DEFINING QUALITIES OF SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELORS

by

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DEFINING QUALITIES OF SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELORS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to collect data concerning perceptions of school guidance counselors about issues that may help to develop more quality school counseling approaches. School counselors must be aware of their own cultural characteristics and the many cultural backgrounds and the cultural differences of others who they wish to help. This cultural variability may also affect counseling decision-making. Involving the parent with the child in counseling sessions is also the role of a school counselor.

In this study, counselors were asked, based on their personal perceptions, what they perceived to be adequate amounts of professional growth hours interns should have before they begin involvement with students. The overall response recommended new counselors should have 300 or more hours. Most counselors stated that personal growth should be an on-going process.

The instrument used was a survey/questionnaire that was sent to three school districts in the State of Arizona. The researcher chose at random the following schools districts to participate: Glendale Unified School District in Glendale, Arizona, Page Unified School District, Page, Arizona and Alhambra Unified School District in Phoenix, Arizona. Six high schools and one middle school participated in the survey/questionnaire that included fifteen high school counselors and two middle school counselors. The
questions ranged from multicultural issues, parent involvement, professional perception
and order rank questions of a school counselor’s daily job performance.

Most school counselors responded that cultural identity and knowing the cultural
backgrounds of students they counsel is very important. Personal interaction between the
counselor and the counselee is just as important and not so much being from the same
cultural background. Most school counselors feel that Program Development was the
priority job performed daily and Counseling Skills were second. Counselors also feel
they should be more of a support system for the students and parents, than sending work
home with educational activities or attempting to solve a student’s problems.

Recommendations were that counselors should be encouraged to attend
workshops and seminars to keep up with school counseling standards each year. Another
recommendation was to involve new in-coming students to participate in summer
orientation type programs. This will familiarize themselves with the school, faculty and
staff and current students.
DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to all my nieces and nephews, specifically, to those who have made the choice to continue their educational opportunities; Natricia, Rogerick and Latanya. I especially dedicate this to Latanya and Latamara Lynn who have inspired and gave me the challenge to further my education. In return, I hope to be an inspiration to all young students. Teenagers are challenging, and they are our future; my passion is to work with them in pursuing their goals. Thank you Jeff, for your help and support in my school projects but most of all, thank you for believing in me.

A special thank you goes to all the school counselors who have participated in my survey/questionnaire. Another special thanks go to the schools that participated in this study. They are:

Glendale High School - Glendale, Arizona
Montebello Elementary School - Phoenix, Arizona
Moon Valley High School - Glendale, Arizona
Page High School - Page, Arizona
Sunnyslope High School - Glendale, Arizona
Thunderbird High School - Glendale, Arizona
Washington High School – Phoenix, Arizona
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CHAPTER ONE
THE PROBLEM

Introduction

“Children and adolescents growing up in the worlds of today are facing a bewildering array of new and old challenges” (Gysbers, Lapan & Blair, 1998, p. 1). The complexity of the problems encountered in schools today, as well as the problems that many families face (such as divorce rates, blended families, financial burdens) demand more innovative and effective counseling approaches than many schools currently sustain (Caffery, Austin, Erdman & Cook, 2000).

These challenges on students are real and the impact it has on them reduces their personal, academic and career development. According to Carlson & McDonough (as cited in Kraus, 1998) “As this past decade has witnessed, social changes have made a significant impact on the ability of the family to perform their most important function, fostering the healthy development of children” (p.4).

In response to these challenges, education reform began in the 1980s to try to address issues in and outside of education; however, little attention was made to include school counselors in the reform process. “The lack of attention to guidance and the work of school counselors continues to this day” (Gysbers, Lapan & Blair, 1999, p. 1). Increased interest for the quality of schooling nationwide is important to continue professional development of teachers and school counselors.
To increase the effectiveness of a school counselor and the need for personal growth, a school guidance counselor must attend workshops and seminars even after graduation. It is also effective to participate in the in-service training at work and other study groups pertaining to school counseling.

The four stages of internship for counselors will be discussed that include; Orientation, Working, Transition & Integration. Depending on whether a school counselor chooses school or college level counseling, "The roles and responsibilities of school counselors have grown. The duties of school counselors include facilitating students' growth in the domains of academic, career, personal and social development" (Nelson & Johnson, 1999, p. 1).

School counselors work with individuals and varying sized groups. Counselors work with schoolteachers, school administrators, parents, social workers, churches, and other counselors to develop better lifestyles for students. The nature of a school counselor's work depends on the type of casework and caseload at hand. The qualifications of a school counselor include a master's degree in school counseling, education or career counseling.

The code of ethics and standards of Practice of the American Counseling Association (ACA, 1997) poses interesting implications for school counselors who might work with families. Standard A.1.d states, "Counselors recognize that families are usually important in clients' lives and strive to enlist family understanding and involvement as a positive resource when appropriate. "Standard C.a. adds, "Counselors practice only within the boundaries of their competence based on their education, training, supervised experiences, state and national professional credentials, and appropriate professional experience". (Magnuson, 1998, p. 1& 2)

The requirements and qualifications for school counseling positions vary depending on which state a counselor chooses to reside in. Most counselors do choose to
be nationally certified and sometimes seek advancement to higher positions such as principals of schools, program directors, instructional supervisors and the department heads of guidance departments. The different approaches and styles of a school counselor and the nature of his/her work to include: multicultural counseling, a family systems approach, and group intervention approaches.

Development of the Problem

The dropout rate in the schools has increased across the United States. Lack of support, violence in the schools, low self-esteem and other pressures of life are some factors that contribute to the student dropout rate. This reduces their goal to continue in pursuing an education. Young students often do not receive sufficient support, encouragement or motivation from family members to remain in school.

"It may be posited that students learn at their fullest potential when the two most important influences in their life -- the school and the home -- have positive and continuous cooperative exchanges" (Hickson & Baltimore, 1998, p.2). Often the lack of support extends to the school systems, especially in the school-counseling arena. According to Hickson & Baltimore, (1998), "There has been limited school counselor training in school counseling programs" (p.1).

"As school counseling training is limited, there is also lack of proper supervision to counseling interns. School counselors are numerous & varied, they need a supervision model that is clear, concise, practical and provides concrete direction regarding their roles and the supervision process" (Nelson & Johnson, 1999, p.2).
The Need for the Study

School guidance counselors may need additional training depending on the type of counseling in which they choose to work. “It is unlikely that many interns will attain the skills associated with the final stage within a typical timeframe of a master’s level internship. Nelson (1999) continues, In fact, most students will not reach this level until they have post-master’s work experience in schools” (p.6). There are varieties of school counselor training programs.

Some of these are; study groups for counselor professional development, family involved and intervention approaches, counselors working with families, multicultural counseling, and in-service training. According to Wagner & Smith, (as cited by Benshoff & Paisley, 1996) “Peer supervision has been defined as a process through which counselors use their relationships and professional skills to assist each other in becoming more effective and skillful helpers” (p. 1).

One of the arduous task for counselors is to determine an approach toward a style of counseling methods. As stated by Kaslow, “It is important to note that theory and technique are teachable, however, style and charisma are not” (Hinkle, 1993, p.3). A school counselor can then apply those skills & techniques to resolve student issues, which may result in better communication and more positive responses.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to collect data concerning perceptions of school guidance counselors about issues that may help to develop more quality school counseling approaches. There is a lack of supervision, at the same time; school counselors across the
nation have expressed the need and the desire for supervision of their counseling. An aspect of this study is to assist guidance counselor graduate students during their internship/practicum hours to plan and find more effective ways to improving school counseling. All counselors can apply those skills & techniques when dealing with people and the environment he/she may wish to work in. "School counselors can be effective change agents for students" (Kraus, 1998, p. 1).

School counselors, among others are encouraged to attend workshops and seminars for professional development such as the EQUITY 2000. "Toward a New Vision of School Counseling" is a workshop for counselors that covers critical issues involving school counselors and "those who teach and supervise them" (Equity 2000, p. 1).

In attending the EQUITY 2000 National Faculty:

Experienced counselors who complete the series of School Counselor Workshops will be eligible for certification as EQUITY 2000 counselor educators. These educators will meet an increasing demand for professional development to help schools reform their counseling programs in ways that reflect the changing role of school counselors. EQUITY 2000 counselor educators will be thoroughly grounded in the research, strategies, and tools need by change agents and educational leaders. (Equity 2000, 2000, p.1.)

There are other regional workshops that school counselors can attend and sharpen their skills. These workshops are held throughout the United States. Workshops like Quest focus on topics such as High-Quality Professional Development, Improve School and Classroom Climate, Cooperative Learning, Conflict Resolution, and Violence Prevention and many more.
Research Question

How can school counselors better develop to prepare themselves and apply their skills and techniques to serve students?
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter will represent information concerning:

✓ Multicultural counseling in the schools
✓ Parent Involvement: The Counselor's Challenge
✓ Mentoring
✓ Study Groups for Professional Development
✓ Internship Programs
✓ Objectives for Counselor Education Program

The education of a student counselor in practice is expected to meet the needs and requirements while in training in the school systems. According to a study from Mississippi State University, Counselors are expected to develop and demonstrate knowledge and skills in the eight common core areas” (Counselor Education-Educational Psychology, 2000, p. 1). The eight common core areas include:

♦ Human Growth and Development
♦ Social and Cultural Foundations
♦ Helping Relationships
♦ Group Work
Career and Lifestyle Development

Appraisal

Research and Program Evaluation

Professional Orientation

Every school counselor may have his/her own approach toward a type of counseling. Some counseling approaches are somewhat unique. Multicultural counseling is an example. How does a school counselor deal with young students who develop cultural identities, self-esteem, and form opinions of themselves and other cultural groups?

The counselor’s challenge and role is to also involve the parents in the counseling sessions. “A school counselor can be more effective in family counseling in which they must first attempt to understand their own family of origin and the problematic family issues” (Hickson & Baltimore, 1998, p. 2, 3 & 4). Hickson & Baltimore stated there are three approaches that can help a school counselor with family counseling:

1) The family autobiography - This design is to help counselors examine their own family of origin by applying the family system concepts. For those families who are entering counseling, the common themes are relationship difficulties in the family and normal transitional issues.

2) Cultural family of origin - A society is sometimes a country (e.g. Japan) or sometimes an ethnic group within a large country (e.g. Polish American or Palestinian Arabs living in Israel). So, the perception of rules and group norms and values are aspects of culture. Cultural identity cannot be separated from the development of the individual’s personality and culture reflects the subjective orientation toward life that individuals have.
3) **Family sculpting** - One important technique used in family counseling as a symbolic process for helping families understand their current difficulties is the family sculpture. The "sculptor" moulds the family members into whatever posture that best represents the issues at hand.

**Multicultural Counseling in the Schools**

"Most school counselors do not have enough practical experience in training, nor in their daily lives, with racial and ethnic minorities" Herring, (1998, p.2). Herring (1998) states that "meaningful multicultural counseling begins with school counselors' self-awareness of multiculturalism" (p. 2.). "Student counselors who feel they are equipped to counsel multicultural students should have sufficient knowledge of young students' cultural backgrounds, other cultural differences and the effect they may have on students' academic standing" (Baruth & Manning, 2000, p. 2).

Additionally, there are reasons for a rationale for multicultural middle school counseling as follows:

1) **Changing demographics of young students.** "The 1998 adolescents' census data in the U.S. shows 2,937,000 10 to 14 year-old African Americans; 770,000 Asian Americans; and 2,515,000 Hispanic Americans. This population will increase significantly in the next decade with nationalities such as India, Pakistan, Iran and Iraq. This will pose the need for new challenges of school counselors" (Baruth & Manning, 2000, p. 2).

"Multicultural counseling can benefit learners of all developmental periods, yet several developmental characteristics suggest that the early adolescent period is an optimal time to provide intervention that promotes cultural identities, fosters close friendships and
social networks, and develops commitments to justice and fairness” (Baruth & Manning, 2000, p. 5).

2) **Developmental characteristics of students developing positive cultural identity.** If students develop negative identity, they face an uphill battle for themselves and their community. Cultural identity is an aspect of their personal and social evolution of their culture. They must also possess positive understanding that mixed race relationships are an important part of the maturation process. Young students beginning at the tender age of 10 to 14 years begin to develop an understanding of “self-esteem and cultural identities and form opinions of other individuals and cultural groups” (Baruth & Manning, 2000, p. 2).

3) **Different cultural backgrounds:** It is important for school counselors to understand the many cultural backgrounds of students and to respect their customs and traditions. For example, some cultures encourage young girls to take assertive roles in society when their tradition may discourage it (Baruth, 2000). Another example is that Native Americans do not have direct eye contact when speaking to one another. Having direct eye contact is deemed to be disrespectful.

Problems that non-native students will face coming from other countries are; discrimination, racism, language barriers, pressures from peers that conflict with cultural values and feelings of mistrust of professionals. Students deserve school counselors who understand their cultural differences and the effects these differences may have on their learning and development (Baruth & Manning, 2000, p. 3).

What is multicultural middle school counseling? According to Baruth & Manning, (2000) there are three accepted interpretations of this term:
(a) Counseling - in which the counselor and counselee are culturally different because of socialization acquired in distinct cultural, subculture, racio-ethnic, or socioeconomic environments.

(b) A situation in which two or more people with different ways of perceiving their social environment are brought together in a helping relationship.

(c) Any counseling relationship in which the counselor and the counselee belong to different cultural groups, hold different assumptions about social reality, and subscribe to different world views. (p. 2)

Young students should feel a sense of justice and develop the understanding that treating all people fair and taking action against treating others wrongfully can last a lifetime (Baruth & Manning, 2000, p. 2). School counselors must be aware of their own cultural characteristics, be aware of their own cultural backgrounds and how it will affect their counseling, the ability to resolve differences between races, and the “skill to send and receive both accurate and appropriate verbal and nonverbal messages” (p. 4).

According to Baruth & Manning (2000), the school counselors who have been trained in multicultural counseling can improve and be more effective with adolescents?

The following are a few guidelines for the middle school counselors to possess.

➤ They need to have multicultural counseling techniques (knowledge, skills and attitudes) and the commitment to provide cultural intervention.

➤ They must understand the early adolescent development period and problems commonly associated with this age group.

➤ The need to understanding the effects of differing class and cultural values between the counselor and counselee, understand some young people’s reluctance and resistance.

➤ The belief that people in some cultures prefer to discuss personal, emotional, and other problems with parents, friends, and relatives rather than with professional counselors. (p. 4).
As cited by Herring (2000), "Many current programs are also haphazard and fragmented without a strong conceptual framework linked to specific competencies, plus cultural differences are dealt with from an intellectual level without references to the sociopolitical ramifications of counseling (oppression, discrimination an racism)" (p. 477).

**Parent Involvement: The Counselor’s Challenge**

A part of a school counselor’s role is to involve parents in the consultation between parent and student. "Based on the belief that parents are the central figures in developing their children’s healthy personalities, parent consultation is offered as primary prevention in the hopes of avoiding emotional and social difficulties in children" (Beale, 1999, p. 1).

In some school systems, counselors are experimenting with certain approaches in dealing with students in their schools. An example is that the parents are given take-home activities to develop better understanding of their children. The counselors provided the parents with a planned series of educational activities that give added knowledge, understanding and hope they can develop a more effective way in dealing with their children. School counselors send work home with parents, giving them activities such as a questionnaire of 25 questions.

Some of these questions include their child’s likes, dislikes and daily habits. This is to allow parents to “test their awareness of their children’s preferences and values. The parents bring this questionnaire back to compare their scores with other parents” (Beale, 1999, p. 6). One rule is, parents need to make certain their children realize that the children’s responses, not the fathers’ responses, are the correct answers. The children also
need to know the tests they are given do not make them feel like failures, simply because their responses do not match with their parents’ responses.

The following is a sample of the questionnaire, How well do you know your child? that was compiled by Andrew V. Beale, Ed.D., who is a professor of Counselor Education, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, (1999, p. 11). This survey was used in the study for parents, particularly fathers in getting to know their child.

Directions:

1. Read through the 25 questions and estimate how many you will answer correctly. Enter that “guess” here:
2. Answer each question in writing.
3. Interview your child to find the correct answers.
4. Enter the number of questions you answered correctly here:

QUESTIONS

1. Who is your child’s favorite teacher?...................

2. What is your child’s favorite television show?............

3. What is your child’s favorite meal-time food?.............

4. Who is your child’s favorite cartoon character?.............

5. Would your child prefer to be an astronaut, an animal trainer, or a teacher?....................

6. If your child could have any pet, what would he/she choose?.............

7. Name your child’s favorite friend..................

8. Name the one thing that frightens your child the most..................

9. What is your child’s favorite color?............... 

10. What does your child like most about school?..............

11. Name your child’s favorite book.............
12. What would your child like to be when he/she grows up?.................
13. What is child’s favorite sport?.................
14. Name your child’s favorite board game..................
15. What do you do that makes your child most angry?............... 
16. What is your child’s proudest accomplishments?.............. 
17. What would your child consider to be a favorite activity with you?......... 
18. What is your child’s least favorite food?.................. 
19. What is your child’s fast food restaurant?.................
20. If your child had spending money, what would he/she want to buy right now?.........
21. What does your child think you do for a living?.............. 
22. What adult friend of yours does your child like the most?.........
23. If your child could suddenly do something better, what would he/she choose?.........
24. The thing your child believes he/she does best is.................. 
25. Where would your child most like to go on a vacation this year?.......... 

When a child’s problems prolong over a period of time, the school counselor and the family will need to solve the problems and issues by formulating a solution. “School counselors are in a perfect position to take the lead in promoting the restructuring that will address this need” (Kraus, 1998, p. 5). A school counselor knows that when students are problem free, they are capable of better learning and can achieve goals in school. The counselor must also understand the importance of keeping families together; therefore, the family systems approach is important in school counseling.
Family Systems Approach: Mental Health Professionals examine individual problems in the social context of the family. Since school counseling involves student’s personal problems, social development and students’ learning, “family counseling is now recognized as an appropriate method of helping individuals to solve their problems within the family framework” (Kraus, 1998, p. 1). School counselors can follow this lead of how family counseling can be incorporated into a school counseling program.

According to Hinkle (as cited in Kraus, 1998):

The retraining of school counselors wishing to use the family-counseling model is the first step toward its implementation. Up to now, school counselor training programs have relied heavily on individual counseling techniques, so those counselors will need to seek elective graduate study, continuing education, or in-service education. This training should concentrate on two important skills - assessing the family’s ability to change and defining the key parts of the problems in a social context, (p. 5).

According to Herbert & Miller (1889), (as cited by Beale, 1999) “Parents have the single greatest impact upon a child’s career choice” (p. 4).

Mentoring

In North Carolina, a Counselor Mentor Education In-Service Training Program was developed by Pamela Peace, (1998) which involved three school systems. The 2-part intervention program involved a 3-hour, 15 week Differentiated Supervision Course, and a 15-week Practicum. As cited by Pailsey & Benshoff, (1996), this curriculum model was originally designed by Theis-Sprinthall in 1984 to promote development on the following areas:

❖ Role taking - The school counselor was asked to a role as a mentor. During the practicum hours, the counselor supervised either a counselor intern, certified counselor or a counselor wishing to renew his/her counseling skills.
"The role required taking a new perspective and was distinctly different from that of counseling students" (p. 4 & 5).

- **Guided Reflection** - The assignments given were regular readings, self-evaluation of taped skill practices, written reactions to experiences and journal entries.

- **Balance between experience and reflection** - Personal written reflection followed after class-time, independent practice and supervision discussion. The participants discussed their new roles as mentors vs. other counseling practices.

- **Support and challenge** - "As mentors began the process of assimilating and accommodating education and supervision experiences, they often felt "stretched," and dissonance was apparent" (p.5). Individual and group support were given through written responses and phone contacts.

- **Continuity** - The four steps were continued over a two-semester sequence.

"The counselors in this study did master the fundamentals of developmental supervision. School counselors stand as an important educational resource for beginning counselors" (Peace & Sprinthall, 1998, p.7).

**Study Groups for Professional Development**

"In a busy school environment, making time for professional staff development is a critical factor in the success of the study group model" (Robertson, 1998, p. 3). One of the successful approaches for professional growth and sharing among school counselors are the development of study groups. Judy R. Robertson writes, "that Murphy states: study groups help an entire school faculty integrate and implement effective teaching an learning practices with the goal of increased student learning" (1998, p. 1).

These are the three foundations taught in counseling programs and the study groups rely on: facilitation, reflective thinking, and successful group interaction. In these
study groups, according to authors (Rice & Smith 1993), as cited by Robertson, (1998) offer examples of five verbal responses to be discussed and effectively demonstrate in their groups.

These five responses are:

- Probes
- Integration
- Restatement/paraphrasing
- Reflection
- Summarization.

For professional development, a school district participated in a study group for staff development model consisted of elementary and secondary schools. The school district that was used as an instrument for this experiment had three high schools, six intermediate schools and 18 elementary schools. Most of these schools had high teacher-student ratios (Robertson, 1998, p. 1 & 2).

In this participation, school counselors were introduced to both the elementary and secondary schools early in the year and discussion of how utilizing study groups might enhance regular scheduled meetings for counselors. As cited by Beale, (1999) both groups were given the article by Schmale (1994), entitled Promoting Teacher Reflection Through Guided Book Reviews. The counselors agreed to use study group format for professional growth during the entire school year.

Requests were made from parents, teachers and administrators for student assistance from counselors to center on student adjustment problems. Therefore, the book, How to Solve Student Adjustment Problems (Beale, 1999) was chosen for this
study. At each group meeting, a different volunteer would facilitate the meeting. The
group-study provided strong professional growth and reflection were encouraged at each
meeting. This format created more insights and experience for counselors on adjustment
problems.

The secondary school counselors had a slightly different format than the
elementary model that was decided by the study group. They received training from a
consultant on “Beyond Conflict Resolution,” which dealt with difficult situations. In the
final stage, the counselors were asked to reflect on “their success in implementing the
strategies learned in the training” (Robertson, 1998, p. 2).

Internship programs

Nelson & Johnson (1999) states that The Council for Accreditation of Counseling
and Related Educational Programs in 1994 said, a 600 hour internship training program
under the supervision of a certified school counselor are requirements for a graduate
school counselor. “Although most school counselors provide administrative and
programmatic supervision approach to interns, it is supervision of counseling skills that
most master’s level counselors need and want” (p. 1).

What is most needed for school counselor interns is a supervision approach
focusing on counseling skills. According to Roberts and Borders (as cited by Nelson &
Johnson, 1994), there are three types of supervision for school counseling:

(a) **Administrative** - focused on attendance, punctuality, staff relations, and
    outreach to parents,

(b) **Program** - focused on program development, implementation, and
    coordination,
(c) **Counseling** - focused on enhancing clinical knowledge and skills. Over time, the supervisor assumes several positions as supervisor based on personal needs of the counselor in training. "Littrell et al. proposed a supervision model that has been characterized as developmental. It described how supervisors foster change and increase responsibility in trainees over the course of four sequential stages"(Nelson & Johnson, 1999). Here are the four stages a supervisor assumes:

- **The first stage:** he/she establishes a relationship, setting goals, and contracting the conditions of supervision with the trainee;

- **The second stage:** Assumes the counselor and teacher role as the trainee is faced with affective issues and skill deficits;

- **The third stage:** The supervisor begins to adopt a collegial role of consultant as the trainee gains confidence and experience; and

- **The fourth stage:** The supervisor becomes a more distant consultant as trainee assumes greater responsibility for the design of their learning. (p. 3).

Each of these stages, student counselors learn and become more responsible and develop a sense of professionalism.

**Objectives for Counselor Education Programs**

According to the journal article, Objectives for Counselor Education, there are eight common core areas of knowledge and skills in the counselor education program. They are:

- **Human Growth and Development** - Students will understand the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels.

- **Social and Cultural Foundations** - Students will understand issues and trends in a multicultural and diverse society.

- **Helping Relationships** - Students will exhibit effective counseling and consultation.
♦ Group Work - Students will understand group development, dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods and skills, and other group approaches.

♦ Career and Lifestyle Development - Students will understand career development and related life factors.

♦ Appraisal - Students will use individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation.

♦ Research and Program Evaluation - Students will apply research methods, statistics, and ethical and legal issues in research.

♦ Professional Orientation - Students will understand all aspects of functioning as a professional counselor including history, roles, organizational structures, ethics, standards, and credentials. (p. 1).

These common core areas are requirements and skills learned at a Masters degree level. A process recommended to qualify as school counselors is through course assignments and comprehensive preliminary examinations. “Students enrolled in the doctoral degree programs are expected to have a greater understanding of the issues in each of the program common core areas”. In the Counselor Education program, there are emphasis areas that have objectives and students are “expected to achieve in addition to those in the eight core areas” (Objectives for Counselor Education, pg. 1).

The four main emphasis in the Counselor Education Objectives are as follows:

School Counseling Objectives:

(1) The student can perform effectively as a counselor.

(2) The student understands the function of the school, understands the family and environmental surroundings and how it may effective the development of the school students. (p. 2).
Rehabilitation Counseling Objectives:

(1) Students realized and understand the disabilities of students in the school and “enhance of probability of successful careers” for job placement.

(2) Students understand the medical, psychological and vocational needs of a person with a disability and promote integration of people in the workplace and in the community.

Community Counseling Objectives:

(1) Students develop specialized skills in the curriculum areas of psychosocial rehabilitation, chemical dependency and counseling early clients.

(2) Students apply those principles in the rehabilitation of psychosocial and family counseling.

Student Development in Higher Education Counseling Objectives:

(1) Students understand the affairs towards higher education.

(2) Students use “student development theory” and apply those theories towards school students.

(3) Students are knowledgeable of legal issues, administration and leadership in the affairs of students. (p. 2).

Summary

The challenges and pressures of peers, family situations, personal & academic issues, financial burden of young school students have increased all across the nation leaving students with little motivation for further education. This reduces their social, academic, career and personal development.

School counselors must understand and be aware of their own multicultural background to be effective in counseling. Student counselors must understand and realize the different types of issues in school counseling and how to approach those counseling...
Missing
Purpose

The purpose of this study was to collect data concerning perceptions of school guidance counselors about issues that may help to develop more quality school counseling approaches. According to Sandra Peace, (1998) as in cited in (American Association for Counseling and Development) stated “Essentially, proper supervision of school counselors is lacking at best, nonexistent at its worst. Utilizing training programs for personal development and professional growth in the school-counseling field is essential in order to keep up with performance of school codes and regulations for school counselors today.

It is also important that skill building is continuous for educators that also may help to improve relationships with students, parents and colleagues. This study includes the multicultural issues school counselors are currently experiencing in the schools today. As cited by Hinkle, 1993, “School counselors, up to now, had training programs which relied heavily on individual counseling techniques, so those counselors will need to seek elective graduate study, continuing education, or in-service education” (p. 4).

The research question to be addressed is: How can school counselors prepare themselves to meet the requirements of schools each year?
Research Design

This research is a descriptive study. "The central focus of descriptive research is to examine facts about people, their opinions and attitudes" (Merriam & Simpson, p. 61). In addition, "the most common technique used for gathering data in descriptive research is the survey" (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Merriam & Simpson state that surveys are carefully planned to elicit whatever information is needed" (p. 71). The researcher focuses on this descriptive study because "the current state of the art for the state of supervision of school counselors at all levels is problematic" (Sandra Peace, p. 1).

The objective is to research and present updated information and materials on current school counseling programs and the approaches school counselors have in dealing with students. In addition, this questionnaire was used to collect data on school guidance counselor's knowledge, their development and their continuing growth as a school counselor in their profession today.

The researcher assisted a school counselor in working with high school students in the Phoenix area in which 90% were minority. As a result, the research and design was to determine how and what approaches school counselors use when dealing with the growing multicultural diversity in the schools today. This is also a delivery design for others who will be future mentors to young students.

Source of Data

The researcher collected literature primarily through journals in the internet, because of its current availability of information on school counselors throughout the United States. Other sources were a survey/questionnaire consisting of 12 questions with
participation from three school districts from the Phoenix area and one from the Page Unified School District. The researcher also found it necessary through personal observations during practicum/intern training to find a design towards better skills and technique approaches by school counselors.

In order to collect data for this study, a descriptive survey was prepared with the help of an Ottawa University faculty to elicit responses from school guidance counselors in three selected school districts in Arizona. The three school districts the researcher chose at random was Glendale Unified School District in Glendale, Arizona, Page Unified School District and Alhambra Unified School District, Phoenix, Arizona to participate. Six high schools included Glendale high school, Page high school, Washington high school, Moon Valley high school, Thunderbird high school and Sunnyslope high school. One middle school, Montebello elementary also participated in the survey/questionnaire.

Twenty-three school counselors were sent surveys. Seventeen of those surveys were sent back. which includes 15 high school guidance counselors and two middle school counselors.

**Procedure**

The researcher delivered the questionnaires to four nearby schools, Thunderbird, Moon Valley, Washington and Sunnyslope, one was sent through the mail, one was sent via the internet and one counselor requested the questionnaire to be faxed. Others were sent through regular mail. All the questionnaires were sent with the permission of the Assistant Principal of each school. While in training, the researcher observed some individual school guidance counseling sessions and was given the opportunity to apply
some practice dealing directly with minority students in a high school setting. The researcher also had the opportunity to attend therapy sessions at a rehabilitation center for women in Phoenix, Arizona. In addition, the researcher attended several sessions at a transitional housing which is the next step after the intense three to six month program at the rehabilitation center.

The questionnaire/survey was compiled and delivered to the three schools districts during Ottawa University’s Fall term of 2000. There were twelve questions on the survey, the questionnaire composed of a likert scale type questions, yes / no, short answer essay, professional perception and rank order inquiries.

**Instrumentation**

The questionnaire/survey consisting of twelve questions were developed from the actual findings through research from chapter two on the daily job responsibilities of school guidance counselors. A copy of the questionnaire can be found at the end of the study in Appendix A.

The questions that were asked were regarding multicultural diversity challenges. How school counselors perceive students adjusting to school life compared to five years prior. How problems could be solved between parents and students, the relationships between the student and parent. How school counselors feel about extensive training of new graduates before they start hands on.

The questions included seven Likert scale questions, one yes/no question, one short answer essay, two professional perception questions, and one rank order inquiry question.
Assumptions & Limitations

The researcher assumed that responses to the questionnaire/survey that was presented to school counselors and returned were honest and accurate responses. The researcher also assumes that the survey was effective and beneficial towards the continual personal and professional growth of a school counselor. Limitations include the small number of schools involved in the questionnaire.

Method of analysis

The method of analysis of survey in this study was to list the frequency of responses for each likert style question. A list of comments from respondents followed the likert scale analysis for each question on the survey.
CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Findings and Results

A questionnaire/survey was compiled and delivered to school guidance counselors in three school districts in the state of Arizona. Glendale Unified School District in Glendale, Arizona, Alhambra Unified in Phoenix, Arizona and Page Unified in Page, Arizona. The questionnaire consisted of twelve questions that were developed from the actual research on what school counselors daily duties are.

The questions included seven Likert scale questions, one yes/no question, one short answer essay, two professional perception questions, and one rank order inquiry question. The following is a breakdown of all responses from questions returned from 17 school guidance counselors from all three districts combined.

**Question 1:** How important is it for counselors to be required to know cultural backgrounds of students in order to be effective?

The likert scale response was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>really important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>very important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>somewhat important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>minimum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, here are comments from four school counselors:

- It is only part of the picture, there are many other areas of concern
- It’s impossible to know everything about all different kinds of backgrounds, so it’s more important to know how to respectfully handle cultural differences.
• Required (keyword)

• The cultural background of the child is as important as the development of the child. Development is not an unrelated series of events but a blend of diverse elements including cultural, psychosocial, and economical variables.

The overall responses from school counselors feel that it is very important and effective to know the cultural backgrounds of students.

**Question 2:** From a counselor's point of view, how important is it for students to have cultural identity?

The likert scale was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7</th>
<th>really important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>very important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>somewhat important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>did not answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>selected ALL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, here are comments from five school counselors:

- It is *very important* for some, not important at all for others
- I believe students need to be good about who they are, cultural identity is only part of this
- Different importance for different students
- Cultural identity is the foundation for character development through knowledge of history, stability, inspiration and good role modeling, family and community connections.
- If it helps to solidify identity, but not segregate, then its helpful

**Question 3:** How important is it to have students' problem solved where possible within a family framework?

The likert scale was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4</th>
<th>really important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>very important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>somewhat important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>minimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, here are comments from six school counselors:

- Best for students to solve their own problems
- This is a great idea in theory, however, many situations do not allow this to occur
• "I'm not sure what this question means", but I personally try to envalue parents whenever possible.
• Parents are the front-line for the child
• If family is needed, then definitely! If it can be resolved here, then so be it
• Often times student's problems are directly related to issues within the family

A majority of the researcher's findings believe the family systems theory approach is very important. The research topic is found in chapter two.

**Question 4:** How do you perceive the effectiveness of a school counselor who belongs in a cultural difference from counselee?

The likert scale was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 neutral</th>
<th>1 somewhat important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 not essential</td>
<td>1 selected ALL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five counselors did not answer the question. In addition, here are comments from ten school counselors:

- Depends
- There are many other issues of greater concern, i.e. genuine positive regard caring quality
- We can always help students regardless if we are of the same backgrounds
- In most cases
- The counselor can be extremely effective even though cultural differences may exist
- Understanding more important than belonging
- If you're asking if I need to be the same ethnicity as my counselee to be effective, I would say no.
- A counselor who has the same cultural background is probably the ideal situation. In our school 23 countries are presented and that is the reality of the school system today.
- Personal interaction is more important than cultural backgrounds
- This is too vague

Three counselors did not answer the question and two counselors did not understand the question. Only ten counselors answered with additional comments.
**Question 5:** When involving parents, how important is it for counselors to prepare educational activities to assist parents, as they become involved with their children? The likert scale was:

1. important
2. somewhat important
3. really important
4. very important
5. minimum
6. did not answer

In addition, here are comments from seven school counselors:

- Usually not a school counselee’s duty. Referrals.
- Each specific individual is unique and requires what is the students best interest if they involve the preparation of activities, then so be it
- I don’t our role as “preparing educational activities”. I see as more as a support system - guiding parents and students
- It depends on the case
- Many of our parents are both working, single parent homes or non-English speaking so it is necessary to have educational literature, videos and activities for them
- Question is vague. What kind of educational activities
- Unsure of what activities you mean

**Question 6:** How do you perceive the ability of students to adjust to High School now compared to five years ago?

The likert scale was:

1. somewhat well
2. very well
3. well
4. not at all
5. somewhat better
6. did not answer

In addition, here are comments from eight school counselors, this includes 1 answer with somewhat better:

- N/A - Been counseling in Arizona for only 2 years
- Somewhere between needing a support system the freshman year & “not well adjusted”. The majority need assistance in the transition
- About the same
- The majority adapt very well
- This is an area that needs improving in our school
- It is a tough transition academically, for many because 8th graders just passes them on, even if they fail
- They are more situations facing students today that didn’t exist to this magnitude 5 years ago.

Researcher feels that geographical locations is a big factor in student adjustment.
Question 7: If the student adjustment process has been more difficult, to what do you attribute the difficulties? (no more than 3)

Six school counselors had no comments, one answered 1 part of three. The responses given are the following:

- Lack of family support
- Stronger negative social behaviors
- Single parent families
- Use of drugs & alcohol
- TV, movies, and the internet
- New atmosphere
- Might have left old friends & needs to make new ones
- Higher academic standards
- Lack of organizational / study skills
- Level of independence in learning
- Decreased parental involvement
- Lack of study skills
- Excessive absences & tardies
- Lack of parental support for education from both parents
- Unrealistic expectations of the high school behavioral system - school day - homework etc.
- Lack of support at home. Parent(s) thinking that the high school is like grade school or Jr. high in that the classroom conference can be arranged for minor situations
- Students’ lack of social skills
- Students’ lack of work ethic towards school
- Students’ inability to make valid decisions
- Increased peer pressure
- Family issues
- Lack of coping skills
- Academics
- Home life
- Bad choices (drugs, who they hang with, followers)
- Less parental involvement
- Poor parent support or involvement
- Poor academic and organizational skills
- Not future oriented, no goals or dreams

The top five responses from the combined 3 school districts on the difficulties attributing to student adjustment process in school with #1 being the ranked the most difficulty and #5 ranked the least. One counselor did not answer.

(1) Lack of family support was answered from the school districts
(2) Lack of work ethics or academics and study skills
(3) Students’ social adjustment and coping skills
(4) Home life and family issues
(5) Drugs and alcohol

**Question 8:** *Given your experiences, what do you think is the adequate number of hours for an internship (practicum) for graduate students who wishes to become school guidance counselors?*

The professional perception for the number of hours of new graduate students that current school guidance counselors recommend is:

- 7 counselors recommend 500+ hours
- 3 counselors recommend 300 hours
- 4 counselors recommend 100 to 200 hours
- 2 counselors recommend 400 hours
- 1 did not answer

In addition, here are comments from four school counselors:

- Experience is a great teacher, however; this needs to be combined with a competent supervision
- Preferably at least part-time throughout a school year
- Perhaps an internship for a year all day, or two years for a half day. It takes at least 3-5 years to learn the basics that can not be taught in the college classrooms
- 100 - 200 hrs is plenty to learn the school guidance program

Overall, there were more responses from school guidance counselors who feel MA students should spend 300 plus hours in their internship (practicum) program. Most counselors feel this should be an on going process.

**Question 9:** *Do you think mentoring first year counselors would increase the efficiency of the first year guidance counselor?*  
*Yes / No*

These are responses:

- 15 responded yes
- 1 responded no
- 1 responded maybe

In addition, here are comments from four school counselors:

- The research on mentoring program are favorable, I would agree
• Maybe ..........Policy/procedure of this district is as important as knowing how to be a counselor
• Every situation has so many rules to their environment
• This is an excellent way to learn

**Question 10:** How often should counselors be requested to research, re-read about counseling skills and teaching?

Professional perception was:

1  4 to 5 years  7  1 year
3  2 to 3 years  6  did not answer

The following are comments from ten school counselors, three responded that this should be on-going:

**Comments:**

- This should be on going
- It should be an expectation of all educators, including counselors to constantly improve and enrich themselves
- It should be an on going process-counselor should be a life-long learner. It is important to be current in your skills - should also be required to have 1 year experience as a classroom teacher
- Continuing education is very important to professional growth
- Professional development needs to be an ongoing process. Organizations such as ASCA, RMACAC, NACAC are all great sources of professional development
- They should continually keep abreast
- We are constantly reading and learning
- But not state require! We have enough to do without that! We help each other out here.
- Current research is very important

**Question 11:** In your role as a counselor, rank the following responsibilities in the order that you perform the most with 1 representing the most time spent and 4 the least time spent?

(a) The following are the #1 choices school counselors ranked as the priority job performed daily:

6 Counseling skills
7 Program development/assistance - academic/curriculum involvement
2 Administrative - attendance, staff related and outreach to parents
1 Added college counseling as being #1
1 Chose all of the them about the same

(b) The following are the #2 choices school counselors ranked as the 2nd priority job performed daily:

6 Counseling skills - (clinical knowledge) & application
4 Administrative - attendance, staff related and outreach to parents
3 Program development/assistance - academic/curriculum involvement
2 Assessment skills - review and interpreting tests of all sorts
1 About the same with other
1 with Administrative and Program development about the same

(c) The following are the #3 choices school counselors ranked as the 3rd priority job performed daily:

7 Administrative - attendance, staff related and outreach to parents
3 Counseling skills - (clinical knowledge) & application
3 Program development/assistance - academic/curriculum involvement
2 Assessment skills - review and interpreting tests of all sorts
1 all about the same
1 w Administrative and Program development about the same

(d) The following are the #4 choices school counselors and ranked as the least job performed daily:

12 Assessment skills - review and interpreting tests of all sorts
3 Program development/assistance - academic/curriculum involvement
1 Administrative - attendance, staff related and outreach to parents
1 all about the same

The survey showed that only seven school counselors out of 17 responses were program development as their first choice in their daily work performance. The second choice was six counselors performing counseling skills in their daily work performance. Seven counselors chose administrative duties in their daily routine as their third choice. Finally, thirteen school counselors perform the assessments skill as their least daily job performance.

One response was all of them about the same with all categories in their daily work performance and one school counselor preferred some college counseling along with daily job duties. Not all school counselors answered all questions on the survey.

In addition, here are comments from two school counselors:
I would prefer more of #3, however, this role is being filled by our full-time social worker (#3 referring to Counseling Skills)

✓ I was trained that “information” was #1

**Question 12:** When engaging in staff development activities leading towards professional growth, how would you perceive the value of study groups with colleagues?

The likert scale was:

- 3. neutral
- 7. very important
- 7. somewhat important
- negative impact
- not essential

In addition, here are comments from three school counselors:

- There is much to be learned from a focus group, especially with other experienced professional
- I am involved in the behavioral health side more than at school. (I’m a CPC as well as school counselor & also work in therapeutic setting)
- Collaborative groups benefit the groups working together

The lack of control over one’s professional life and destiny probably contributes a great deal to a second fundamental issue: The discussion, and arguments, about a school counselor’s role continues despite a series of ASeA statements; task force reports; published surveys of counselors, principals, teachers, and parents; and countless other articles and presentations at state and national meeting. A number of role-related questions continue to be debated, such as “To what extent should school counselors be in the classroom?” and “What percentage of a school counselor’s time should be developed to direct services, and what percentage to administrative tasks?” (Paisley & Borders., 1995 p. 5).

Toni Tollerud, 1999, stated that Transitions bring opportunity for both excitement and challenges. “Competence and confidence are essential characteristics that enable school counselors to effectively perform their tasks” (p. 1).

The best educational experiences happen when students, staff, and families all work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and with a genuine enthusiasm for learning. A school climate committee offers many opportunities for student, staff, and committee involvement. Students participate in setting guidelines for treating each together with kindness and respect. School-wide thematic events planned by the committee provide an opportunity for students to apply the skills they are learning. (Lion-Quest, 2000, p.2.)
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to collect data concerning perceptions of school guidance counselors about issues that may help to develop more quality school counseling approaches.

According to the literature reviewed, there is a never-ending learning and knowledge of a school counselor. The school counselor must be aware of his/her own cultural characteristics and the many cultural backgrounds and the cultural differences of others that may effect counseling decisions. Counselors must respect the customs and traditions of all cultures. “Multicultural counseling benefits all developmental stages but, studies show that early adolescent period is an optimal time to provide intervention that may promote cultural identities” Baruth (2000) p. 5.

A school counselor also has a role in involving the parents with the child in counseling sessions. The family systems approach is important and is recognized as an appropriate method of helping individuals to solve family framework. School counselors are now incorporating family counseling into school counseling programs. When family situations in a home are good, then the student is likely to achieve his/her goals in school and receive good grades.
Internships, study groups, mentoring programs and in-service training programs all improve skills for new school counselors before they start hands on. Additional training after graduation is also essential in keeping up with standards of school guidance counseling each year. School counselors are encouraged to attend workshops such as “Lion-Quest” and “Equity 2000” which are held throughout the United States.

A questionnaire/survey was compiled and delivered to school guidance counselors in three school districts in the state of Arizona. Glendale Unified School District in Glendale, Arizona, Page Unified School District and Alhambra Unified School District, Phoenix, Arizona in which six high schools and one middle school participated in the survey/questionnaire. Fifteen high school counselors and two middle school counselors responded. There were twelve questions on the survey, the questionnaire composed of seven likert scale type questions, one yes/no, one short answer essay, two professional perception and one rank order inquiries.

The following was done on a likert scale of really important, very important, somewhat important, important and minimum. Question 1, 2 and 4 asked about cultural issues. A total of fifteen school counselors responded that knowing the cultural background of students is very important. There was also a majority of counselors who responded that being aware of cultural identity was just as important.

Six school counselors responded that it is not essential however, the effectiveness of counseling students who are not of the same cultural background. In addition, five counselors responded that having cultural differences is not important but, rather the personal interaction between counselor and counselee.
Fifteen school counselors thought that it is very important in solving students' problems within a family framework. However, the response to question 5, nearly half responded that sending educational activities home with parents is not the role of a school counselor. Counselors feel they are more of a support system than sending work home with parents. Additionally, the question was not clear and was not understood by what was meant, educational activities.

The students' adjustment to school compared to five years ago was somewhat well for majority of students. If the student adjustment was difficult, counselors were asked to what do they think attributes to these difficulties? At least ten counselors responded that this was due to lack of support from family members or home-life/family issues.

Counselors were asked based on their personal perception what the adequate amount of hours interns should have before hands on work. The overall response recommended new counselors should have 300 hours or more and most counselors feel this should be an on-going process. Fifteen counselors said mentoring would increase the efficiency of the first year guidance counselor. Researching and re-reading is also favorable to counselors. Seven responded that this should be done every year and three responded to 2 to 3 years and most feel this should also be an on-going process.

On question 11 school counselors were asked to rank the following responsibilities to which is priority in their daily job performance. The #1 daily duty performed as priority among seven counselors responded to Program Development/Assistance - academic/curriculum involvement. Six counselors responded to the second daily duty they performed was Counseling Skills - (clinical knowledge) & application. Administrative -
attendance, staff related and outreach to parents was third with Assessment skills - review and interpreting tests of all sorts being the least job performed daily by counselors.

Conclusions

As a school counselor, the importance of knowing all cultural backgrounds and respecting each one of them can have effect on school guidance counseling. Envaluing cultural identity in everyone is important at all stages but, it is most important for students at a early age. Students experience the problems of lack of support and encouragement from family members and other issues within the home. The counseling approach that a school counselor may take in dealing with parent and child varies in every individual school counselor. In the researcher’s survey, one counselor is a CPC, also working in a therapeutic setting.

Drugs, lack of social skills, student adjustment to new environment, lack of work ethics and study skills are some of the difficulties attributing to their adjustment process in the schools. It is the school counselor’s motivation and personal interactive role that may influence students to further their education and follow their goals.

Programs such as internship, study groups and mentoring was favored by most school counselors who gave their personal perception on the adequate number of hours of researching and re-reading is 300 hours or more.

Recommendations

As a result, the researcher recommends that school counselors are encouraged to attend workshops and seminars to further their personal and professional growth. The
researcher also recommends and encourages special summer camps/programs with individuals who need the extra academic attention. It is also recommended to involve new in-coming freshman students to participate in a summer orientation type program. This is a pre-admission process and students would get the chance to get acquainted with the school and possibly some faculty and students.
REFERENCE LIST


APPENDIX A

THE SURVEY / QUESTIONNAIRE
THE SURVEY/QUESTIONNAIRE:

How important should counselors be required to know cultural background of students in order to be effective?

Really Well  Some-what well  Well  Minimum  Not at all

Comments: _____________________________________________

From a Counselors point of view, how important is it for students to have cultural identity?

Really Well  Some-what well  Well  Minimum  Not at all

Comments: _____________________________________________

How important is it to have student’s problem solved where possible within a family framework?

Really Well  Some-what well  Well  Minimum  Not at all

Comments: _____________________________________________

How do you perceive the effectiveness of a school counselor who belongs in a cultural difference from Counselee?

Really Well  Some-what well  Well  Minimum  Not at all

Comments: _____________________________________________

When involving parents, how important is it for counselors to prepare educational activities to assist parents as they become involved with their students?

Really Well  Some-what well  Well  Minimum  Not at all

Comments: _____________________________________________
How do you perceive the ability of students to adjust to high school now compared to 5 years ago?

Really Well  Some-what well  Well  Minimum  Not at all

Comments: ____________________________________________

If student adjustment process has been more difficult, to what do you attribute the difficulties? (no more than 3)

Really Well  Some-what well  Well  Minimum  Not at all

Comments: ____________________________________________

Given your experience, what do you think is an adequate number of hours for an internship (practicum) for graduate students who wish to become school guidance counselors?

Really Well  Some-what well  Well  Minimum  Not at all

Comments: ____________________________________________

Do you think mentoring first year counselors would increase the efficiency (of the first year guidance counselor)?

Really Well  Some-what well  Well  Minimum  Not at all

Comments: ____________________________________________

How often should counselors be requested to research, re-read about counseling skills and teachings?

1 year  2 to 3 years  4 to 5 years  never

Comments: ____________________________________________
In your role as a counselor, rank the following responsibilities in the order that you perform the most with 1 representing most time spent and 4 least time spent?

____ Administrative - attendance, staff related and outreach to parents
____ Program development/assistance - academic/curriculum involvement
____ Counseling skills - (clinical knowledge) & application
____ Assessment Skills - review, interpreting tests of all sorts

When engaging in staff development activities leading towards professional growth, show would you perceive the value of study groups with colleagues?

Very important       Some-what important       Negative impact       Not essential

Comments: ____________________________________________
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born on August 7, 1959, Alta Ann (Barlow) Duncan was born in Tuba City, Arizona. She is a Native American of the Navajo Tribe. While growing up she was raised by two sets of families, moving off and on the reservation attending various schools in Arizona. Although she spent most of her elementary education in Phoenix, she graduated from Shonto Boarding School, a small reservation in northwestern Arizona. She began her high school at Many Farms High School but, completed high school off the reservation in 1978, graduating from Corona Senior High School in Corona, CA. In 1978 – 1980, she attended Brigham Young University in Provo Utah. She was a member of their native american performing group, The Lamanite Generation. In 1981-82, she worked at Tuba City high school one year then relocated to Phoenix, Arizona where she currently resides. She attended various colleges throughout Arizona then landed a job and is currently working at Ottawa University. Ottawa University gave her the opportunity to further her education. She earned her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Human Services in 1998. She will be receiving her diploma in January 2001, with a Masters of Arts in Education, specializing in School Guidance Counseling. She has a passion to work with young students and plan to support them in pursuing their education.