, turnover intentions, and proactive behavior (Dahir & Stone, 2009; Scarborough & Culbreth, 2008).

In sum, while this review found that high school counseling as a profession is currently underserving its constituency, just as stakeholders have reported, this is primarily due to school-wide and district-wide systemic factors, including a lack of adequate resources needed for school guidance program readiness. A societal commitment to adequate funding of school guidance programs, especially in urban school districts serving large concentrations of high needs students, is an essential requirement for closing the gap between stakeholder expectations and guidance program performance.

While adequate guidance staffing and other resources are an essential requirement for improved guidance program readiness and outcomes, the counselors' job description itself also needs to be redrawn. The whole systems organizational paradigm provides a theoretical framework for such redefinition that takes account of the multiple, interacting school-wide and district-wide factors that affect both individual and system performance (Deming, 1994; Fullan, 2010; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). My research contributes to this needed paradigm shift by determining the impact of three school-wide factors—urbanization of school location, school size, and counselor-student ratio—on high school guidance counseling programs in New York State. In the next chapter I discuss the methodology for this research, followed by a chapter on my statistical findings and a final chapter on implications and recommendations.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

This study used the whole system organizational paradigm (Fullan, 2010) to identify school-wide independent variables that can explain variation in guidance program readiness. These school-wide factors vary independently of individual guidance counselor performance and understanding them was an important prerequisite for initiating a system transformation to improve both individual and organizational performance as a whole. This study used a nonexperimental, quantitative design, and was specifically designed to determine whether three school-wide variables—degree of urbanization of school location, school size, and counselor-student ratio—predicted program readiness as measured by the ASCA Readiness Survey, the dependent variable.

According to Holcomb-McCoy (2010), the readiness of a counseling program predicts the effectiveness of the program during implementation. The planning and preparation for counseling programs determine how effective they are in achieving program objectives. The ASCA Readiness Survey consists of seven subscales that measure different aspects of counseling program readiness—community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing time and use, school counselor's beliefs and attitudes, school counselor's skills, and district resources—and an overall readiness score (Carey, Harrity, & Dimmit; 2005). These subscales were used to measure the study's dependent variable.

Research Questions

The following research question and hypotheses guided the study:

RQ1: Do urbanization, school size, and counselor-student ratio predict program readiness?

$H1_0$: Urbanization has no statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

$H1_a$: Urbanization has a statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

$H2_0$: School size has no statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

$H2_a$: School size has a statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

$H3_0$: Counselor-student ratio has no statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

$H3_a$: Counselor-student ration has a statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

This chapter discusses the methodology and research design of the study, including information pertaining to the sampling plan, instrumentation, data collection

procedures, data analysis plan, validity and reliability of the instrumentation, and considerations of human subjects protection.

Research Design

I employed a nonexperimental, quantitative research design suitable for survey research, as suggested by Yaremko, Harari, Harrison, and Lynn (1986). The objective was to estimate the association between the independent variables of urbanization, school size, and counselor-student ratio with counselor perceptions of program readiness, the dependent variables. Since one of the independent variables, urbanization, was categorical and since there were multiple subscales of the dependent variable, multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) was the most suitable statistical model for these data.

Population

All participants in the study were guidance counselors from high schools New York State and collectively represented a wide range of different school characteristics. New York has 1,040 high schools that employ approximately 4,000 active guidance counselors. The participants were recruited from a random selection of high school counselors with addresses in New York were selected from the membership files of ASCA. I initially selected 168 people, and then added additional small batches until the process yielded an adequate sample size. Thus, the sample was limited to active ASCA members with valid mailing addresses. In the initial mailing, prospective respondents were told the purpose of the study as well as the potential benefits the study may have in their practice. The mailing also included a consent form, and only individuals who completed the form indicating they volunteered for the study were allowed to participate and answer the surveys online.

Sample Size

I continued sampling continued until a suitable number of respondents was obtained. Prior to data collection, I conducted a power analysis using the G*Power program in order to determine the appropriate sample size. This yielded a minimum sample size of 84, which was sufficient to allow inferences about all subgroups of interest.

G*Power calculates minimum sample size for a variety of statistical tests based on desired statistical power and level of significance, and anticipated effect size. Desired significance level, or the probability of a type I (alpha) error, was set at .05 and desired power was set at .8, following prevailing standards of social science research (Cooper and Schindler, 2011). Type I error is the probability of incorrectly rejecting the null hypothesis. An alpha level of 0.05 is equivalent to a 95% confidence interval. Type II error is the probability of incorrectly accepting the null hypothesis. The power of a statistical test is its ability to detect an effect in the population, defined as 1 – beta, where beta is the probability of type II error. In this study, I made the conservative assumption that the effect size would be small, defined arbitrarily as .1

With these inputs to G*power, the program calculated a minimum sample size of 84. Assuming a 50% response rate, 168 surveys were sent out initially to obtain a minimum number of 84 participants. I continued sampling until receiving 100 surveys, of which three were discarded because of incomplete data, yielding a final sample size of 97. The G*power computation for this study can be seen in Appendix A.

Sampling Plan

All respondents in this study were active guidance counselors of high school in New York State. Arrangements were made with the New York Chapter of ASCA for a complete mailing list of all active members. The member list included only name and mailing address. A random sample of the list was selected for potential respondents for this study. Following Cooper and Schindler (2011), I used a stratified random sampling strategy ro reduce chances of bias. Other than mailing address, no other information was available about the initial sample other than that they were listed as active members of ASCA at the time of the study.

The sampling plan was stratified to ensure that respondents were gathered from different communities within New York to assure proportional representation of important groups. The sampling process was also stratified to help ensure adequate sampling by regional areas. Following Cooper and Schindler (2011), I chose a stratified random sampling procedure for the following reasons:

- To increase the statistical efficiency of sample, to provide adequate data for analyzing the various subpopulations or strata, and to enable different research methods and procedures to be used in different strata;
- Stratification is usually more efficient statistically than simple random sampling or at worst it is equal to it; and
- With the ideal stratification, each stratum is homogeneous internally and heterogeneous with other strata.

Instrumentation

The survey instrument, ASCA Readiness Survey, was used to measure the dependent variable—program readiness as perceived by guidance counselors in accordance with the ASCA national standards. Appendix B gives the instrument, which consists of 63 items (exclusive of demographic items) with each item based directly on the ASCA standards and counselor role definition. The instrument is composed of seven indicator areas including community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing time and use, school counselor's beliefs and attitudes, school counselor's skills, and district resources (Carey, Harrity, & Dimmit; 2005). An overall program readiness score was also calculated based on the total score of the responses of participants. These variables were considered as the dependent variables in the study.

The survey instrument used a four point Likert-type scale which ranges from 1 = *Like my District,* 2 = *Somewhat Like My District, 3 = Not like my district,* and 4 = *Possible interventions if not like my district*. The Readiness Survey was developed to help school counselors and administrators assess their district's readiness to implement the American School Counselor Association National Model (ASCA, 2003), and to determine areas that needed to be addressed to successfully implement the ASCA National Model as well as the state versions of the National Model.

The independent variables in this study are urbanization, school size, and counselor-student ratio. The questionnaire used to collect these data is presented in Appendix C.

Data Collection

This research entails the use of the ASCA readiness survey to obtain information on the perceptions of active high school guidance counselors in New York State on their counseling programs. A mailing to potential respondents included an introduction to the study, consent to participate letter, and the ASCA instrument and the questionnaire. The consent letter is shown in Appendix D. While initial contact with potential respondents was through a mailing, respondents completed the survey online.

Data collection was done through an online survey tool called www.surveymonkey.com. The survey was uploaded in the SurveyMonkey webpage and the participants accessed the survey link to gain access to the survey. As is normally the case with online survey tools, the data were downloaded from the SurveyMonkey website. An identification number was assigned to each survey and name information was deleted. Address information was only retained for the city and zip code of the respondent.

Data Analysis

Descriptive Statistics summarizing the categorically measured the data of the independent variables are reported. Data were analyzed using the SPSS 21.0 statistical software. Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to determine the associations between independent and dependent variables. In the process of data analysis, all responses obtained from the deployed survey instrument were inputted in SPSS 21.0. Using the MANOVA model, I compared dependent variable means for two or more levels of the independent variable while considering multiple dependent variables, namely, the seven subscales of the ASCA Readiness Survey and the overall

readiness score. MANOVA was the most suitable statistical model for the study because the independent variables are categorical and there are multiple dependent variables. A level of significance of 0.05 was used for all statistical tests.

For independent variables found to predict one or more dependent variables in the MANOVA model, post-hoc analyses were conducted to analyze pairwise difference among levels of the independent variables. The Bonferroni criterion was selected for the post-hoc analysis.

Threats to Validity

Regarding external validity, guidance programs in New York State are likely to be typical in some ways and atypical in others compared to guidance programs nationwide. All states operate under uniform federal accountability policies such as No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top, as well as federal mandates for special needs students and policies for allocating federal funds. On the other hand, state education departments vary in significant respects in their accountability and other policies, as well as in their formulas for allocating state revenues to school districts. In addition, student and staff demographics and the organizational culture of schools due to such factors as unionization of school personnel also vary by state. These between-state differences limit the generalizability of my findings from New York to guidance programs nation-wide.

Regarding internal validity, the rationales for the variables chosen are as follows. Urbanization was chosen because urban and rural public school districts typically serve higher concentrations of academically disadvantaged students with fewer resources per-student than suburban school districts. This difference in resources and level of needs of

the population served can be expected to have a major impact on program readiness. School size was chosen as an independent variable because small schools typically have more personal and less bureaucratic cultures than large schools, a factor likely to impact program readiness. Counselor-student ratio was chosen because there would appear to be a clear causal relationship between counselor caseload and capacity of counselors to provide individualized guidance services, a key aspect of program readiness. There do not appear to be threats to internal validity in this research.

Exploratory factor analysis and reliability analyses were conducted in previous studies to provide evidence for the construct validity and reliability of ASCA readiness Survey. Validity and reliability of the instrument using exploratory factor analyses was obtained by the University of Massachusetts National Outreach Center for School Counseling composing of 693 respondents during the time (McGannon, 2007). A standardized factor loading of each predicted item ranged from .43 to .91 wherein the correlation between latent variables showed that the correlation between school counselor skills, and beliefs and attitudes was high (.84) suggesting that these items are measuring similar constructs and the measurement errors of the results were not excessively high (McGannon, 2007). Based on the factor analysis, three factors were identified. In terms of the scale reliability through the computed Cronbach's coefficient alpha, results of the scale reliability measures indicated a high coefficient alpha for the three factors as listed: (a) school counselor characteristics (.924), (b) district conditions (.936), and (c) school counseling program supports (.927) (McGannon, 2007). These results showed that the survey instrument was internal consistent indicating acceptable validity and reliability. The ASCA readiness survey was also extensively used in measuring the readiness of

counseling programs. The subscales of the ASCA readiness survey involves the measure of the different aspects of counseling programs that need to be assessed specifically in this study (McGannon, 2007).

Reliability testing was also conducted on the responses of the ASCA readiness survey instrument to test the reliability of the responses of the study's respondents for this study. This was conducted through the computation of Cronbach's alpha measure of internal consistency. The results indicated that the Cronbach's alpha values of the responses of participants were above .70 for all subscales of the ASCA readiness survey, indicating acceptable reliability.

There are no apparent threats to statistical conclusion validity in this research.

Informed Consent and Ethical Considerations

Every research participant in a study has a right to privacy and the expectation that their data was kept confidential at all times. The right to privacy and confidentiality was disclosed to research participants in the invitation to join the study. The study was conducted in accordance with recognized ethical standards that pertain to research with human subjects, including the protection of subject identities and other confidential information to ensure the protection of human subjects (Sheehan, 2005). The researcher completed the Institutional Review Board process for acquiring formal permission to conduct the research. The IRB Approval number for this project is 03-19-14-0108471.

Although the study's participants were volunteers, they were informed with a brief description of the study, potential risks involved, terms regarding confidentiality, and the contact information of the researcher and committee chairperson, which was contained in the informed consent form. The choice to withdraw at anytime during the

study was emphasized. Participants could withdraw from the study by contacting the researcher, and that participant was removed from the sample.

To protect the privacy of the participants, the experimental results and other data pertaining to each respondent was only available to the researcher and the doctoral committee. Each respondent was assigned a unique number for the survey. Names of the participants did not appear in any of the files including data and summarized data reports. The assigned unique numbers and the corresponding real names were put on a sheet of paper to which the researcher has the only access. The names of the participants of the study were kept so that if additional information is needed, they can be contacted.

The electronic-based material was kept safe on a password-protected computer, and only the researcher had access. Doing so helped insure the anonymity of the participants. Any paper-based material, such as the informed consent form, were placed in a secure filing cabinet. Individual information collected for the current research will be retained for a period of three years, after which it will be purged. Electronic-based material will be permanently deleted from the hard drive, and paper-based material shredded in a paper shredder.

Summary

The aim of this research was to determine associations between school-wide independent variables and guidance program readiness. The study tested associations urbanization, school size, and counselor-student ratio—the independent variables—and program readiness as measured by the ASCA Readiness Survey. The population was active high school guidance counselors in New York State.

The study employed a nonexperimental, quantitative research design and the MANOVA model was used in the data analysis. In this chapter I have discussed the details of the methodology including sampling method, sample size, threats to validity, and ethical considerations and procedures involving research with human subjects. In the following chapter I turn to the results of this research.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

This chapter presents the statistical findings of a quantitative study designed to identify school-wide predictors of guidance program readiness. This study collected survey data from high school guidance counselors in New York State, using the seven subscales and overall score on the ACSA Readiness Survey as the dependent variables. According to Holcomb-McCoy (2010), counseling program readiness predicts program readiness. Survey data were collected using an online surveyand analyzed using the multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) model.

This research addresses the following research question and hypotheses:

RQ1: Do urbanization, school size, and counselor-student ratio predict program readiness? The dependent variable is measured by seven subscales—community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources—and overall program readiness.

$H1_0$: Urbanization has no statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

$H1_a$: Urbanization has a statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

$H2_0$: School size has no statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

$H2_a$: School size has a statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

$H3_0$: Counselor-student ratio has no statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

$H3_a$: Counselor-student ratio has a statistically significant effect on community support, leadership, guidance curriculum, staffing/time use, counselor's beliefs and attitudes, counselor's skills, district resources, or overall program readiness.

In the remainder of this chapter, I discuss my data collection procedures and present my descriptive statistics and data analysis.

Data Collection

In this study I collected survey data from members of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) through the online survey tool Survey Monkey. I continued sampling until I collected surveys from 100 counselors. Since this was not a traditional random sample, it was not possible to measure response rate. Three incomplete surveys were discarded, yielding a final sample size of 97.

Descriptive Statistics

The demographic characteristics of the counselors as well as the schools evaluated in this study are summarized in Table 1. Demographic information on age, gender, and ethnicity were collected from the participants. There were 11 (11%) participants between the ages of 20 and 29 years' old, 26 (26%) participants between 30 and 39 years' old, 28 (28%) participants between 40 and 49 years' old, 18 (18%)

participants between 50 and 59 years' old, and 10 (10%) participants who are 60 years' old. In terms of gender, there were more female participants (n = 53, 53%) than male participants (n = 41, 41%). For the ethnicity of participants, 45% were Caucasians, 23% were Hispanics, 16% were African Americans, and 9% were Asians.

For the school demographics, 37% of the schools had 501–1000 students, while 27% of the schools had 1001–2000 students. Majority of the schools were in an urban location (n = 82, 82%). There were 38 schools with a student:counselor ratio of less than 1:250, while 41 schools had a ratio of 1 counselor to 250 students or higher. 63% of the schools had between 250 and 500 students in counseling.

Table 1

Frequencies and Percentages of Demographic Characteristics

Category	Response	Frequency
Age	20 to 29 years old	11
	30 to 39 years old	26
	40 to 49 years old	28
	50 to 59 years old	18
	60 years old	10
Gender	Male	41
	Female	53
Race	African American	16
	Asian	9
	Caucasian	45
	Hispanic	23
Number of Students	500 students and below	18
	501 to 1000 students	37
	1001 to 2000 students	27
	2001 to 3000 students	10
	3001 to 4000 students	2
	4001 to 5000 students	2
School Location	Urban	82
	Suburban	10
	Rural	3
Counselor to Student Ratio	1 counselor to less than 250 students	38
	1 counselor to 250 students	41
	1 counselor to 500 students	11
	1 counselor to 1000 students	3
Number of Students Counseled	Less than 250 students	20
	250 or more, but less than 500 students	63
	500 or more, but less than 1000 students	10
	1000 or more students	1

Based on the data gathered for this study, an average of 58% of the schools' counselor population were females while an average of 46% of the schools' population

were males. In terms of ethnicity, 32.11% of the students were African Americans, 17.68% were Whites, and 16.74% were Puerto Ricans.

Table 2 presents the intercorrelations of the dependent variables as well as Cronbach's alpha for the variables, a measure of the intercorrelation of the questionnaire items in each construct. Four out of the seven subscales (leadership, staff/time use, counselor's skills, and district resources) were significantly correlated with two or more of the other subscales and with overall program readiness. The counselor's beliefs and attitudes construct was significantly correlated with counselor's skills, but with no other subscale or with overall program readiness. Community support and guidance curriculum were not significantly correlated with any other subscales or with overall program readiness. The Cronbach's alpha values in the table exceed .70 in all but one case, which was only slightly below .70, indicating acceptable internal reliability of the seven subscales.

Table 2

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Dependent Variables, Cronbach's alpha on Main Diagonal

		VARIABLE NUMBER							
#	Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Community Support	0.86							
2	Leadership	0.64	0.71						
3	Guidance Curriculum	0.47	0.61	0.77					
4	Staff/Time Use	0.26	0.38 *	0.53	0.67				
5	Counselor's Beliefs and Attitudes	0.12	0.32	0.21	0.09	0.77			
6	Counselor's Skills	0.22	0.44 *	0.36	0.40	0.46 **	0.85		
7	District Resources	0.42	0.60 *	0.57	0.40	0.10	0.43 **	0.88	
8	Program Readiness	0.71	0.84 *	0.74	0.60 *	0.44	0.68 **	0.76 *	0.90

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality for of the subscale scores. The results showed that none of the dependent variables were normally distributed. However, the MANOVA model used in the data analysis is not sensitive to violations of the normality assumption.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Program Readiness Variables

Factor	*n*	Minimum	Maximum	*M*	*SD*	K-S Test Sig.
Community Support	96	2.18	4.00	3.08	0.32	<0.01
Leadership	96	2.33	4.00	2.96	0.23	<0.01
Guidance Curriculum	96	2.00	4.00	2.88	0.29	<0.01
Staff/Time Use	96	1.2	4.00	2.53	0.39	<0.05
Counselor's Beliefs and Attitudes	96	1.86	4.00	3.11	0.26	<0.01
Counselor's Skills	96	2.62	4.00	3.06	0.21	<0.01
District Resources	95	1.56	4.00	2.77	0.37	<0.01
Program Readiness	96	2.49	4.00	2.95	0.20	<0.01

Data Analysis

The statistical model for this study was multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). The first research hypothesis stated that urbanization predicts counseling program readiness. The independent variable for this analysis is school location in an urban, suburban, or rural setting while the dependent variables are the seven subscales of program readiness and the overall program readiness score. Table 4 shows the result of the MANOVA and Table 5 presents the Bonferroni Post Hoc test to determine which groups of school location have significantly means on the dependent variables. The Wilk's lambda statistic in Table 4, $\lambda = .71$, is significant, $p = .02$, indicating that the

urbanization of school location predicts the set of dependent variables as a whole. According to Table 4, school location predicts counselor's skills, $F(2,94) = 4.931$, p-value = .009. Based on the post hoc test, it was determined that participants from suburban schools had higher mean scores for the counselor's skills than urban schools (Mean Difference = -.1707, p-value = .047). Therefore, I reject the null hypothesis regarding urbanization in the case of counselor's skills and accept it for the other six subscales and overall program readiness.

Table 4

MANOVA Results of Program Readiness Subscales based on School Location

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
School Location	Community Support	0.20	2	0.10	1.00	0.37
	Leadership	0.11	2	0.05	1.07	0.35
	Guidance Curriculum	0.07	2	0.03	0.39	0.68
	Staff/Time Use	0.66	2	0.33	2.29	0.11
	Counselor's Beliefs and Attitudes	0.22	2	0.11	1.58	0.21
	Counselor's Skills	0.42	2	0.21	4.93	0.01
	District Resources	0.02	2	0.01	0.07	0.94
	Program Readiness	0.03	2	0.02	0.40	0.67

Note. Wilk's lambda = .71, p-value = .02

Table 5

Post Hoc Test Results of Program Readiness Subscales Based on School Location

Dependent Variable	(I) School Location	(J) School Location	Mean Difference (I-J)	SE	Sig.
Counselor's Skills	Urban	Suburban	-.17*	0.07	0.05
		Rural	-0.31	0.15	0.12
	Suburban	Urban	.17*	0.07	0.05
		Rural	-0.14	0.16	1.00
	Rural	Urban	0.31	0.15	0.12
		Suburban	0.14	0.16	1.00

The second hypothesis states that school size predicts program readiness. According to Table 6, school size is not a significant predictor of any dependent variables. I therefore accept the null hypothesis regarding school size in the case of all seven subscales and for overall program readiness.

Table 6

MANOVA Results of Program Readiness Subscales Based on School Size

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Students Counseling	Community Support	0.52	5	0.10	1.02	0.41
	Leadership	0.09	5	0.02	0.34	0.89
	Guidance Curriculum	0.25	5	0.05	0.61	0.70
	Staff/Time Use	1.03	5	0.21	1.41	0.23
	Counselor's Beliefs and Attitudes	0.18	5	0.04	0.49	0.78
	Counselor's Skills	0.25	5	0.05	1.07	0.38
	District Resources	0.20	5	0.04	0.27	0.93
	Program Readiness	0.10	5	0.02	0.49	0.78

Note. Wilk's lambda = .625, *p*-value = .431

The third hypothesis stated that counselor-student ratio predicts counseling program readiness. The independent variable for this analysis is counselor-student ratio and the dependent variables were the readiness subscales and overall score. Table 7 presents the result of the MANOVA and Table 8 presents the result of the Bonferroni Post Hoc test to determine which groups are significantly different. The Wilk's lambda statistic in Table 8, $\lambda = .59$, is significant, $p = .01$, indicating that counselor-student ratio predicts the set of dependent variables as a whole. According to Table 7, counselor-student ratio predicts community support, $F(3,93) = 3.897$, p-value = .012, guidance curriculum ($F(3,93) = 7.177$, p-value < .01), district resources ($F(3,93) = 6.004$, p-value = .001), and program readiness ($F(3,93) = 4.139$, p-value = .009).

Based on the post hoc test, it was determined that participants from schools with a smaller counselor to student ratio have higher mean scores for the subscales of community support, guidance curriculum, district resources, and overall program readiness scores. I therefore reject the null hypothesis in the case of these four dependent variables and accept it in the case of the other four.

Table 7

MANOVA Results of Program Readiness Subscales based on Counselor to Student Ratio

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Counselor-Student Ratio	Community Support	1.10	3	0.37	3.90	0.01
	Leadership	0.38	3	0.13	2.68	0.05
	Guidance Curriculum	1.51	3	0.50	7.18	0.00
	Staff/Time Use	0.51	3	0.17	1.15	0.33
	Counselor's Beliefs and Attitudes	0.37	3	0.12	1.74	0.16
	Counselor's Skills	0.09	3	0.03	0.62	0.61
	District Resources	1.99	3	0.66	6.00	0.00
	Program Readiness	0.44	3	0.15	4.14	0.01

Note. Wilk's lambda = .59, *p*-value = .01

Table 8

Post Hoc Test Results of Program Readiness Subscales Based on Counselor to Student Ratio

Dependent Variable	(I) Counselor to Student Ratio	(J) Counselor to Student Ratio	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Community Support	1 counselor to less than 250 students	1 counselor to 250 students	0.04	0.07	1.00
		1 counselor to 500 students	.35*	0.11	0.01
		1 counselor to 1000 students	0.25	0.18	1.00
	1 counselor to 250 students	1 counselor to less than 250 students	-0.04	0.07	1.00
		1 counselor to 500 students	.31*	0.11	0.03
		1 counselor to 1000 students	0.21	0.18	1.00
	1 counselor to 500 students	1 counselor to less than 250 students	-.35*	0.11	0.01
		1 counselor to 250 students	-.31*	0.11	0.03
		1 counselor to 1000 students	-0.10	0.20	1.00
	1 counselor to 1000 students	1 counselor to less than 250 students	-0.25	0.18	1.00
		1 counselor to 250 students	-0.21	0.18	1.00
		1 counselor to 500 students	0.10	0.20	1.00
Guidance Curriculum	1 counselor to less than 250 students	1 counselor to 250 students	0.08	0.06	0.99
		1 counselor to 500 students	.32*	0.09	0.01
		1 counselor to 1000 students	.56*	0.16	0.00
	1 counselor to 250 students	1 counselor to less than 250 students	-0.08	0.06	0.99
		1 counselor to 500 students	0.24	0.09	0.07
		1 counselor to 1000 students	.47*	0.16	0.02
	1 counselor to 500 students	1 counselor to less than 250 students	-.32*	0.09	0.01
		1 counselor to 250 students	-0.24	0.09	0.07
		1 counselor to 1000 students	0.23	0.17	1.00
	1 counselor to 1000 students	1 counselor to less than 250 students	-.56*	0.16	0.00
		1 counselor to 250 students	-.47*	0.16	0.02
		1 counselor to 500 students	-0.23	0.17	1.00
District Resources	1 counselor to less than 250 students	1 counselor to 250 students	-0.01	0.07	1.00
		1 counselor to 500 students	0.31	0.12	0.07
		1 counselor to 1000 students	.65*	0.20	0.01
	1 counselor to 250 students	1 counselor to less than 250 students	0.01	0.07	1.00
		1 counselor to 500 students	0.32	0.12	0.05
		1 counselor to 1000 students	.66*	0.20	0.01
	1 counselor to 500 students	1 counselor to less than 250 students	-0.31	0.12	0.07
		1 counselor to 250 students	-0.32	0.12	0.05
		1 counselor to 1000 students	0.35	0.22	0.70

1 counselor to 1000 students	1 counselor to less than 250 students	-.65*	0.20	0.01
	1 counselor to 250 students	-.66*	0.20	0.01
	1 counselor to 500 students	-0.35	0.22	0.70

Finally, Table 9 presents variance explained (*eta squared*) and significance (*p*) for one-way analysis of variance. School size does not explain a significant amount of variance for any dependent variable and urbanization of school location explains only counselor's skills, $h^2 = .08$, $p < .02$. Counselor-student ratio, however, significantly explains community support $h^2 = .12$, $p < .01$; leadership, $h^2 = .11$, $p < .02$; guidance curriculum, $h^2 = .21$, $p < .00$; district resources, $h^2 = .17$, $p < .00$; and overall program readiness, $h^2 = .13$, $p < .01$.

Table 9

Variance Explained and Significance of One-way Analysis of Variance

	INDEPENDENT VARIABLES					
	urbanization of school location		school size		counselor-student ratio	
DEPENDENT VARIABLES	h^2	*p*	h^2	*p*	h^2	*p*
Community Support	0.03	0.35	0.05	0.43	0.12	0.01
Leadership	0.06	0.06	0.02	0.81	0.11	0.02
Guidance Curriculum	0.01	0.77	0.03	0.79	0.21	0.00
Staff/Time Use	0.04	0.13	0.07	0.23	0.03	0.38
Counselor's Beliefs and Attitudes	0.03	0.31	0.03	0.77	0.06	0.16
Counselor's Skills	0.08	0.02	0.06	0.38	0.02	0.64
District Resources	0.00	0.94	0.02	0.93	0.17	0.00
Overall Readiness	0.01	0.72	0.02	0.81	0.13	0.01

Summary

Surveys were collected for a total of 100 participants, of which 97 cases with complete data were considered in this study. MANOVA was conducted to determine whether urbanization of school location, school size, and counselor-student ratio predict counseling program readiness. Urbanization was found to predict the counselor's skills subscale of readiness, and the effect was significant. School size was not found to predict any of the dependent variables. Finally, counselor-student ratio was found to predict community support, guidance curriculum, district resources, and overall program readiness. All of these effects were significant in one-way ANOVA and in addition, leadership, which was not significant in the MANOVA, did show a significant effect. These findings, especially in the case of counselor-student ratio, provide some evidence for my overall thesis that school-wide factors affect guidance program readiness.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Implications, and Recommendations

In this chapter, I present an overview of the study, summarize my statistical findings, discuss these results in relation to the literature, and discuss the implications of the findings for practice, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

Overview of the Study

The research problem addressed in this study is to identify school-wide factors that impact guidance program readiness, which prior research has found correlated with guidance program effectiveness. Research in industrial organizational psychology shows that organizations are systems comprised of multiple interacting factors, and that the performance of individual employees is greatly constrained by these factors. The dominant school reform paradigm in the United States today does not take this systemic nature of organizations, however. The dominant school reform paradigm at the time fo this study focused on the job performance of individual education professionals and used to improve system outcomes through positive and negative incentives. This paradigm is based on the questionable assumption that organizations are the sum of the individuals who work in them.

The whole system paradigm of school reform described by Fullan (2010), by contrast, examines schools and school districts as organizational systems. It also calls for improving both individual and organizational performance through attention to critical system-wide variables. I used the whole system paradigm as the theoretical framework for this study to investigate the impact of school-wide factors on program readiness. The

study's independent variables were urbanization of school location, school size and counselor-student ratio, three school-wide factors that I hypothesized would predict guidance program readiness, my dependent variable. The dependent variable in this study was measured using the ASCA Readiness Survey.

My data analyses provided partial support for my hypotheses that school-wide factors predict guidance program readiness. Specifically, data analyses showed that urbanization predicts one of the program readiness subscales and counselor-student ratio predicts three subscales and overall program readiness. These findings have implications for policy and positive social change. School size produced significant associations with some dependent variables, but none of the effect sizes were significant.

Summary of Results

I analyzed the data in this study using the multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) model. This analysis showed that school size did not predict any of the study's dependent variables. It did show that participants from suburban schools had higher mean scores on counselor's skills, one of the readiness subscales in the study instrument. Finally, the data analysis showed that respondents from schools with a smaller student:counselor ratios had higher mean scores for subscales of community support, guidance curriculum, district resources, and for overall program readiness scores than those with larger student:counselor ratios.

My findings raise the question why counselors in suburban schools give higher evaluations of their colleagues' skills than urban and rural counselors give of theirs. This may indicate that suburban schools have better training and/or may attract and retain

more skilled counselors due to better pay and less stressful school environments than urban and rural schools. However, it may also indicate to some extent a perception of more adequate performance due to lower workloads and fewer academically and socially-emotionally needy children.

The most important and striking finding in this study is that schools with smaller counselor-student ratios have greater program readiness on the community support, guidance curriculum and district resources subscales, as well as on overall program readiness scores. These findings confirm my experience as a guidance counselor that excessive caseloads make it impossible for counselors to provide quality guidance.

Discussion of the Results in Relation to the Literature

The finding that two school-wide factors predict some measures of guidance program readiness is consistent with the whole system paradigm of organizations, which holds that system-wide factors are the primary determinants of organizational outcomes, not the performance of individual employees. This view is consistent with the industrial organizational psychology literature and guidance counseling case studies reviewed in Chapter Two. The picture that emerges from this literature is that multiple system-wide factors, especially institutional characteristics and availability of resources, strongly influence such individual characteristics as job satisfaction, burnout, and job performance.

The finding regarding counselor-student ratio confirms the findings of Borders and Drury (1992), who cited adequate staffing as an essential component of guidance and counseling programs. A smaller ratio of counselors to students ensures that counselors

can give time and attention to the needs of individual students. The ASCA established that 250 students for every one counselor is the required ratio for a quality guidance program (American School Counselor Association, 2003). In this study's sample, which was broadly representative of the State of New York, a majority (63%) of the schools that employed study participants had a student:counselor ratio higher than 250:1. The association of suburban schools with high counseling program readiness may also reflect to some extent better counselor-student ratios and greater availability of resources generally in suburban than in urban or rural schools.

As presented in Chapter 2, several studies have affirmed the existence of a wide gap between expectations and performance in counseling, and strong evidence pointed to institutional factors, more than individual counselors' goals, as the primarily reasons for the gap (Baggerly and Osborn, 2006). The general impression provided by studies described in Chapter 2 was that school counselors are stretched thin, with counselors assigned many disjointed tasks with insufficient time to perform any of them well. Blackburn (2010) and Griffin (2010) reached similar conclusions.

Responses on the present readiness survey provide further evidence for the findings of prior research that the overloaded and excessively diffuse counselor job description is one of the primary reasons for low job satisfaction and high turnover. In addition, the NCLB accountability regime calls for counselors to become proactive, central personnel in helping all students reach their achievement goals. While this goal is laudable, it adds further stress to guidance counselors who are already coping with excessive workloads with inadequate resources. Moreover, more proactive behavior by

individuals creates its own set of problems from a systems perspective (Lewis & Borunda, 2006; Mitus, 2006; Rayle, 2006; Taylor & Karcher, 2009; Wilkerson & Bellini, 2006).

The finding that urbanization predicts program readiness may indicate that better funded suburban schools can attract and retain more skilled counselors through higher pay and lower need student populations who are easier to service. However, whether the objective skill levels of counselors from suburban settings are actually greater than those of counselors in urban settings is an understudied area of research. In light of my findings, a possible explanation is that this association to some extent reflects a perceived inadequacy of urban counselors' skill levels relative to their excessive caseloads, and workloads generally, compared with counselors in affluent suburban settings.

Implications for Practice

The most important specific recommendation arising from this study is the need for much lower counselor caseloads. The ASCA recommendation of not more than 250 students per counselor is an essential requirement for guidance program readiness and thus for producing quality outcomes. This requires increased guidance staffing, especially in underfunded urban schools serving high concentrations of academically disadvantaged students. A society that wants quality public schools must make the fiscal commitment needed to achieve this objective.

In addition, this study confirms the usefulness of the ASCA National Model as a uniform set of criteria to assess and to help improve counseling programs, not only in high schools but also in other educational levels.

Finally, my overall finding that two school-wide factors predict some measures of guidance program readiness provides some evidence for the whole systems paradigm for understanding and managing organizations. According to this paradigm organization-wide factors are more important than individual differences in employee performance for understanding and improving organizational performance (Deming, 1982, 1994; Fullan, 2010). In fact, improving the performance of individual employees does not in itself improve an organization as a system, and under some circumstance can even have negative effects on the system, a finding documented in the industrial organizational psychology literature on proactivity. By contrast, transforming the system improves both individual and organizational performance (Deming, 1982, 1994; Fullan, 2010), a principle that should become foundational for all school reform initiatives.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation of the study is only sampling counselors from New York State. Given the similarity of the 50 states due to uniform federal policies, it is likely that many of my findings will be robust across states. However, repeating this kind of research in other states may produce variations, which will limit the nation-wide applicability of this study's specific findings.

Self-reporting may be another limitation. Some counselors may have felt a stake in the reputation of their programs and in that case might have overstated the readiness of their programs. On the other hand, counselors in some ways understand the real state of their programs better than third party observers and their survey responses capture

informed judgments about some aspects of program readiness that may not be adequately represented by institutional records.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the general finding that school-wide factors predict guidance program readiness is not dependent on the particularities of the New York sample and the replicability of this general finding in other states is highly likely.

Recommendations for Future Research

It is recommended to expand the scope of the surveys to a wider set of locations in the United States given that New York may be significantly different in some respects compared with the other states. For future research, it is also recommended to explore other variables relevant to the effectiveness of counseling programs, including principal-to-counselor or counselor-to-counselor relationships and other school-wide factors. The percentage of a school's budget allotted to its counseling program and absolute funding levels for its program are likely to be strong predictors of guidance program readiness.

Future research could also involve surveys of other stakeholders in guidance programs, including students, parents, and administrators. Survey research should ideally be supplemented with interviews and focus groups, which capture aspects of stakeholder thinking that cannot be expressed in surveys. In addition, objective sources of data such as school records can provide information that complements the subjective perceptions of stakeholders. Finally, experimental organizational research informed by the whole system paradigm has great potential for identifying variables that are relevant for system improvement and transformation (Moen, Nolan, and Provost, 2012).

Summary and Conclusion

This study provides some evidence for the importance of school-wide variables in understanding guidance program readiness, in this case urbanization of school location and counselor-student ratio. The findings regarding urbanization and counselor-student ratio underscore the essential role of resources and adequate funding for all schools in achieving quality educational outcomes. Overall and in general, the associations between school-wide variables and some subscales of program readiness provide evidence for the whole systems paradigm of organizations and the limitations of accountability systems focused on the performance of individual guidance counsellors and other education professionals.

References

Adler, M. (2010). *Economics for the rest of us: Debunking the science that makes life dismal*. New York, NY: New Press.

Aiken, L. S. and West, S. G. (2003). Multiple linear regression. In J. A. Schinka & W. F. Velicer (Eds.), *Handbook of psychology: Research methods in psychology* (pp. 483–532). New York, NY: Wiley.

Akos, P., Schuldt, H., & Walendin, M. (2009). School counselor assignment in secondary schools. *Professional School Counseling*, *13*(1), 1-11. Retrieved from http://soe.unc.edu/fac_research/publications/journal_articles/professional_sch_counseling_akos.pdf

Alaska State Department of Education and Early Development. (2001). *The comprehensive counseling program for Alaska Public Schools. A guide for program development K-12th grade*. Juneau, AK. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED478360).

Alemu Y. (2013). Assessment of the provisions of guidance and counseling services in secondary schools of East Harerge Zone and Hareri Region, Ethiopia. *Middle Eastern & African Journal of Educational Research, 2,* 28-37. Retrieved from http://www.majersite.org/issue2/yirgalem.pdf

Aluede, O., & Egbochuku, E. (2005). The influence of personal characteristics on secondary school teachers' beliefs about school guidance and counseling programs. *Education*, *127*(3), 440-448.

Aluede, O., & Egbochuku, E. (2009). Teachers' opinions of school counseling programs in Nigerian secondary schools. *Educational Research Quarterly, 33*(1), 42-61. Retrieved from http://erquarterly.org/

Amatea, E. S., & Clark, M. A. (2005). Changing schools, changing counselors: A qualitative study of school administrators' conceptions of school counselor role. *Professional School Counseling, 9*(1), 1-20. Retreived from http://www.schoolcounselor.org

Amatea, E. S., & West-Olatunji, C. A. (2007). Joining the conversation about educating our poorest children: Emerging leadership roles for school counselors in high-poverty schools. *Professional School Counseling, 11*(2), 1-16. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org/

American School Counselor Association. (2003). *The ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling program.* Alexandria, VA: Author.

American School Counselor Association. (2009). The role of the professional school counselor. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org/content.asp?contentid=240

American School Counselor Association. (2008). *The ASCA national Model: A framework for school counseling programs.* Alexandria, VA: ASCA.

Anyon, Jean. (1997). *Ghetto schooling: A political economy of urban education reform*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Arowolo, D. (2013). Counsellors' perception of problems facing guidance and counselling services in Nigerian schools. *Journal of Education and Practice*,

4(24), Retrieved from http://iiste.org/Journals/index.php/JEP/article/viewFile/8906/9180

Astramovich, R. L., Coker, J. K., & Hoskins, W. J. (2005). Training school counselors in program evaluation. *Professional School Counseling, 9*(1), 1-10. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org

Baggerly, J., & Osborn, D. (2006). School counselors' career satisfaction and commitment: Correlates and predictors. *Professional School Counseling, 9*, 1-18. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org

Belschak, F. D., Den Hartog, D. N., & Fay, D. (2010). Exploring positive, negative and context-dependent aspects of proactive behaviors at work. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 63*, 267-273. doi:10.1348/096317910X50143

Blackburn, M. (2010, September 10). A numbers game for high school counselors. *U.S. News and World Report.* Retrieved from http://www.usnews.com/education/articles/2010/09/10/a-numbers-game-for-school-counselors

Bolino, M., Valcea, S., & Harvey, J. (2010). Employee, manage thyself: The potentially negative implications of expecting employees to behave proactively. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 83*, 325-345. doi:10.1348/096317910X493134

Borders, L. D., & Drury, S. M. (1992). Comprehensive school counseling programs: A review for policy makers and practitioners. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 70*(4), 487-498. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6676.1992.tb01643.x

Brown, C., Dahlbeck, D. T., & Sparkman-Barnes, L. (2006). Collaborative relationships: School counselors and nonschool mental health professionals working together to improve the mental health needs of students. *Professional School Counseling, 9*(4), 332-335. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org

Bryan, J., Holcomb-McCoy, C., Moore-Thomas, C., Day-Vines, N. L. (2009). Who sees the school counselor for college information? A national study. *Professional School Counseling, 12*(4), 1-20. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org

Bryant, J., &Milsom, A. (2005). Child abuse reporting by school counselors.*Professional School Counseling, 9*(1), 1-15. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org

Burns, N., & Grove, S. K. (2005). *The practice of nursing research: Conduct, critique, & Utilization* (5th ed.). St. Louis, MO: Elsevier Saunders.

Burrow-Sanchez, J. J., & Lopez, A. L. (2009). Identifying substance abuse issues in high schools: A national survey of high school counselors. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 87*(1), 72-81. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6678.2009.tb00551.x

Camizzi, E., Clark, M. A., Yacco, S., & Goodman, W. (2009). Becoming 'difference makers': School-university collaboration to create, implement and evaluate data-driven counseling interventions. *Professional School Counseling, 12*(6), 1-13. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org

Carey, J. C., & Dimmitt, C. (2006). Resources for school counselors and counselor educators: The Center for School Counseling outcome research. *Professional*

School Counseling, 9(4), 416-420. Retrieved from http://schoolcounselor.metapress.com/content/b66gwmp0h64476h3/

Carey, J. C., Dimmitt, C., Hatch, T. A., Lapan, R. T., & Whiston, S. C. (2008). Report of the National Panel for Evidence-Based School Counseling: Outcome research coding protocol and evaluation of student success skills and second step. *Professional School Counseling, 11*(3), 197-206. Retrieved from http://www.studentsuccessskills.com/National.Panel.pdf

Carey, J. C., Harrity, J., & Dimmitt, C. (2005). The development of a self-assessment instrument to measure a school district's readiness to implement the ASCA national model. *Professional School Counseling, 8*(4), 305-312. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounseling.org

Chimes, M., & Gordon, S. (2008). What works: A student and counselor explore college recruitment. *Journal of College Admission,199,* 26. Retrieved from http://www.nacacnet.org/research/PublicationsResources/Journal/Pages/Journal-of-College-Admission.aspx

Cicourel, A. V., & Kitsuse, J. I. (1963). *The educational decision-makers*. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill.

Cohen, J. (1977). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (Rev. ed.). New York, NY: Academic Press.

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences.* Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Cooper, D. R., & Schindler, P. S. (2011). *Business research methods* (11th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw- Hill/Irwin.

Cozby, P. C. (2001). *Methods in behavioral research.* New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

Creswell, J. W. (2005). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluation quantitative and qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cross, T. L., & Burney, V. H. (2005). High ability, rural and poor: Lessons from Project Aspire and implications for school counselors. *The Journal of Secondary Gifted Education, 16*(4), 148-156. Retrieved from http://pendientedemigracion.ucm.es/info/sees/web/LINKS/Journal%20of%20Secondary%20Gifted%20Education.htm

Culbreth, J. R., Scarborough, J. L., Banks-Johnson, A., & Solomon, S. (2005). Role stress among practicing school counselors. *Counselor Education & Supervision, 45*(1), 58-74. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6978.2005.tb00130.x

D'Agostino, B. (2012). School Reform and Other Diversions, in The Middle Class Fights Back: How Progressive Movements Can Restore Democracy in America (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.

Dahir, C. A., & Stone, C. B. (2009). School counselor accountability: The path to social justice and systemic change. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 87,* 12-22. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6678.2009.tb00544.x

Dawley, D., Houghton, J. D., & Bucklew, N. S. (2010). Perceived organizational support and turnover intention: The mediating effects of personal sacrifice and job fit. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 150*(3), 238-237. doi:10.1080/00224540903365463

Deemer, S. A., & Ostrowski, M. (2010).Students' perceptions of a program for exploring postsecondary options. *American Secondary Education, 38*(3), 79-96. Retrieved from http://www1.ashland.edu/coe/about-college/american-secondary-education-journal

Deming, W. E. (1984). *Out of the Crisis*. Cambridge, MA. M.I.T. Press.

Deming, W. E. (2000). *The New Economics for Industry, Government, Education*.2nd ed. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

DePaul, J., Walsh, M. E., & Dam, U. C. (2009). The role of school counselors in addressing sexual orientation in schools. *Professional School Counseling, 12*(4), 1-17. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.com

De Stobbeleir, K. E. M., Ashford, S. J., & de Luque, M. F. S. (2010). Proactivity with image in mind: How employee and manager characteristics affect evaluations of proactive behaviors. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 83,* 347-369. doi:10.1348/096317909X479529

Dimmit, C., & Carey, J. (2007). Using the ASCA national model to facilitate school transitions. *Professional School Counseling, 10*(3), 227-232. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org

Dimmit, C. (2009). Why evaluation matters: Determining effective school counseling sexual orientation. *Professional School Counseling, 12*(6), 395-399. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org

Dodson, T. (2009). Advocacy and impact: A comparison of administrators' perceptions of high school counselor role. *Professional School Counseling, 12*, 1-12. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org

Farmer-Hinton, T. L., & Adams, T. L. (2006). Social capital and college preparation: Exploring the role of counselors in a college prep school for black students. *The Negro Educational Review, 57*(1-2), 101-118. Retrieved from http://thener.org/

Fitch, T. J., & Marshall, J. L. (2004). What counselors do in high-achieving schools: A study on the role of school counselor. *Professional School Counseling, 7*(3), 1-10. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org

Fullan, M. (2010). All Systems Go: The Change Imperative for Whole System Reform. London: Sage Publishers.

Galassi, J. P., & Akos, P. (2004). Developmental advocacy: Twenty-first century school counseling. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 82*(2), 146-157. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6678.2004.tb00296.x

Griffin, C. (2010, September). High school counselors take it on the chin: A recent survey finds guidance counselors receiving low marks from graduates. *District Administration, 46*(8), 80-81. Retrieved from http://districtadministration.com/

Gysbers, N. C., & Henderson, P. (2001). Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs: A rich history and a bright future. *Professional School Counseling, 4*(4), 246. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounseling.org

Gysbers, N. C., & Henderson, P. (2002). *Implementing comprehensive school guidance programs: Critical leadership issues and successful responses*. Greensboro, NC: University of North Carolina.

Hanushek, E. A., and Hoxby, C. M. (2005a). "Developing Value Added Measure for Teachers and Schools." In *Reforming Education in Arkansas*, by Koret Task Force. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press.

Hanushek, E. A., and Hoxby, C. M. (2005b). "Rewarding Teachers." In *Reforming Education in Arkansas*, by Koret Task Force. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press.

Hargreaves, A. & Fullan, M. (2012). Professional Capital: Transforming Teaching in Every School. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Herbert, J. T., Trusty, J., & Lorenz, D. C. (2010). Career assessment practices for high school students with disabilities and perceived value reported by transition personnel. *Journal of Rehabilitation, 76*(4), 18-26. Retrieved from http://gseuphsdlibrary.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/career-assessment-practices-for-high-school-students-with-disabilities-and-perceived-value-reported-by-transition-personnel.pdf

Hess, F. M. (2006). *Tough Love for Schools: Essays on Competition, Accountability, and Excellence*. Washington, DC: The AEI Press.

Hine, T. (1999). *The rise and fall of the American teenager*. New York, NY: Harper/Collins.

Holcomb-McCoy, C. (2010). Involving low-income parents and parents of color in college readiness activities: An exploratory study. *Professional School Counseling*, *14*(1), 1-16. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org

Johnson, J., Rochkind, J., & Ott, A. (2010). Why guidance counseling needs to change. *Educational Leadership,* 67(7), 74-81.

Johnson, J., Rochkind, J., & Ott, A. (2010). *Can I get a little advice here?* San Francisco, CA: Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Keppel, G., & Zedeck, S. (2001) Data analysis for research designs: Analysis of variance and multiple regression/correlation approaches. New York, NY: W. H.

Keuhl, R. O. (2000). *Design of experiments: Statistical principles of research design and analysis.* Pacific Grove, CA: Duxbury Press.

Kolodinsky, P., Draves, P., Schroder, V., Lindsey, C., & Zlatev, M. (2009). Reported levels of satisfaction and frustration by Arizona school counselors: A desire for greater connections with students in a data-driven era. *Professional School Counseling*, *12,* 1-13. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org

Kozol, J. (1991). *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Kozol, J. (2005). *The Shame of the Nation: The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America*. New York, NY: Crown Publishing Group.

Lewis, R. E., &Borunda, R. (2006). Lived stories: Participatory leadership in school counseling. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 84*(4), 406-415. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6678.2006.tb00424.x

Lilley, S. C. (2008). *Effective school counseling teams.* Doctoral dissertation, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Blacksburg, VA. Retrieved from http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=psyh&AN=2008-99131-150&site=ehost-live

Marczyk, G. R., DeMatteo, D., &Festinger, D. (2005). *Essentials of research design and methodology*.New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Mason, E.C.M., & McMahon H (2009).Leadership Practices of School Counselors.*ASCA Professional School Counseling*.Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/leadershipspecialist/leadershippractices.pdf

McGannon, D. (2007). *A validity study of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model Readiness Self-Assessment Instrument*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

McNichol, E., Oliff, P., & Johnson, N. (2011). *States continue to feel recession's impact*. Washington, DC: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Retrieved from http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=711

Mitkos, Y. M., & Bragg, D. D. (2008). Perceptions of the community college of high school counselors and advisors.*Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 32*, 375-390. doi: 10.1080/10668920701884513

Mitus, J. S. (2006). Organizational socialization from a content perspective and its effect on the affective commitment of newly hired rehabilitation counselors.*Journal of Rehabilitation, 72*(2)12-21. doi:10.1108/00483481011064136

Moen, R. D. et al (2012). Quality Improvement Through Planned Experimentation, Third Edition. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

Nelson, J. A., Robles-Pina, R., & Nichter, M. (2008). Analysis of Texas high school counselors' roles: Actual and preferred counseling activities. *Journal of Professional Counseling: Practice, Theory and Research, 36*(1), 30-47. Retrieved from http://tpcjournal.nbcc.org/

Neuman, W. L. (2003). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Neuman, W. L. (2005*). Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

New York State Department of Education. (2011). *State aid to schools: A primer*. Albany, NY: The State University of New York. Retrieved from http://www.oms.nysed.gov/faru/PDFDocuments/Primer11-12D.pdf

Nichols, S. L. & Berliner, D. C. (2007). *Collateral Damage: How High-Stakes Testing Corrupts America's Schools.* Cambridge: Harvard Educational Press.

O'Day, Jennifer et al, eds. (2011). *Education Reform in New York City: Ambitious Change in the Nation's Most Complex School System.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Educational Press.

Porter, L.S., R. M. Steers, R. T. Mowday, and P.V. Boulian (1974). Organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover among psychiatric technicians. *Journal of Applied Psychology 59.*

Rapp, K. (2005). Merit scholarships: Are high school counselors' perceptions aligned with university practices? *Journal of College Admission, 189,* 15-22. Retrieved from http://www.nacacnet.org/research/PublicationsResources/Journal/Pages/Journal-of-College-Admission.aspx

Ravitch, D. et al (2009). *NYC Schools Under Bloomberg and Klein: What Parents, Teachers, and Policymakers Need to Know.* New York, NY: Lulu Press.

Ravitch, D. (2010). *The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Rayle, A. D. (2006). Do school counselors matter? Mattering as a moderator between job stress and job satisfaction. *Professional School Counseling, 9,* 1-17. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounseling.org

Reeves, D. B. (2001). *Crusade in the Classroom: How George W. Bush's Eduction Reforms Will Affect Your Children and Our Schools.* New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

Rudel, R. J., Moulton, P., & Arneson, K. (2009). The shortage tsunami and high school guidance counselors' perspectives on future nurse recruitment. *MEDSURG Nursing, 18*(6), 269-377. Retrieved from http://www.medsurgnursing.net/cgi-bin/WebObjects/MSNJournal.woa

Ryan, J. A. (2007). Raising achievement with adolescents in secondary education—The school counselor's perspective. *British Educational Research Journal, 33,* 551-563. doi:10.1080/01411920701434060

Salkind, N. J. (2006). *Exploring research* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Scarborough, J. L., &Culbreth, J. R. (2008). Examining discrepancies between actual and preferred practice of school counselors. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 86,* 446-461. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6678.2008.tb00533.x

Schaefle, C., Smaby, M. H., Packman, J., & Maddux, C. D. (2006). Performance assessment of counseling skills based on specific theories: Acquisition, retention and transfer to actual counseling sessions. *Education*, *128*(2), 262-275.

Schimmel, C. (2008). School counseling: A brief historical overview. Retrieved October 12, 2011, from http://wvde.state.wv.us/counselors/history.html

Sheehan, M. (2005). International Security: An Analytical Survey. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

StatPac (c. 2007). *Questionnaire Design Considerations*. Retrieved September 8, 2011, from http://www.statpaccom/surveys/questionnaire-design.htm

Steen, S., & Noguera, P.A. (2010). A broader and bolder approach to school reform: Expanded partnership roles for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling*, *14*(1), 1-20. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounseling.org

Tatar, M., &Bekerman, Z. (2009). School counselors' and teachers' perceptions of their students' problems: Shared and divergent views. *Counseling and Psychotherapy Research, 9,* 187-192.

Taylor, E. R., &Karcher, M. (2009). Cultural and developmental variations in the resiliencies promoted by school counselors. *Journal of Professional Counseling: Practice, Theory and Research, 37*(2), 66-89.

Urdan, T. C. (2005). *Statistics in plain English* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Laurence Erlbaum.

Uwah, C. J., McMahon, H. G., & Furlow, C. F. (2008). School belonging, educational aspirations and academic self-efficacy among African American male high school students: Implications for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling, 11,* 1-14. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounselor.org

Wachter, C. A., Clemens, E. V., & Lewis, T. F. (2008). Exploring school counselor burnout and school counselor involvement of parents and administrators through an Adlerian theoretical framework. *The Journal of Individual Psychology, 64*(4), 432-442. Retrieved from http://www.alfredadler.org/journal-of-individual-psychology

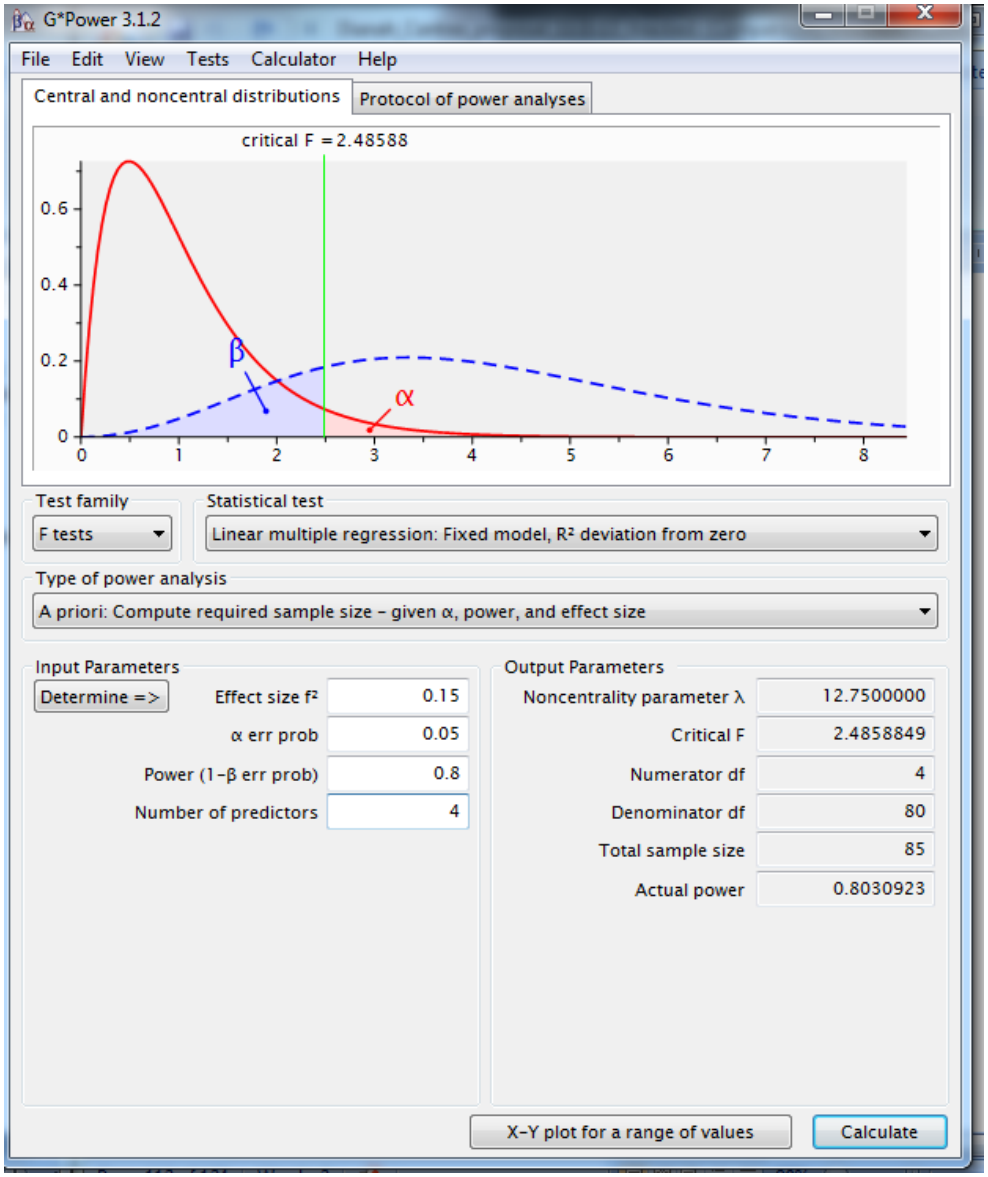
Wagner, J., & James, A. (2006). A pilot study of school counselors' preparedness to serve students with diabetes: Relationship to self-reported diabetes training. *Journal of School Health, 76*(7), 387-395. Retrieved from http://www.ashaweb.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3341

Ware, W. B., & Galassi, J. P. (2006). Using correctional and prediction data to enhance student achievement in K-12 schools: A practical application for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling, 9,* 1-16. Retrieved from http://www.schoolcounseling.org

Wilkerson, K., & Bellini, J. (2006). Intrapersonal and organizational factors associated with burnout among school counselors. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 84*(4), 440-452. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6678.2006.tb00428.x-

Yaremko, R. M., Harari, H., Harrison, R. C., & Lynn, E. (1986). *Handbook of Research and Quantitative Methods in Psychology: For Students and Professionals*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Appendix A: G*Power Computation



Appendix B: ASCA Readiness Survey

Instructions: Please select the most appropriate response to each of the statements below:

Components:	Like My District	Somewhat Like My District	Not Like My District	Possible Interventions if Not Like My District
A. **Community Support**				
1. The school board recognizes that school counseling is an important component of all students' public education.				
2. The school board believes school counselors can play an influential role in closing the achievement gap.				
3. Parents understand the intended benefits of the school counseling program.				
4. Parents support the school counseling program.				
5. Students believe the school counseling program is an important resource.				
6. Teachers at all levels appreciate the importance of the school counseling program.				
7. Teachers at all levels collaborate with school counselors in meeting school counseling program goals and objectives.				
8. School counselors are recognized by teachers for their expertise in issues that have an impact on learning and teaching.				
9. Parents from all racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds believe school counseling can be an important source of help for to all students.				
10. Influential business and community leaders are familiar with and support the school counseling program.				
11. Community leaders would be eager to be active participants on a school counseling advisory board.				
B**. Leadership**				

1. The superintendent believes the school counseling program is an essential component of the district's educational mission.				
2. The superintendent believes the school counseling program can help support students' academic achievement.				
3. The school counseling program has a full-time, district-level leader who is respected by the superintendent, principals and school counselors.				
4. The superintendent commits resources to support school counseling program development.				
5. The district's school counseling leader knows the principals of standards-based reform and can communicate the relationships between school counseling activities and student learning outcomes.				
6. The district's school counseling leader knows how to initiate and coordinate systemic change in the school counseling program.				
7. The majority of principals believe school counselors ought to be engaged in developmental and preventive activities.				
8. The majority of principals believe school counselors ought to be involved in helping students achieve academically.				
9. The majority of principals would be receptive to redefining school counselor activities.				
10. The majority of principals would be receptive to creating yearly plans with school counselors.				
11. The majority of principals would be willing to commit resources to alleviate school counselors from routine clerical/administrative duties so they can devote at least 80 percent of their time to activities directly benefiting students.				
C. **Guidance Curriculum**				
1. The school counseling program operates from a set of student learning objectives that have measurable student outcomes.				
2. The school counseling program operates from a set of student learning objectives that are grouped by grade or grade cluster.				
3. The school counseling program operates from a set of student				

learning objectives grounded in both the ASCA National Standards and local norms.				
4. The school counseling program operates from a set of student learning objectives connected to the district's academic curricula.				
D. **Staffing/Time Use**				
1. School counselor workload is consistent with needs of a National Model program (e.g. 300 students/elementary counselor; 200 students/middle school-high school counselor).				
2. School counselors spend at least 80 percent of their time in activities the directly benefit students.				
3. School counselors spend at least 25 percent of their time in educational activities that promote student development and prevent problems.				
4. School counselors spend less than 30 percent of their time responding to crises, emergencies and delivering mental health counseling,				
5. School counselors do not spend an inordinate amount of time on routine clerical tasks.				
E. **School Counselors' Beliefs and Attitudes**				
1. In general, school counselors are open to change.				
2. In general, school counselors believe it is important to adopt the ASCA National Model.				
3. In general, school counselors believe they should be responsible for helping all students achieve academically.				
4. In general, school counselors believe it is important to demonstrate how students are different as a consequence of guidance interventions.				
5. In general, school counselors believe it is important collect outcome data in order to be able to modify interventions.				
6. In general, school counselors agree on a mission statement that				

establishes the school counseling program as an essential educational program that is designed to serve all students.				
7. In general, school counselors are willing to devote the time to learn new skills.				
8. In general, school counselors believe it is important that they serve as advocates for underserved students.				
F. **School Counselors' Skills**				
1. School counselors are competent in a wide range of interventions (whole school, classroom guidance, small group and individual counseling).				
2. School counselors understand the individual and systemic factors associated with poor academic achievement and the achievement gap.				
3. School counselors are familiar with the principles of standards-based educational reform and can identify the relationships between school counseling activities and student performance.				
4. School counselors can identify evidence-based interventions that enhance academic achievement, career development and personal/social development.				
5. School counselors know how to be effective advocates for underserved students.				
6. School counselors can measure how students are different as a consequence their interventions.				
7. School counselors can use institutional data (e.g. achievement, attendance, school climate surveys) to describe current problems and set goals.				
8. School counselors use technology effectively to access needed student data.				
9. School counselors use technology effectively to accomplish routine clerical tasks efficiently.				
10. School counselors use technology effectively to communicate with students, parents and colleagues.				
11. School counselors are recognized as leaders in their schools.				

12. School counselors can establish goals and benchmarks for school counseling in their own schools.				
13. School counselors can document their impact on students for principals, school committees and the community.				
G. **District Resources**				
1. The district's school counseling program has developed or adopted a set of instruments, referenced to the student learning objectives, to measure student change in academic development, career development and personal/social domains.				
2. The district provides school counselors with regular institutional data reports (disaggregated student achievement, attendance and school climate data) in user-friendly form in order to facilitate monitoring students and defining problems.				
3. The district has a school counselor performance evaluation system that evaluates counselor effectiveness in a broad range of activities (e.g. whole school, classroom guidance, small group and individual counseling).				
4. The district has a school counselor performance evaluation system based upon professional performance standards.				
5. The district has a school counselor performance evaluation system connected to meaningful professional development.				
6. The district has a system for ensuring all school counselors have access to developmental supervision to improve practice.				
7. The district is committed to providing professional development to help school counselors develop skills necessary for the implementation of the ASCA National Model.				
8. The district school counseling leader has implemented a system for monitoring the ongoing outcomes and continuously improving programs in each school.				
9. The district school counseling leader has implemented a system for periodic program evaluation for the entire school counseling program.				
10. The district school counseling leader has implemented a system				

for coordinating school counseling program activities (e.g. a master calendar).				
11. The district school counseling leader has implemented a system ensuring good communication and information sharing across the school counseling program.				

Appendix C: Demographic Questionnaire

Part 1: Counselor Characteristics

Select the most appropriate response for each of the questions below:

1. Indicate your age:

    - 20 to 30 years old
    - 30 to 40 years old
    - 40 to 50 years old
    - 50 to 60 years old
    - 60 years old and above

2. Indicate your gender:

    - Male
    - Female

3. Indicate your ethnicity

    - African American
    - Asian
    - Caucasian
    - Hispanic
    - Native American

Part 2: School/district Characteristics

4. How many students are currently in your high school?

- 500 students and below
- 501 to 1000 students
- 1001 to 2000 students
- 2001 to 3000 students
- 3001 to 4000 students
- 4001 to 5000 students
- 5001 students and above

5. Please indicate whether your school is located in a rural, suburban or urban setting?

    - Urban
    - Suburban
    - Rural

6. What is the counselor to student ratio in your high school?

    - 1 counsellor to less than 250 students
    - 1 counsellor to 250 students
    - 1 counsellor to 500 students
    - 1 counsellor to 1000 students
    - 1 counsellor to more than 1000 students

7. How many students are you currently counselling?

    - Less than 250 students
    - 250 or more, but less than 500 students
    - 500 or more, but less than 1000 students
    - 1000 or more students

8. Please enter a value to respond to the following questions:

a. What percentage of students in your school are male
___%
b. What percentage of students in your school are female
___%
c. What percentage of students in your school are:

African American: ___%
Asian: ___%
Caucasian: ___%
Hispanic: ___%
Native American: ___%

Appendix D: Participant Informed Consent Form

Dear _____,

My name is Dianah Cantres. I am a student at the Walden University working on my degree Organizational Psychology. I am conducting a research study entitled: How Effective Are New York State High School Counseling Programs. The purpose of the research study is to determine whether school characteristics such as urbanization, school size, counselor-student ratio, and student population demographics have a bearing and/or affects counselling program effectiveness.

Your participation will involve completing a survey. Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your expected duration of participation is approximately 1-2 days. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so without penalty or loss of benefit to yourself. If you choose not to participate, simply discard this packet and its contents. If you submit the completed surveys and decide you do not wish to participate, contact the researcher so your information may be removed from the study. The results of the research study may be published but your identity will remain confidential and your name will not be disclosed to any outside party.

In this research, there are no foreseeable risks to you. Although there may be no direct benefit to you, a possible benefit of your participation includes researchers achieving a greater understanding on several theories relating to the said association of factors thus might resolve current issues as seen in your practice. With this understanding, the researcher can understand the association between the said variables and can provide recommendations to provide benefits to the parents.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please call me at 1-917-669-6303 or email me at diancantr@aol.com. You could also contact the Walden University Research Department at 1-800-925-3368 concerning any questions you may have about your rights as participants.

As a participant in this study, you should understand the following:

1. You may decline to participate or withdraw from participation at any time without consequences.
2. Your identity will be kept confidential.
3. Dianah Cantres, the researcher, has thoroughly explained the parameters of the research study and all of your questions and concerns have been addressed.
4. Data will be stored in a secure and locked area. The data will be held for a period of five years, and then destroyed.
5. The research results will be used for publication.

“By signing this form you acknowledge that you understand the nature of the study, the potential risks to you as a participant, and the means by which your identity will be kept confidential. Your signature on this form also indicates that you are 18 years old or older and that you give your permission to voluntarily serve as a participant in the study described.” You may keep a copy of the Participant Informed Consent Form.

Signature of the participant _____ Date _____

Signature of the researcher _____ Date _____