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Date

August 7, 1974

A COMPARISON OF ADMINISTRATOR'S PERCEPTIONS OF COUNSELOR
FUNCTIONS IN LARGE AND SMALL HIGH SCHOOLS IN MONTANA

by

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A professional paper submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

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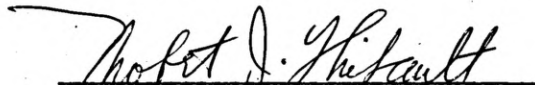
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ABSTRACT

The problem of this study was to compare large high school administrators' perceptions of counselor functions to small high school administrators' perceptions of counselor functions in the state of Montana. The two categories of schools consisted of one group with a student enrollment of 400 or more, while the second group was comprised of schools with a student enrollment of 399 or less.

The Counselor Function Inventory, constructed by G. F. Shumake and M. C. Oelke, was used to determine which functions were the responsibility of the counselor. The inventory listed seventy-seven different functions and had five possible responses for each, ranging from primary responsibility to no direct responsibility.

The data was organized utilizing tables and statistically analyzed. A short statement followed each function stating the significant differences.

Conclusions drawn as a result of this investigation were as follows: (1) a strong positive relationship between administrators' opinions of counselor functions and counselors' opinions of counselor functions; (2) counselor education programs are doing an adequate job of preparing counselors for high school counseling positions; (3) according to the administrators, counselors seem to be doing identical types of functions in all high schools regardless of size; and (4) there are no significant differences of perception between the two groups of administrators.

Recommendations made by the investigator were: (1) research should be completed in the area of time spent on normal everyday functions of a high school counselor; (2) a comparison of administrator and counselor perceptions of functions in their respective schools should be done; (3) because of this study's inability to distinguish areas of disagreement between the two groups of administrators, the study should not be duplicated; and (4) a similar study should be completed using a different instrument.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The identification of counselor roles in today's public high schools is a concern to counselors and administrators.

During the first half of this century, the role of a counselor in our public high schools was accepted by high school counselors and high school administrators. During this period, the counselor's role was that of a disciplinarian. He was expected to keep the student's individual behavior in the bounds of accepted school standards. Duties such as keeping attendance records, writing school reports, and other varied clerical tasks were expected to be performed by the counselor, and the counselor accepted these responsibilities. However, during the last two decades, counseling roles in high schools have begun to change drastically. Counselors are no longer satisfied to have roles and expectations laid upon them by administrators. Recent research in the field of counseling has provided high school counselors with a great influx of findings which have caused them to begin examining their worthiness in schools. They have reached certain conclusions for becoming more effective in the field of school counseling. As a result of counselors attempting to integrate these new ideas into their school environment, the roles of counselors are undergoing a process of change.

They are no longer adhering to predetermined roles as they have

in the past. They are beginning to specialize and narrow their efforts down to person-to-person relationships.

This has created a conflict for present school administrators and their perceptions of counselor roles. Many are inclined to agree with the counselors and consider individual therapeutic counseling to be the most important counselor function. Still, other administrators cling to past expectations of counselor roles and consider the most important function of a counselor to be a consultant to students, teachers, and administrators.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of this study was to compare large high school administrators' perceptions of counselor functions to small high school administrators' perceptions of counselor functions in the state of Montana.

NEED AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

As a result of the changing roles of counselors in today's public schools, administrators have been unable to reach a mutual agreement among themselves as to the desired functions of counselors. McCleary and Miller (1966:496) found that administrators ranked counseling as the most important function of a school counselor. However, administrators are not able to agree on a definition of counseling.

Some interpret counseling to mean individual therapeutic counseling with students. Others interpret counseling to mean giving advice to various school personnel such as teachers and administrators, as well as students.

Another disagreement between administrators is their acceptance of high school counselors as professionals. Dunlop stated, "In written responses, administrators did not appear willing to distinguish between teachers and counselors as professional specialists ('My teachers are my best counselors')(1965:1026-27)." Arbuckle (1972:789) found a different point of view, that a counselor's particular professional contribution is the counseling involvement with students.

A possible reason for administrator's various disagreements is that there are different perceptions of counselor roles in small high schools than those of counselors in large high schools. A comparison of these two sizes of schools is needed to determine if possibly this is a reason for their differences. If it is, administrators will become aware of a reason for their incongruence of perceptions. Perhaps the information gathered in this study will assist them with a formulation standardized counselor roles. If there is no difference between their perceptions, perhaps this study will infer other possible reasons that need to be investigated.

When all the reasons for their differences of perceptions are revealed and understood, administrators will be able to collaborate and establish a universal set of roles for high school counselors. Once

this is achieved, counselors and counselor educators can discuss their opinions with administrators professionally and eventually develop counselor roles which are mutually agreed upon by both parties. High school students in Montana will then receive the types of counseling services they deserve.

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

An attempt to answer the following questions was made by means of this study.

1. What are Montana's large high school administrators' perceptions of counselor functions in their high schools?
2. What are Montana's small high school administrators' perceptions of counselor functions in their high schools?
3. Is there a difference between the large high school administrators' perceptions and those of small high school administrators in Montana?
4. If a difference exists, does this study suggest reasons other than enrollment for differences of perceptions between large high school and small high school administrators in Montana?

GENERAL PROCEDURE

The procedure of this study was to complete a review of literature in high school counselor's and administrator's relationships

and perceptions of counselor roles. After the review of literature was completed, a comparative study was made of administrator's perceptions in large and small high schools in Montana.

A counselor function inventory was sent to a representative sample of large and small high school administrators in the state of Montana. An explanation of the study accompanied the questionnaire. Once all of the inventories were completed and returned, the investigator statistically analyzed the data.

LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

The administrators which were questioned was a limitation of this study. In the large school systems, principals completed the questionnaire, and in the small school systems superintendents, as well as principals, completed the questionnaire. Another limitation was the possibility that the perceptions reported were those of the school district and not those of the individual administrator.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Counselor. The term "counselor," as it has been used in this study, is defined as professionally qualified high school personnel employed in the capacity of a high school counselor.

Large high school. The term "large high school," as it has been used in this study, is defined as a Montana public high school with

an enrollment of 400 and over.

Small high school. The term "small high school," as it has been used in this study, is defined as a Montana public high school with an enrollment of 399 or less.

Administrator. The term "administrator," as used in this study, is defined as a professionally qualified superintendent or principal of a Montana public high school.

SUMMARY

The expectations which have prevailed over high school counselors for the past fifty years is no longer acceptable to today's counselors. Research has proven that methods and techniques of counseling have increased beneficial effects upon students. Administrators and counselors must decide on the acceptance of new counselor roles. However, this will not be possible until administrators are able to reach an agreement, among themselves, on acceptable counselor roles. This report has been an attempt to assist administrators to reach this goal.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Katz (1973:1) stated the basic purpose of counseling services in our country's public high schools is to help students become mature decision makers. Many counselors and high school administrators would be inclined to agree with Katz's statement. However, other functions of a school counselor in a public high school setting are not always clearly understood. Upon occasion, poor communication or lack of mutual understanding interferes with effective counseling.

Because of this incongruence of understanding between counselors' and administrators' perceptions of accepted functions of high school counselors, much research has been written to assist in resolving these differences. The first segment of this review of literature will investigate some of these conflicting perceptions. The second segment of the review will establish some criteria which might be used for solving these problems and thus initiating a more useful and successful counseling program.

CONFLICTING PERCEPTIONS

According to Schnidt (1962:603), school counselors and their principals tend to substantially agree on what the counselor should be doing ideally. Despite this basic agreement, counselors in public schools are being expected to perform various tasks which are not

related in any way with high school counseling. In fact, Hart and Prince (1970:378) found that principals are in agreement that the school counselor should accept many varied duties which are not commonly associated with counseling.

One of the duties which many administrators felt counselors should be held accountable was student discipline. They felt that the school counselor should be able to induce changes in a student's behavior if the present behavior was not in accordance with set school standards. These administrators also felt that a disciplinary duty of this nature would not interfere with the normal activities and responsibilities of a school counselor.

Another task, which is in direct conflict with counselor functions, is the responsibility for career guidance. School counselors were expected to have a strong knowledge about the non-school world of work. Even if a counselor had a thorough background in this area, it would be very improbable that the counselor would be able to be of significant assistance to a student. Arbuckle (1972:789) has reported that evidence indicates that counselors as academic and vocational advisors have failed to have any positive effect, and that what they have done ineffectively can be done more effectively by computers.

A duty which has been met with criticism from counselors for some time is that concerned with clerical work. Counselors have felt that these duties could be carried out with the same efficiency by

para-professionals or clerical employees. If this were possible, the counselors would be able to devote more of themselves and their time to individual counseling for which they had been trained. Administrators have attempted to rebut this criticism by contending that such routine clerical duties are one of the necessary functions of a counselor.

In addition to these non-related tasks which have been forced onto the school counselor, there are many areas of accepted counselor activity which administrators have met with disagreement. For instance, administrators and counselors have always agreed that the primary professional responsibility of a school counselor is the counseling involvement with individuals and small groups of students. However, many administrators have tended to be suspect of psychological and therapeutic counseling. Sexton (1965:132) stated, "I feel the less we emphasize the psychological, the psychiatric, and anything therapeutic, the better the feelings the students will have toward counseling."

Another area of concern was the confidentiality between the student and the counselor. In order for a counselor to create a strong relationship with students, the counselor must represent the highest level of security in the school. Arbuckle (1968:343) feels "the counselor should be viewed by his potential clientele, not only as a caring and helping individual, but equally important, as one who does not have, and does not represent, the authority of the institution." Despite the

importance of this confidentiality, principals felt that counselors should release information obtained from students when it would be of help to them. This can partly be explained by the fact that the many administrators see counseling more as academic advising than self-discovery and adjustment.

The last area of disagreement was to what extent the counselor should work with school staff members. Sweeney (1966:846) found that administrator's scores in the areas relating to counselor functions in working with staff members and promoting the general school program indicated significantly more importance than the counselor's scores. It has been generally agreed that counselors should be able to assist the teachers with reference to new approaches to learning based on the needs of children. He also must be able to assist teachers with the interpretation of behavior and various standardized tests of students' abilities, aptitudes, and intelligence. Administrators, however, did not feel the counselor's attempt to help was sufficient. DeFeo and Cohn (1972:320) found that "a recurring criticism from the administrators centered around guidance counselors isolating themselves from other school personnel."

SUCCESSFUL CRITERIA

Because of the problems concerning counselor functions, there have been concentrated efforts to establish and maintain effective

school counseling services. The second segment of this review of literature will be concerned with this research.

Stintzi and Hutcheon (1968:330) have reported several criteria of a successful counseling program. The first criteria was one in which the counselor and administrator understood and agreed fully on the stated goals and functions to be performed by the counselor. The counselor would possibly state what his goals were, even though others might not necessarily agree with them. In this way, administrators and counselors would discuss pertinent problems and resolve them. This could be very demanding on the part of the counselor. Sweeny (1966:845) stated, "From their positions as leaders of the educational program in the schools, principals play a major part in defining the role of their school counselors." Thus, it seems that although the counselors have a professional and research basis for defining their role and functions within the school setting, their freedom to implement the role is often limited by the school administration who has different role expectations for them. Counselors should realize these limitations and work as efficiently as possible under them.

The second criteria of a successful counseling program was to relieve all responsibility and association from the counselor for any and all punitive punishment. This could be a very difficult problem if an administrator views the counselor's role as that of a quasi-administrator. However, Cawelti (1967:64) has reported that principals

lean more toward behavior supportive of school practice, while counselors tend to emphasize student decision making based on the individual. Most principals have also agreed that counselors should not have activities associated with discipline as part of their function.

The third criteria of the counseling program was to encourage an open-door policy to students, faculty, and parents. With this type of foundation for inter-personal relationships, it would be much easier for the counselor to effectively work with these groups.

The fourth criteria of the program was to make sure that all of the types of services available from the counseling department were known to all students, faculty members, and administrators. If these services were well known to these groups, there would be a greater use of these services, which would increase the usefulness of the department. This could be very valuable to the counselor, because DeFeo and Cohn (1972:321) have found that "the support guidance programs receive from administrators will be a direct result of the counselor's ability to demonstrate the value of his services."

The fifth criteria was to keep counselors from being involved in formal classroom teaching. It was considered important for a counselor to keep himself out of the teacher role. According to Arbuckle:

. . . if the counselor is seen--and if he seems himself--as having functions no different from those of teachers and administrators, there is little doubt that great numbers of students will believe he is more concerned with the maintenance of the

school as an establishment than with helping students as unique human beings (1972:788).

The last criteria would be to have the offices of the counselors located in an area distinctively separate from the administrative offices. If this were achieved, the students would feel less inhibited about going to see a counselor and, just as important, it would increase the differentiation between the counselor role and that of a quasi-administrative role.

SUMMARY

In summation, there are many different viewpoints on counselor functions as perceived by administrators and counselors. Many administrators agree on the basic functions of the counselor but disagree to what extent the counselors should perform their duties. Restating the basic agreements, administrators felt a counselor should have as his most important responsibility, student counseling, individually and with small groups. They also felt that counselors should be active in individual planning and learning programs for special placement. He should continually consult and assist teachers, as well as maintain informal and formal student relationships. They also felt that a counselor should not be involved with classroom teaching nor student discipline.

Chapter 3

PROCEDURES

The problem of this study was to compare large high school administrators' perceptions of counselor functions to the perceptions of counselor functions by small high school administrators in the state of Montana. In this chapter, the researcher has described the procedures to be used to evaluate the data collected for this study. A description of the population to be researched has been presented with the sampling procedure. The categories of large and small high schools have been defined and controls of variables presented. A copy of the Counselor Functions Inventory (CFI) has been included in the appendix as the instrument used for the collection of data. The method of organizing the data after it was received for analysis has been explained. The investigator has stated the statistical hypotheses which were subjected to systematic testing. Lastly, the method of analyzing the data has been included with an explanation of precautions which were taken to assure accuracy of the data analysis.

POPULATION AND SAMPLING

According to Colberg (1973:10), there were 170 high schools which were operating during the 1973-74 school year in the state of Montana. The administrators of these 170 high schools comprised the population to be researched. The basis of student enrollment was used

to determine the limits which separated the large high schools from the small high schools. Due to the extreme variance of enrollment figures of the high schools in Montana--20 students to 2,306 students--the upper enrollment limit of the small high school category was set at 400 students. High schools with enrollments of 401 or more were considered large high schools, for the purposes of this study. The distinction of an enrollment figure of 400 was chosen to insure a representative sample of schools in each category to be studied. The division at this enrollment figure resulted in 140 small high schools and 30 large high schools.

From the two categories of schools, random samples were drawn by the use of a table of random numbers. All of the schools in the small high school category were assigned numbers from 1 to 140. Once these numbers were assigned, a table of random numbers was used to select sixty samples needed from this category. Due to the small number of large high schools, all thirty schools were used as the sample drawn from the large high school category. Samples of size sixty for small high schools and size thirty for large high schools were determined to insure that a sufficient number would be studied to arrive at valid conclusions.

METHOD OF COLLECTING DATA

Shumake and Oelke (1967:130) developed an instrument to accumulate different perceptions of counselor roles in high schools. The Counselor Function Inventory, henceforth referred to as the CFI, consists of seventy-seven functions which could possibly be performed by a high school counselor. For each of the seventy-seven questions, the respondent was given a choice of five alternative answers. The alternative responses were:

1. Personally perform
2. Primary responsibility but may not personally perform
3. Share planning and performing with others
4. Serve as consultant only upon request
5. No direct responsibility.

Shumake and Oelke (1967:130) determined the validity of the CFI by "submitting it to a panel of judges selected from educators in the fields of counseling, research, testing, and educational psychology."

The educators evaluated the validity of the CFI by the use of an instrument entitled Evaluation of CFI. The panel judged the CFI to be adequate for covering the functions of high school counselors.

The test-re-test method was used by Shumake and Oelke to determine the reliability of the responses on the CFI. Two groups, counselors and administrators, were asked to complete the inventory and then were re-tested with the same instrument several weeks later. The

rank order correlation for the two administrations of the CFI to the school counselors was .96. The rank order correlation to the school administrators was .94.

METHOD OF ORGANIZING DATA

Tables have been used by the researcher to illustrate data obtained from the CFI. These tables presented the accumulative perceptions of counselor functions by large high school administrators and small high school administrators. They were also used to compare the accumulative perceptions of each administrator category for each of the instruments' seventy-seven functions.

STATISTICAL HYPOTHESES

Null hypothesis. There was no difference between large high school administrators' perceptions of counselor functions and small high school administrators' perceptions of counselor functions.

Alternative hypothesis. There is a difference between large high school administrators' perceptions of counselor functions and small high school administrators' perceptions of counselor functions.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The Chi Square Test of Independence was used to analyze the accumulated perceptions of the two categories of administrators. A

table consisting of ten cells, five for each group, was used to compile the perceptions of administrators on each counselor function. Each of the five cells for the two groups represented each of the five possible responses. The Chi Square Test of Independence was then used to determine if the difference in perceptions between the two groups was due to chance. However, due to the number of samples used in this study, 80 per cent of the expected cell values for each function must be greater than or equal to five. If 20 per cent or more of the expected values are less than five, a statement discussing the differences of perceptions for the particular function was presented.

Analysis of each function tested by the Chi Square Test of Independence was based on the .05 level of significance. The .05 level of significance was selected for the following reasons. A possible consequence of making a type I error could be in-service training sessions stressing counselor functions in Montana's high schools. Another possible consequence of making a type I error could be changes in course contents which prepare high school counselors for their positions in Montana's high schools. However, it is the investigator's opinions that the possible consequences of making a type II error, retaining a false null hypothesis, would have a detrimental effect upon Montana's high school counselors. For instance, research has proven that counselor role is not consistent among schools. It has not been determined if the inconsistency is due to the size of high school

enrollment. Because of the possibility that high school enrollment may be a reason for this inconsistency, it is most important to insure ourselves against making a type II error.

The data received from the administration of the CFI was compiled and transferred to graphs and tables by hand. These hand calculations were rechecked in their entirety to assure the accuracy of the computations. The Chi Square Test of Independence was performed by a computer which insured the calculations to be correct.

SUMMARY

Perceptions of counselor functions by large high school administrators were compared to the perceptions of counselor role by small high school administrators in the state of Montana. This study drew its sample from the 170 high schools operating during the 1973-74 school year in Montana.

The Counselor Function Inventory was used to determine the perceptions of the administrators. Once the data was transferred from the CFI onto graphs and tables, the Chi Square Test of Independence was administered. The .05 level of significance was used to determine if the null hypothesis, no difference between perceptions of each administrator category, was rejected or retained.

When the data was compiled and transferred to graphs and tables, by hand, all data was rechecked to assure accuracy. The computation of the Chi Square Test of Independence was performed by a computer.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to compare large high school administrators' perceptions of counselor functions to small high school administrators' perceptions of counselor functions in the state of Montana.

As stated in Chapter 3, 190 public high schools were in operation during the 1973-74 school year in the state of Montana. From this population, two groups were selected based on their student enrollments. The large high school group was comprised of all public high schools with a student enrollment of 400 or more. The small high school group was comprised of all public high schools with a student enrollment of 399 or less.

A random sample was drawn from each of the two groups of schools. Thirty schools were selected from the large high schools as a representative sample. Sixty schools were drawn from the small school category as a representative sample. Of the ninety Counselor Function Inventories sent to the schools' administrators, seventy-one were returned resulting in an overall return of 79 per cent. Twenty-four of the thirty Counselor Function Inventories were returned by the large high school administrators for a return of 80 per cent. Forty-seven of the sixty Counselor Function Inventories were returned by the small high school administrators for a return of 78 per cent.

FINDINGS

Each of the seventy-seven functions of the Counselor Function Inventory is presented in the chapter in the same numerical order as listed on the instrument. A table illustrating the administrator's responses will accompany each item. A brief statement evaluating the statistical significance has also been presented with each item.

The abbreviations LHSA and SHSA have been used to identify the responses of the large high school administrators and those of the small high school administrators.

Item 1. Assisting students in selecting high school courses.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	13	14	18	1	1
LHSA	17	3	4	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 2. Scheduling students in classes.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	7	7	22	8	3
LHSA	5	2	6	8	3

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 3. Placing students in part-time and summer jobs.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	3	13	15	10	6
LHSA	1	5	5	7	6

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 4. Placing students in permanent jobs.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	4	7	16	13	7
LHSA	2	1	9	6	6

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 5. Arranging course transfers for students within the school.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	14	10	15	6	2
LHSA	7	5	9	3	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 6. Providing information about individual students to potential employers.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	15	15	10	6	1
LHSA	6	7	4	7	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 7. Providing information about individual students to colleges at which the student has applied.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	26	11	9	1	0
LHSA	7	11	6	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 8. Making the decisions concerning special grouping of students.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	1	7	24	11	4
LHSA	3	5	14	2	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 9. Assisting students in the selection of extracurricular activities.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	2	8	19	9	9
LHSA	0	6	5	8	5

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 10. Sending and receiving transcripts to and from other high schools.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	16	12	9	2	8
LHSA	7	2	4	3	8

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 11. Counseling with students concerning academic failures.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	27	12	7	1	0
LHSA	16	3	5	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 12. Counseling with potential dropouts.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	30	12	4	1	0
LHSA	20	3	1	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 13. Counseling with students in evaluating personal assets and limitations.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	30	9	7	1	0
LHSA	20	2	2	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 14. Counseling with students concerning learning difficulties.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	21	14	11	1	0
LHSA	14	7	3	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 15. Counseling with students in their development of special abilities.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	19	13	13	1	1
LHSA	13	8	3	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 16. Counseling with students concerning discrepancy between ambitions and abilities.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	26	8	12	1	0
LHSA	16	5	1	2	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 17. Counseling with students concerning military service.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	25	11	9	2	0
LHSA	8	10	6	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 18. Counseling with students in regard to educational and vocational plans.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	34	9	4	0	0
LHSA	18	4	2	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 19. Providing the student an opportunity to "talk through his problems."

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	42	1	4	0	0
LHSA	19	3	2	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 20. Counseling with professional staff in regard to school problems.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	17	9	17	3	1
LHSA	8	5	8	3	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 21. Counseling with students concerning personal decisions.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	24	13	8	2	0
LHSA	14	5	3	2	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 22. Conducting follow-up studies of graduates.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	21	13	10	1	2
LHSA	9	8	6	0	1

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 23. Conducting follow-up studies of dropouts.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	21	14	9	0	3
LHSA	7	8	6	2	1

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 24. Evaluating students' adjustment to school environment.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	13	19	12	3	0
LHSA	6	6	10	2	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 25. Evaluating student achievement as compared to capacity.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	18	14	14	1	0
LHSA	8	9	4	2	1

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 26. Evaluating effectiveness of extracurricular activities in meeting student needs.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	4	5	26	3	9
LHSA	1	4	11	7	1

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 27. Conducting follow-up studies of students counseled by guidance personnel.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	25	15	4	2	1
LHSA	9	11	2	0	2

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 28. Evaluating student adjustment to curriculum choices.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	10	21	12	2	2
LHSA	9	7	6	1	1

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 29. Preparing an analysis of grades given each year by faculty.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	6	6	15	8	12
LHSA	0	3	5	3	13

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 30. Evaluating effectiveness of school curriculum in meeting students' academic and social needs.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	2	8	28	8	1
LHSA	1	1	18	4	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 31. Conducting follow-up studies to consider effectiveness of homework.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	1	8	20	12	6
LHSA	0	4	10	4	6

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 32. Planning orientation activities for entering freshmen.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	5	15	16	2	9
LHSA	5	4	13	2	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 33. Registering new students.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	14	14	13	5	1
LHSA	9	6	7	2	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 34. Planning orientation for students transferring from another high school.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	14	13	11	5	4
LHSA	5	8	9	2	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 35. Conducting orientation conferences for new teachers.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	2	7	14	8	16
LHSA	0	1	4	9	10

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 36. Scheduling new students.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	15	11	10	7	4
LHSA	9	4	5	3	3

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 37. Preparing handbook of school rules and policies for distribution.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	7	3	16	9	12
LHSA	0	1	9	7	7

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 38. Conducting follow-up of new students to determine adjustment to school environment.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	11	11	18	2	5
LHSA	5	6	10	2	1

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 39. Conducting follow-up of new students to determine academic adjustment to school.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	14	13	17	1	2
LHSA	4	8	9	3	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 40. Maintaining permanent records.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	16	10	18	2	1
LHSA	4	4	4	2	10

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 41. Organizing school testing program.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	27	14	5	0	1
LHSA	16	7	1	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 42. Administering standardization tests.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	31	10	6	0	0
LHSA	12	9	3	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 43. Organizing the use of test results by faculty and administration.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	24	13	9	1	0
LHSA	13	6	4	0	1

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 44. Identifying exceptional children.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	15	18	12	2	0
LHSA	8	7	9	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 45. Visiting homes to confer with parents.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	10	14	12	6	5
LHSA	6	2	5	7	4

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 46. Planning case conferences involving parents and teachers.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	12	11	18	3	3
LHSA	4	7	10	3	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 47. Conducting a study of a student's out-of-school experiences.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	6	9	17	6	9
LHSA	4	0	8	7	5

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 48. Assisting teachers in diagnosing learning difficulties of students.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	9	13	19	3	3
LHSA	11	3	8	2	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 49. Administering the program for reporting pupil progress to parents.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	7	7	23	5	5
LHSA	1	5	9	1	8

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 50. Checking credits for graduation and college entrance.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	23	10	10	1	4
LHSA	15	4	4	0	1

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 51. Writing letters of reference.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	16	13	14	2	2
LHSA	11	4	7	2	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 52. Accumulating personality data on students.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	22	12	9	3	1
LHSA	8	6	5	2	3

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 53. Providing occupational information.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	31	11	4	1	0
LHSA	14	8	2	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 54. Providing college information.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	31	8	7	0	1
LHSA	14	7	3	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 55. Providing information concerning study habits.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	14	12	18	2	1
LHSA	6	8	8	2	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 56. Providing information concerning personal and social needs.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	17	12	17	1	0
LHSA	3	7	10	4	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 57. Providing scholarship information.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	27	10	7	2	1
LHSA	15	5	3	1	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 58. Providing information on child labor laws and work permits.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	9	12	15	6	5
LHSA	4	5	9	4	2

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 59. Providing information on economic conditions related to future employment and education.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	18	15	12	1	1
LHSA	3	11	8	2	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 60. Providing information on community referral resources.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	18	13	11	3	2
LHSA	7	9	6	2	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 61. Assisting students with vocational plans.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	27	12	7	0	1
LHSA	16	5	3	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 62. Assisting students with college plans.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	28	11	6	1	1
LHSA	16	5	3	0	0

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 63. Teaching courses on occupational development.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	13	12	10	4	8
LHSA	3	5	5	4	7

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 64. Conducting community surveys to determine occupational opportunities.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	10	11	15	4	7
LHSA	4	6	7	6	1

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 65. Planning college night programs.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	16	8	14	2	7
LHSA	13	6	4	0	1

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 66. Planning career day programs.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	15	10	13	3	6
LHSA	12	5	4	0	3

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 67. Coordinating the school audio-visual service.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	2	2	14	4	25
LHSA	0	0	1	0	23

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 68. Making decisions concerning student disciplinary action.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	2	2	10	15	18
LHSA	0	0	4	6	14

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 69. Teaching academic courses other than group guidance courses.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	7	2	11	7	20
LHSA	1	1	3	2	17

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 70. Selecting and revising curriculum content.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	3	3	26	10	5
LHSA	0	0	10	10	4

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 71. Working with students who are delinquent in attendance.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	4	14	21	5	3
LHSA	5	4	10	3	2

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 72. Coordinating remedial work for students.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	4	9	20	7	7
LHSA	2	3	11	2	6

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 73. Planning P.T.A. activities and programs.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	1	6	6	9	25
LHSA	0	1	1	2	20

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 74. Compiling faculty newsletter pertaining to school program.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	3	2	11	12	19
LHSA	0	1	3	6	14

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 75. Ordering school supplies and equipment.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	2	2	11	5	27
LHSA	0	0	3	1	20

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 76. Preparing school information for distribution to public communication media.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	3	2	14	13	15
LHSA	0	3	5	9	7

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

Item 77. Planning assembly programs.

	Personally perform	Primary responsibility	Share planning	Consultant	No direct responsibility
SHSA	3	2	11	3	28
LHSA	0	0	2	9	13

At the .05 level, no significant difference was found.

SUMMARY

This chapter has presented the findings of this study. The data was analyzed through the use of the chi square test of independence. The four questions posed in Chapter 1 were answered in terms of the data gathered from the Counselor Function Inventory. The results gathered yielded the following answers to those questions.

1. What are Montana's large high school administrators' perceptions of counselor functions in their high school? The large high school administrators surveyed generally agreed on the functions which should be the responsibility of the counselor. Generally, they indicated that the counselor should have the primary responsibility of counseling with individual and groups of students. They also indicated that the counselor should be held personally responsible for the school's standardized testing program, providing information on colleges and various vocations, and assisting students with school decisions. The large high school administrators also indicated that certain functions were not a primary responsibility of the counselor. These functions included placement into work situations, assisting students with decisions concerning extra-curricular activities, evaluating the existing curriculum, various clerical tasks, teaching academic courses, and disciplinary action.

2. What are Montana's small high school administrator's perceptions of counselor functions in their high schools? The small

high school administrators generally agreed on the following functions to be a primary responsibility of the counselor: placement duties, providing information, individual and group counseling, vocational planning assistance, follow-up studies of students, and orientation tasks. The small high school administrators indicated that certain functions were not a primary function of the counselor. These functions included disciplinary action, various clerical tasks, curriculum evaluation, teaching academic courses, and preparing handbooks and newsletters.

3. Is there a difference between the large high school administrators' perceptions and those of small high school administrators in Montana? Based on the findings of this study, no significant differences of perceptions were found between the two groups of high school administrators.

4. If a difference exists, does this study suggest reasons other than enrollment for differences of perceptions between large high school and small high school administrators in Montana? Based on the findings of this study, no significant differences of perceptions were found between the two groups of high school administrators. Thus, this study did not offer any alternative reasons for differences of perception between the two groups.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to compare administrators' perceptions of counselor functions in large and small high schools in Montana. Two sample groups were drawn from the 190 public high schools in operation during the 1973-74 school year. The first sample comprising the large high schools was drawn from the high schools with a student enrollment of 400 or more. The second sample comprising the small high schools was drawn from the high schools with a student enrollment of 399 or less.

A seventy-seven item checklist entitled the Counselor Function Inventory was sent to each administrator from both samples. The results of these Inventories were tabulated and a comparison was made between the two samples by means of the chi square test of independence.

The study found the perceptions of the large high school administrators and those of the small school administrators to be quite similar. By using the .05 level of significance, there were no significant differences on any of the seventy-seven functions listed on the Counselor Function Inventory.

The study also found certain functions which the majority of administrators felt high school counselors should be held primarily responsible. These functions were: individual and group counseling;

providing information on colleges and various careers; assisting students with school decisions; administering the school's standardized testing program; placement duties; and follow-up studies of students.

The study also found a variety of functions which the majority of the administrators felt high school counselors should not be held responsible. These functions included: disciplinary actions; teaching academic courses; preparing handbooks and newsletters, evaluating the existing curriculum; various clerical tasks; and assisting students with decisions concerning extra-curricular activities.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study were often inconsistent with many of the findings of the literature reviewed during the course of this study.

This study found a strong positive relationship between administrators' opinions of proper counselor functions and counselors' opinions of proper counselor functions. It would seem that the most important finding is that both parties agreed on the importance of individual and group counseling. This is contrary to the findings of Sexton (1965).

The findings also indicated an agreement between the two parties concerning various clerical duties. This also was inconsistent with many of the findings in the literature. From these two statements, one

could conclude that administrators and counselors in Montana are in agreement of expected counselor functions.

Another conclusion that could be drawn is that the counselor education programs are doing an adequate job of preparing counselors for high school positions. Counselors are entering the schools with the training which is expected of them by their administrators.

The results of this study also strongly indicate very little difference between the perceptions of counselor functions by large and small high school administrators. From this, one could conclude that a high school counselor would be doing basically the same functions regardless of the size of school in which he was working.

It is this writer's opinion, however, that this is not the case. In larger high schools with better staffing a counselor will have more time to concentrate on individual counseling. Other responsibilities will be divided equally among the staff in most cases. The small high school counselor is not in the same situation. He may have much less time for counseling simply because he is solely responsible for the other functions which consumes much of his work day. This is one reason why the conclusion of the same duties, etc. is not entirely valid. The Counselor Function Inventory was not intended to identify and analyze the time element. Its only purpose was to identify functions which a counselor should be held responsible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has suggested a number of directions to further study the position, role, function, and preparation of counselors in Montana high schools. The investigator felt that the following recommendations for further research may lead to a clear understanding of the role of high school counselors.

1. Research should be completed in the area of actual time spent on the normal everyday functions of high school counselors.
2. A comparison of administrator and counselor perceptions of counselor functions in their respective schools should be studied.
3. Because of this study's inability to distinguish areas of disagreement between large and small high school administrators, this study should not be duplicated.
4. Because of the possibility that the Counselor Function Inventory might be responsible for not being able to identify the differences of perception, a similar study should be completed using a different instrument.

APPENDIX

COUNSELOR FUNCTION INVENTORY

Directions: Respond to each of the following items by placing a check mark (✓) in the appropriate box to the right of each question.

- 1--The counselor should personally perform this function.
- 2--The counselor should have primary responsibility for this function, although he may not personally perform the function.
- 3--The counselor should share with other groups in planning and performing this function, but he does not have primary responsibility for function.
- 4--The counselor should serve as a consultant in this function only upon request.
- 5--The counselor should have no direct responsibility for this function.

1. Assisting students in selecting high school courses.
2. Scheduling students in classes.
3. Placing students in part-time and summer jobs.
4. Placing students in permanent jobs.
5. Arranging course transfers for students within the school.
6. Providing information about individual students to potential employers.
7. Providing information about individual students to colleges at which the student has applied.
8. Making the decisions concerning special grouping of students.
9. Assisting students in the selection of extra-curricular activities.

[illegible]

10. Sending and receiving transcripts to and from other high schools.
11. Counseling with students concerning academic failures.
12. Counseling with potential dropouts.
13. Counseling with students in evaluating personal assets and limitations.
14. Counseling with students concerning learning difficulties.
15. Counseling with students in their development of special abilities.
16. Counseling with students concerning discrepancy between ambitions and abilities.
17. Counseling with students concerning military service.
18. Counseling with students in regard to educational and vocational plans.
19. Providing the student an opportunity to "talk through his problems."
20. Counseling with professional staff in regard to school problems.
21. Counseling with students concerning personal decisions.
22. Conducting follow-up studies of graduates.
23. Conducting follow-up studies of dropouts.
24. Evaluating students' adjustment to school environment.
25. Evaluating student achievement as compared to capacity.
26. Evaluating effectiveness of extra-curricular activities in meeting student needs.
27. Conducting follow-up studies of students counseled by guidance personnel.

[illegible]

28. Evaluating student adjustment to curriculum choices.
29. Preparing an analysis of grades given each year by faculty.
30. Evaluating effectiveness of school curriculum in meeting students' academic and social needs.
31. Conducting follow-up studies to consider effectiveness of homework.
32. Planning orientation activities for entering freshmen.
33. Registering new students.
34. Planning orientation for students transferring from another high school.
35. Conducting orientation conferences for new teachers.
36. Scheduling new students.
37. Preparing handbook of school rules and policies for distribution.
38. Conducting follow-up of new students to determine adjustment to school environment.
39. Conducting follow-up of new students to determine academic adjustment to school.
40. Maintaining permanent records.
41. Organizing school testing program.
42. Administering standardization tests.
43. Organizing the use of test results by faculty and administration.
44. Identifying exceptional children.

[illegible]

45. Visiting homes to confer with parents.
46. Planning case conferences involving parents and teachers.
47. Conducting a study of a student's out-of-school experiences.
48. Assisting teachers in diagnosing learning difficulties of students.
49. Administering the program for reporting pupil progress to parents.
50. Checking credits for graduation and college entrance.
51. Writing letters of reference.
52. Accumulating personality data on students.
53. Providing occupational information.
54. Providing college information.
55. Providing information concerning study habits.
56. Providing information concerning personal and social needs.
57. Providing scholarship information.
58. Providing information on child labor laws and work permits.
59. Providing information on economic conditions related to future employment and education.
60. Providing information on community referral resources.
61. Assisting students with vocational plans.

[illegible]

62. Assisting students with college plans.
63. Teaching courses on occupational development.
64. Conducting community surveys to determine occupational opportunities.
65. Planning college night programs.
66. Planning career day programs.
67. Coordinating the school audio-visual service.
68. Making decisions concerning student disciplinary action.
69. Teaching academic courses other than group guidance courses.
70. Selecting and revising curriculum content.
71. Working with students who are delinquent in attendance.
72. Coordinating remedial work for students.
73. Planning PTA activities and programs.
74. Compiling faculty newsletter pertaining to school program.
75. Ordering school supplies and equipment.
76. Preparing school information for distribution to public communication media.
77. Planning assembly programs.

[illegible]

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