

## **Role Responsibilities, Time Commitments, and Counseling Activities of Ohio Licensed School Counselors**

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*Professional School Counselors occupy a unique and important role in the U.S. educational system. The appropriate use of school counselors is vital to the mental health and success of students. The purpose of the study was to examine job duties of licensed school counselors in the State of Ohio and their perceptions of their job duties using the School Counselor Activity Rating Scale. 56 school counselors completed the survey, including demographic and supplemental questions to measure their actual (What I Do) job duties and their preferred (What I Prefer) job duties. Participants reported that they spent 36.71% of their time performing counseling activities and 23.77% of their day performing other activities. Participants also reported that they would prefer to do more counseling, consultation, curriculum, and coordination activities than they actually do with less other administrative duties.*

*Keywords: professional school counselors, school counselor roles, school counselor duties, school counselor activities*

The current state of the national educational philosophy places strong emphasis on achievement and aptitude testing to assist schools in monitoring and measuring school performance in relation to both state and national standards. The drawback to this emphasis, however, is the lack of time, energy, and resources taken away from the professional counseling directive for school counselors; the mental and emotional needs of students.

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Studies indicate that one in five children meet the criteria for a mental health disorder (National Institute of Mental Health, n.d.; Perou et al., 2013). Depression, anxiety, addictions, trauma, violence, and self-injury/suicide are prominent issues in the modern educational environment. School counselors are a valuable and needed resource in identifying and addressing these issues, but are limited in these role due to the administrative and non-clinical duties.

School counselors do not provide long-term counseling or therapy, however school counselors are expected to respond to the immediate needs of students, which often include mental or emotional issues. School counselors are trained to provide brief counseling interventions and support, as well as connect students and families to appropriate community resources. For students who may not have access to community mental health services, the school counselor may very well be the only mental health professional a student may see. Consequently, it is imperative that school counselors have the time available to provide services that address these critical needs, in addition to other roles and responsibilities that are often bestowed upon them by administration to provide system support.

### **History of the Problem**

Role confusion and ambiguity has been an ongoing problem for school counselors who are often pulled in many different directions by administrators and stakeholders who may or may not understand the role of the professional school counselor. Beginning in vocational guidance, the shift towards a more holistic approach to student support has required the professional school counselor to serve as both educational leader and counselor in order to better meet the needs of students. This transformation has left school counselors with some divide regarding their professional identity and primary role in the school setting. In the absence of a clear professional identity, school counselors find themselves being asked to complete non-counselor related tasks and it could be argued that time is spent inappropriately and student needs are going unmet (Pyne, 2012).

The American School Counseling Association has attempted to remedy issues of role confusion by providing school counselors with directives for professional practice. These directives include the ASCA National Standards for Students (2004), which were later replaced by the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success (2014), and the ASCA National Model (2003, 2005, 2012). The ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success provides school counselors with standards for program development. The ASCA National Model provides a framework for the planning, implementation and evaluation of a comprehensive school counseling program which addresses student needs across three domains: academic, social/emotional development and careers; yet, it has been argued that this model does not specifically address the mental health related issues that impact students across these three domains (Brown & Trusty, 2005; Walley, Grothaus & Graigen, 2009).

ASCA recommends that school counselors deliver services via guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services and system support. All four components of the delivery system provides a platform for addressing mental health related issues in some way, but particularly, responsive services affords school counselors the opportunity to work directly with students who may be experiencing any mental or emotional disturbance. These services include individual counseling, group counseling and crisis response (ASCA, 2012). Gybsers and Henderson (2000) recommend that school counselors spend between 25-40% of their time within the delivery system providing responsive services, with the highest percentages recommended for elementary and middle school counselors. School counselors still struggle to find a balance that allows them to use responsive services to adequately address personal/social and emotional needs, in addition to their perceived primary role of promoting academic success and career readiness. Disproportionate counselor to student ratios, school counselor self-efficacy addressing personal, social and emotional issues, and a lack of clinical supervision are all contributing factors that prevent school counselors from achieving this professional balance (DeKruyf, Auger, Trice-Black, 2013).

### **Previous Scholarship**

Recent studies have explored how much time school counselors spend performing the various tasks within a comprehensive school-counseling program. Walsh, Barrett and DePaul (2007) examined the frequency of activities performed by elementary school counselors in Boston and how they aligned with the new direction of the school counseling profession and the delivery component of the ASCA National Model. Participants kept weekly logs of the activities they completed each week and the researchers identified 9 school counselor activity categories: group services, individual student services, individual student appraisal, service connections, family support and outreach, school climate activities and school screenings. Participants reported the following allocation of time: 34% of their time was spent providing responsive services (individual student services and service connections), 32% of their time was spent providing guidance curriculum (group services, school climate activities and family support/outreach), 17% in system support (staff and agency support) and 17% in individual planning (individual student appraisal and school screenings). Percentages of time spent delivering responsive services and guidance curriculum were consistent with recommendations provided by Gysbers and Henderson (2000), however the activities identified in these two categories may have some overlap in other areas, indicating some subjectivity regarding how school counselors conceptualize the various activities they perform.

Scarborough (2005) developed the School Counseling Activity Rating Scale (SCARS) to explore differences between best practices and the actual job duties of school counselors. The SCARS measures the frequency in which school counselors actually perform various activities in comparison to the frequency in which they would prefer to perform those same activities. School counselor activities are divided into four categories: counseling, coordination, consultation and curriculum. A fifth category, including non-counseling activities commonly performed by school counselors, is identified as “other” (Scarborough, 2002). The SCARS is a validated instrument that has been used in a number of studies since its creation (2005). Nelson, Rolbes-Pina, and Nichter (2008) used the SCARS to examine these differences in high school counselors in Texas (n=475) and found that participants reported spending less time performing counseling, coordination,

consultation and curriculum activities than they would prefer. Participants also reported that they perform more administrative or clerical activities, under the “other” category than they would prefer. Similarly, Vaughn, Bynum and Hooten (2007) used the SCARS and the Counselor Survey to examine school counselors’ perceptions of job duties in Alabama (n=52) and found that participants reported that they spend less time performing counseling and curriculum activities than they would prefer but more time performing “other” activities than they would prefer. Both studies suggest significant discrepancies between the actual job duties school counselors perform and those they believe they should perform. These results are consistent with the role ambiguity issues that continue to linger within the profession.

### **Research Problem**

In 2015, the Ohio Department of Education published the *Ohio Standards for School counselors* to provide guidance for implementing a comprehensive school-counseling program aligned with the ASCA National Model (Ohio Department of Education, n.d.). In 2016, the state took it a step further and established the Ohio School Counselor Evaluation system to evaluate school counselors on the newly adopted standards. The establishment of state standards and an evaluation system were both advances for the profession as it relates to accountability and professional growth, but failed to examine a major issue school counselors often reference, a misuse of time. Partin (1993) conducted a study in the state of Ohio exploring how much time school counselors actually spent performing counseling related activities and which activities were taking the most time away from providing direct services. School counselors from all grade levels (n=210) reported that on average 40% of their time was spent providing individual and group counseling, yet they would prefer to do more. About 23% of their time was spent in testing/student appraisal, administration or clerical, and other non-guidance/counseling related tasks. Of these activities, paperwork (records), scheduling and administrative tasks were reported as the greatest “robbers” of time (Partin, 1993).

More than two decades later, school counselors still complain that these activities, along with testing responsibilities, interfere with time that can be spent providing actual counseling services to students. The Ohio Department of Education has yet to provide any clear directives regarding appropriate and inappropriate duties for school counselors or recommendations for percentage of time spent in the various components of a comprehensive school counseling program. Benigno (2017) surveyed elementary and middle school counselors in the state of Texas regarding counselor perception of job duties in relation to administrator expectations (n=50) and found that 90% of participants reported that they were performing duties they did not believe were appropriate. Respondents expressed dissatisfaction with time being spent supervising common areas, coordinating testing and excessive amounts of paperwork. The author opined that open communication and more collaborative planning opportunities between school counselors and administration could repair this disconnect (Benigno, 2017). No published studies have revisited this issue in the state of Ohio since 1993. Amidst the current trends regarding youth mental health and the continued evolution of the professional identity of the school counselor, it is vital that job duties be reviewed regularly to ensure program delivery activities are consistent with the needs of students.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research is to provide a current profile of the common duties, responsibilities, and job profiles of licensed professional school counselors in the State of Ohio. Specifically, this study will explore the frequency with which school counselors perform various duties, the frequency with which they would prefer to perform these duties and the percentage of time spent addressing mental health related issues. An exploration of professional responsibilities will yield data to identify potential deficits in program implementation and/or any imbalances in time allocation. The specific research questions addressed were:

- 1) How often do school counselors engage in counseling related activities/responsive services?

- 2) Which activities would school counselors prefer to perform more frequently than they actually perform?
- 3) Which activities would school counselors prefer to perform less frequently than they actually perform?
- 4) What percentage of time do school counselors spend providing services that address mental health related issues?

## **Method**

### **Participants**

Fifty-six school counselors (46 female, 10 male) completed all of our survey items. The majority of participants identified as European American/White (95%) with 2 identifying themselves as African American/Black and 1 as Asian American. Most participants were employed full-time (95%); 23 participants (41%) had five or fewer years of experience as a school counselor, 10 (18%) had 6-10 years of experience, nine (16%) had 11-15 years of experience, eight (14%) had 16-20 years of experience, and the remaining six participants had more than 20 years of experience. Participants reported working in high schools (34%), elementary schools (29%), middle schools (18%), or in multilevel or alternative school environment (19%). Most participants worked in a rural school district (50%), followed by suburban (32%) and urban (18%) school districts. Over half of the participants (57%) reported that they were the only counselor in their building or that they were the only counselor covering multiple schools. Nearly all respondents (96%) reported being a “Licensed Professional School Counselor” and almost half (42%) reported having a “Teaching License”.

### **Materials and Procedures**

Participants received a link to a Qualtrics survey via an email sent through the Ohio School Counselor Association’s listserv. In addition to providing demographic information,

participants completed Scarborough's (2005) SCAR to describe both what they actually did and what they would prefer to do in the broad categories of counseling, consultation, curriculum, coordination, and other activities. Participant's responses within each category were generally consistent with observed Cronbach alphas ranging from .77 to .92 for the different counseling activities that they actually engaged in but less consistent for the other category, with an alpha of .54; responses to their preferences were consistent across all dimensions with Cronbach alpha's ranging from .74 to .90. After completing the SCAR participants also divided their work time into these broad categories such that the total added to 100%. Finally, participants completed an open-ended question asking what percentage of their week was devoted to mental health.

## Results

The five broad activities captured by the SCAR were measured with both global ratings of each categories as well as composite ratings computed from averaging the

Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics of Global Activities and Composite Ratings of Activities*

	Global Ratings			Composite Ratings						<i>d</i>
				What I Do			What I Prefer			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range	Alpha	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Alpha	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Counseling	36.71	19.57	10-75	.83	3.37	.64	.83	4.01	.60	.89**
Consultation	16.00	9.07	5-40	.77	3.66	.66	.84	3.88	.69	.33**
Curriculum	13.98	15.87	0-75	.91	2.73	.66	.90	3.81	.81	1.05**
Coordination	10.54	9.50	0-40	.78	2.59	.61	.89	3.68	.70	1.52**
Other	23.77	20.78	0-80	.54	2.94	.65	.74	2.30	.64	-1.07**

*Note.*  $n = 56$ .  $d =$  Cohen's  $d$  effect size comparing "What I Do" to "What I Prefer",  $n = 56$ , with significance value from the corresponding  $t$ -test. \*\*  $p < .01$ .

responses to individual activities. A summary of both the global ratings and composite

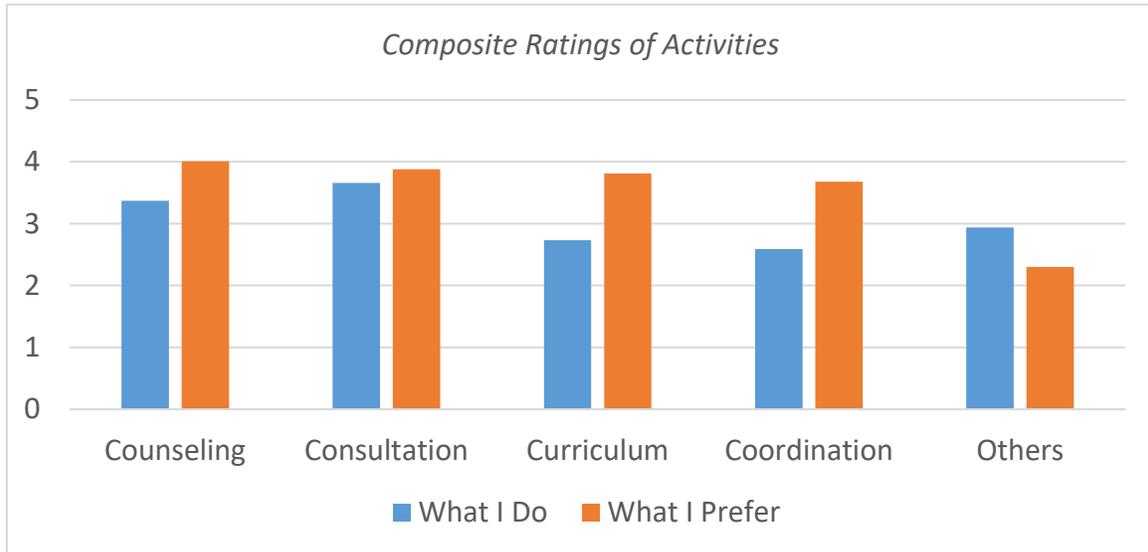
ratings of what counselors actually do and what they would prefer to do is provided in Table 1.

### Research Question 1

Research question 1 focused on how often school counselors engaged in counseling related activities and responsive services. Overall, participants indicated that they spent 36.71% ( $SD = 19.57\%$ ) of their time engaging in counseling activities and responsive services. Utilizing the global ratings presented in Table 1, a repeated measures ANOVA indicated that there were significant differences between participants ratings of activities, Wilks  $\Lambda = .40$ ,  $p < .01$ . On average, counseling activities made up 36.71% of counselors work time; as no hypotheses existed, post-hoc analyses were carried at with a protected paired-sample  $t$ -test with the alpha level set at .005 (.05/10 potential analyses). Results indicated that counseling activities were rated representing significantly more of their day than consultation activities,  $t(55) = 6.72$ ,  $p < .005$ , curriculum activities,  $t(55) = 5.67$ ,  $p < .005$ , and coordination activities,  $t(55) = 7.67$ ,  $p < .005$ , but not other activities,  $t(55) = 2.53$ ,  $p = .014$ . Other activities were rated presenting significantly more of their day than coordination activities,  $t(55) = 4.09$ ,  $p < .005$ , but not consultation,  $t(55) = 2.36$ ,  $p = .022$ , or curriculum,  $t(55) = 2.36$ ,  $p = .022$ , activities. Consultation activities took up significantly more time than coordination activities,  $t(55) = 3.10$ ,  $p < .005$ . No other comparisons were significant at the .005 level. A composite ratings of school counselor activities and preferences is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1

*Composite Ratings of School Counselor Activities and Preferences*



### Research Questions 2 and 3

Research question 2 focused on identifying which activities school counselors would prefer to perform more frequently than they actually perform and research question 3 focused on identifying which activities school counselors would prefer to perform less frequently than they actually perform. To address this the composite ratings presented in Table 1 were analyzed using a repeated measures ANOVA. Results indicated that there were significant differences in mean ratings for both what they did, Wilks  $\Lambda = .23, p < .01$ , what they would prefer to do, Wilks  $\Lambda = .51, p < .01$ , and the interaction between their actual activities and their preferred activities, Wilks  $\Lambda = .22, p < .01$ . This interaction is the primary interest to us, as it indicates that the pattern of differences between “do” and “prefer” were not the same.

Comparing ratings of what counselors do to what they would prefer to do with repeated measures  $t$  tests indicated that there were significant differences in all five categories. In general, participants would prefer to engage more in all four counseling related activities than what they actually do and engage less in other activities than what they currently do. The biggest difference in what they would prefer to do more of was seen for coordination activities ( $d = 1.52$ ), followed by curriculum activities ( $d = 1.05$ ),

counseling activities ( $d = .89$ ), and finally consultation activities ( $d = .33$ ). Effect sizes and their significance levels are presented in the final column of Table 1.

#### **Research Question 4**

Research question 4 focused on understanding what percentage of time school counselors spend providing services that address mental health related issues. While some of the SCAR items address mental health related activities, we focused on the open ended questions that participants answered regarding what percentage of their time was spent addressing mental health related issues. Responses ranged from 3 to 75% with an average of 35.67% ( $SD = 22.91$ ) and a median of 35%. A one-sample  $t$ -test indicated that was a significant amount of time (assuming a null hypothesis of 0%),  $t(55) = 11.65, p < .001$ ; further exploration indicated that this was significantly more than a quarter of school counselor's time,  $t(55) = 3.49, p < .001$ , but not significantly more than a third of their time,  $t(55) = .87, p > .05$ .

#### **Discussion**

Previous research has consistently demonstrated that school counselors are limited in supporting student's mental health needs (DeKruyf, Auger, & Trice-Black, 2013). This limitation is in direct contradiction to the ASCA Code of Ethics (American School Counselor Association, 2016) which states in section A.1: "School counselors have a primary obligation to the students..." (n.p.). In addition, standard A.7.a. of the American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics (2014) directs counselors to advocate at individual, group, institutional, and societal levels to reduce barriers and obstacles that interfere with access and/or the growth and development of clients. The education and training standards of school counseling also contributes to the blueprint of the roles of the school counselor. Section 5 of the Council of the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) Standards (2016) require counselor education programs to adequately prepare school counselors to possess the professional knowledge and skills

necessary to promote the personal and social development of all P-12 students.

The present study explored licensed school counselor's views of their job duties in an effort to assess whether or not they feel they are meeting the needs of the students they serve. Statistical significance was found in several job duties assesses, indicating a disparity between either what school counselors are actually doing (or not doing) and what they would prefer (or not prefer) to do. The data gives indication to the changing job roles of school counselors as they adapt to a rapidly changing and dynamic school environment and global society.

Several key data points can be applied to the modern practice of school counseling. A strong message collectively surmised by the present research is that school counselor's feel that they are not being used to address the mental health needs of their student population. In the larger category of counseling activities, a consistent theme was found in participants feeling strongly that they would prefer to do more group counseling interventions than they do. Groups in schools can offer efficient and effective ways to address current issues effecting the mental health of students (Steen, Henfield, & Booker, 2014). Specific groups topics identified as important included addressing relationship and social skills, family issues (e.g. parental divorce), and substance abuse issues. In the curriculum activities category, participants expressed a desire to conduct classroom lessons on topics such as helping students in their relationships with others (friends and family), personal growth, conflict resolution, substance abuse, and personal safety issues. In the coordination activities category, participants identified conducting parent education workshops, coordinating school advisory teams to identify counseling program needs, and conducting ongoing needs assessments as duties they would like to perform more. Of particular note, scores were much less significant in the consultation activities category, indicating a relative compatibility between what school counselors do and what they prefer to do.

As the data indicates, certain over-arching themes can be found throughout the counseling, curriculum, and coordination activity domains. The data indicates that participants preferred to do more interventions on the topics of substance abuse. This may be contributed to the tragic and ongoing heroin epidemic currently plaguing the State of

Ohio (Daniulaityte et al., 2017). Additionally, data suggested that participants would also like to do more work with students on interpersonal relationship and social issues. The ease of access to the dynamic and complicated world of social media and cyber-bullying is clearly affecting the psychoeducational health of students (Paez, 2018). Assisting students on topics connected to relating to others, peer relations, conflict resolution, and personal safety were identified as specific interventions school counselors would like to do more. Lastly, participants placed significant emphasis on working more with children and parents on issues related to the family system, including divorce and family discord.

In contrast to participants wanting to spend more time doing certain task than they are currently doing, several duties were identified by participants as duties that they would like to do less than currently are doing. These duties include coordinating standardized testing, responding to health issues, performing hall, bus, and cafeteria duty, filling in for teaching duties, and scheduling students for classes. These duties have long been identified as “time robbers” (Partin, 1993) and conflict with school counselors addressing the mental health needs of students.

### **Implications for School Counselors**

The need for more mental health services in all settings and environments is increasingly recognized as an imperative to a healthy and altruistic society. Schools provide a present and powerful environment for the implementation of competent professional counseling. The utilization of professional school counselors in appropriate, effective, and efficient roles is essential for this role. In alignment with the ASCA National Model, school counselors are responsible for addressing academic, social/emotional and career development in the K-12 setting (American School Counselor Association, 2012). The data presented in this study showed that school counselors would prefer to do more counseling, curriculum consultation and coordination activities than what they actually do. In efforts to increase the amount of time spent in the above-mentioned direct and indirect services, the researchers suggest the following strategies: 1) Use of data to advocate for student programming, 2) Integration of counseling related activities within non-counseling related

tasks, 3) Collaboration with mental health providers and 4) Collaboration with teachers in addressing social emotional standards in the classroom.

### **Use of Data**

The management of a comprehensive school counseling program requires school counselors to collect and analyze data in order to identify the specific needs of students in their building and ensure that they are providing programming that addresses these needs (Dollarhide & Saginak, 2018). Data analyzed from the school data profile as well as data collected through needs assessments and/or the use of an advisory council can be presented to administration to advocate for student needs and gain support in making groups, guidance lessons and both coordination and consultation activities a priority over other non-school counselor specific tasks. Data should also be collected to document the use of school counselor time for accountability purposes as well as to use in advocating for professional duties when time is not spent appropriately (Dollarhide & Saginak, 2017).

### **Integration of counseling activities within non-counselor related activities**

School counselors are often asked to perform tasks that are not aligned with what ASCA identifies as “appropriate activities for school counselors”. These tasks, many of which fall in the “other” category in the data collected in the present study take up a great deal of school counselor time, but are typically not optional. In the instance that these tasks are considered required duties, school counselors can make efforts to use any time with students to integrate academic, social/emotional and/or career counseling. For example, school counselors responsible for lunch duty can use the lunch period to check in with students and/or facilitate social discussions or activities appropriate for the lunchroom. Another example would be to call students down to provide academic or career advising when inputting student data or performing scheduling.

### **Collaboration with mental health providers**

The integration of school-based therapists is becoming more and more common in the K-12 setting. These licensed mental health professionals provide students with services throughout the school day (Roanes & Hoagwood, 2000). School counselors have access to these providers to consult on student issues and to collaborate when appropriate. School counselors can work with administration and mental health agencies to establish appropriate expectations for consultation and collaboration within school based mental health provider contracts.

### **Collaboration with Teachers**

The 2019-2024 Ohio Strategic Plan for Education calls for teachers to integrate social emotional learning within the curriculum (Ohio Department of Education, 2018). This push for an emphasis on the “whole child” provides the perfect opportunity for school counselors to collaborate with classroom teachers on the implementation of lessons that focus on social and emotional development. School counselors can provide supplemental programming that aligns with lessons facilitated in the classroom such as groups or additional guidance lessons. School counselors can also provide school wide programming that aligns with specific units to enhance each lesson. Collaboration with teachers is a great strategy to keep school counselors engaged with students in the classroom as well as positively impact the perception teachers have of the professional role of school counselors.

### **Limitations**

The purpose of this study was to get a current profile of the day-to-day duties of licensed Ohio school counselors compared to their ideal duties based on their perceived needs. Although statistically adequate, our sample size was not exhaustive. The participants of this research were limited geographically to the State of Ohio and only represent licensed school counselors in the public-school system. Individual states can vary significantly in the administration, role, and utilization of school counselors (American School Counselor Association, 2017). Although a degree of generalizability is possible,

the differing state standards determined by the respective state Departments of Education influence the role and utilization of professional school counselors. Additionally, a random sampling was not utilized, as all participants were members of an online email list associated with the Ohio School Counseling Association. This also reduces the generalizability of the research within Ohio school counselors, as well as a nationally.

### **Direction for Future Research**

As society continues to evolve through the rapid changes affecting the mental health of our children, schools need to continue to meet the changing needs prompted by this evolution.

An ongoing attempt to quantify the fluctuating mental health needs of our students is of vital importance in meeting these needs. Future research must assess these needs in an ongoing pursuit of quantifying this data and providing compatible services. As school counselors are on the front line of this work, further investigation into the best and most efficient use of professional school counselors is warranted. A priority should be directed toward a thorough analysis of the mental health needs of children and adolescents through the medium of the educational and academic environment.

Social, political, and economic variables strongly impact the utilization of school counselors in the current educational environment. One emerging trend is the increase in school districts using contracted counseling services to assist in meeting the mental health needs of students. Districts are turning to this option as a means of reducing the costs of providing counseling services within the school building, further complicating the role of the school counselor (Robertson, Lloyd-Hazlett, Zambrano, & McClendon, 2016). It is unclear, however, whether schools are turning to this option due to the utilization of school counselors in increasingly administrative capacities. The results of the present study would indicate that school counselors generally prefer doing *less* traditionally administrative duties such as coverage issues, test preparation and administration, and substitute teaching and covering classes. Future research can also investigate the emerging role of contract therapists being hired and providing services in schools.

School counselors and clinical mental health counselors alike could benefit from more research and training on how to work effectively, efficiently and most importantly collaboratively with one another in the school setting. To assist with the endeavor, research is needed to investigate the views and perspectives of various school personnel, including counselors, administrators, and Boards of Education. Research should build upon the current roles and perspectives on the delivery of mental health services among the people in the position to create and fulfill these roles. Lastly, regarding the sample size and generalization limitations of our study, the profession could benefit from an extension of the study findings to a more national sample and potentially produce nationally generalizable results.

## **Conclusion**

Professional school counselors provide needed and vital services to children and adolescents. Essential for the successful implementation of these needed services is to ensure that professional school counselors have the time and resources to perform one of the primary service that they are trained and competent to perform – counseling. As the modern school environment grows in complexity through high-stakes testing, state and federal standards, and district report cards and evaluations, professional school counselor roles are increasingly being re-directed to duties further away from the important mission of recognizing and addressing the mental health needs of students.

Many variables contribute to the job duties and roles filled by school counselors, including educational/political climates, funding, and school administrator's views (Clemens, Milsom, Cashwell, 2009). It is our hope that the data will contribute to positive evolution of school districts (administrators and school boards) utilizing school counselors in effective and efficient ways – guided by the feedback of the school counselors themselves.

Advocacy efforts need to be prioritized on the adequate and effective use of school counselors to the utmost of their potential.

The intent of our research was to assist in identifying how the modern school counselor spends their time during a day and compare this to how they believe they should be spending their time in meeting the needs of the students of their district. Our data clearly delineates the concept that the true experts on school counseling, the professional school counselors themselves, do not believe that they are being utilized as effectively as possible in their daily job duties. Our research has identified themes and consistencies in the specific content areas where practicing school counselors think they are being either under or over utilized. These duties are vitally important to identify, especially as the needs of the students evolve and change with social trends and environmental diversity.

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