1999

Relationships between experience, credentials, moral development, conceptual level, and self-efficacy of school counselors

Susan Emilie Halverson

William & Mary - School of Education

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RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EXPERIENCE, CREDENTIALS, MORAL DEVELOPMENT, CONCEPTUAL LEVEL, AND SELF-EFFICACY OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Susan Emilie Halverson
July 1999
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EXPERIENCE, CREDENTIALS, MORAL DEVELOPMENT, CONCEPTUAL LEVEL, AND SELF-EFFICACY OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS

BY

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my wonderful family. First, I dedicate it to my three children, Christopher, Kari, and Jessica. They have been with me since I began my classes as an undergraduate in Minnesota. They have made many sacrifices over the years as I continued to gain the degrees that have brought me to this point. Their love and support have proved of inestimable value to me.

In addition, my parents, William and Esther Fiene, proved excellent role models for me. They never met an obstacle they could not overcome with the help of God, their creativity, and their sense of humor. They instilled in me a lifelong love of learning, as well as a love for God and mankind; both have been foundational in the pursuit of my own education and training, and in the work I hope to do after this.
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The purpose of this study was to investigate school counselors and relationships between their experience, credentials, moral development, conceptual level, and self-efficacy. It was hypothesized that school counselors with higher levels of education, experience, supervision and support would have higher scores on cognitive development and self-efficacy.

One hundred and eight school counselors from three school systems participated by completing Rest’s Defining Issues Test, Hunt’s Paragraph Completion Measure, Larson’s Counselor Self-Estimate Inventory, and a general demographic and support questionnaire. Significant correlation was found between school counselors’ reports of willingness to get more training and/or supervision and higher scores on the measure of moral development. Higher scores also correlated with feelings of low support from the state school board and legislature. Additionally, school counselors with higher conceptual levels indicated a higher level of job satisfaction.

Further study is needed to determine more efficacious methods of providing continuing education and supervision for school counselors.

Susan Emilie Halverson

School of Education Counseling Program

The College of William and Mary
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EXPERIENCE, CREDENTIALS, MORAL DEVELOPMENT, CONCEPTUAL LEVEL, AND SELF-EFFICACY OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS
CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Description of Problem

The purpose of this study is to investigate school counselors and relationships between their experience, credentials, moral development, conceptual level, and self-efficacy. The specific research question is as follows: Do school counselor's levels of training, experience, supervision, and perceived levels of support influence the cognitive developmental domains of moral development and conceptual level, as well as their sense of self-efficacy? It appears from the literature that higher levels of cognitive development as well as elevated levels of self-efficacy may enhance a school counselor's ability to perform competently and effectively with students, parents, administrators, and teachers. Studies report that counselors or teachers at more complex levels of cognitive development are more adaptive and are able to apply complex reasoning in problem solving processes (Chang, 1994; Peace, 1995). Research has shown that more successful and empathic counselors possess higher levels of self-efficacy (Sutton & Fall, 1995). A counselor's ability to display accurate empathy has been related to higher level conceptual complexity (Reiman, Bostick, Lassiter, & Cooper, 1995).

Counselor training and supervision researchers and teachers have asserted that cognitive processes and strategies should be included as a vital part of counselor training (Haynes, Dagley, & Horne, 1996; Peace, 1995). Research comparing counselor training promoting cognitive complexity and behavioral skills training with
only behavioral skills training, showed that participants demonstrated significantly
greater empathy when promotion of cognitive development was incorporated with
behavioral skills training than behavioral skills training alone (Morran, Kurpius,
Brack, & Brack, 1995). Counselor trainees also demonstrated more effective
communication skills when their training included cognitive instruction (Kurpius,
1983; Richardson & Stone, 1981). This training included systematic approaches using
instruction, modeling, practice and feedback (Morran, et al., 1995). Mahoney and
Lyddon (1988) characterized schemata (cognitive structures and processes involved
in such activities as planning, decision making, and problem solving) as tacit
scaffoldings for understanding that promotes the formation of viable representational
models of experience. Bandura (1997) claimed that people with stronger self-efficacy
are more likely to have high aspiration, take long range views, think soundly, set
themselves difficult challenges, and commit themselves firmly to meeting those
challenges.

Several issues appear relevant to school counselor self-efficacy. First, the
counselor’s role needs to be clear and their tasks need to be in agreement with their
role. Second, the administration and system in which they function needs to be
supportive and allow them to accomplish those tasks which are part of their job
description (Henderson & Gysbers, 1998; Sutton & Fall, 1995).

School counselors face a daunting task in today’s schools. Students come to
school with a myriad of complex and serious personal and social problems in addition
to academic and career choice issues. Changes in family structure, including greater
numbers of single parent families or families where both parents work outside the
home, have resulted in a call for counselors to help develop full-service schools to address these social and emotional needs (Carroll, 1993; Evans & Carter, 1997; Studer & Allton, 1996).

Administrators and faculty may turn to counselors for help in additional areas. Because the benefits of school counseling in enhancing children's development and learning have been well documented (Borders & Drury, 1992; Brake & Gerler, 1994; Whiston & Sexton, 1996; Whiston & Sexton, 1998), school officials may request that elementary counselors participate in pre-kindergarten services (Hoffman, 1991). The benefits of conflict mediation training and peer helping models have been clearly shown at both the elementary and secondary level (Borders & Drury, 1992; Tindall & Gray, 1985; Whiston & Sexton, 1996). Counselors at every level, elementary, middle, and high school, could be required by the school administration to add the additional task of training and implementing these peer programs. The benefits of group experience are also well documented (Brake & Gerler, 1994; Prout & DeMartino, 1986). Although elementary school counselors often conduct small groups, middle and high school counselors may find more requests for this type of intervention. The increasing incidences of school violence across the country also means that administrators, teachers and the public will look to school counselors for answers and help.

The inclusion movement, which will return children with learning difficulties and special needs to the regular classroom, will have implications for school counselors. Some of the responsibilities counselors may be asked to assume include increasing involvement in multidisciplinary teams, promoting acceptance by non-
disabled peers, addressing the needs of medically fragile children, increasing interaction with school social workers, counseling parents, working with siblings of children with disabilities, developing peer helper programs, and preparing pre-service and in-service training (Greer, Greer & Woody, 1995; Howard-Hamilton, 1995; Sexton, Whiston, Bleuer, & Walz, 1997).

Some school systems have family therapy connections with local universities, such as the New Horizons Program at The College of William and Mary or the California State University, Los Angeles school-based family counseling program; school counselors could be tapped to consult or coordinate with those programs (Evans & Carter, 1997).

Parents are another group who are demanding more from counselors in the way of time and accountability, and it is clear that working with parents will become an increasingly important aspect of their work (Carroll, 1993; Paisley & Borders, 1995). Certain coalitions and parents rights groups are challenging the content of contacts between counselors and their children, often leaving counselors defensive and unsure how to address these charges (Otwell & Mullis, 1997; Whiston & Sexton, 1998). However, the counselor's role as consultant tends to have a major impact on how teachers and parents view the counseling program (Carter, 1993; Fall, 1995).

School boards are pressed to make the best use of the taxpayers dollars and want counselors to prove their worth. It seems that school counselors are left out, overlooked in the process of determining how to best address the needs of students when administrators, legislators, and school reformers make decisions about schools and what school counselors should do (Paisley & Borders, 1995; Sutton & Fall,
It is essential that counselors engage in research efforts which produce understandable data that reflect school counselors' contributions to academic achievement (Otwell & Mullis, 1997). Counseling outcome research could perhaps close the gap between research and practice and help direct policy decision-making (Sexton, Whiston, Bleuer, & Walz, 1997; Whiston & Sexton, 1998). Research is, nevertheless, low on the priority list for most practicing counselors (Sisson & Bullis, 1992).

Counselors are often hired and placed in one or more school and then abandoned to function in isolation from their peers (Crutchfield & Borders, 1997). Supervision is provided by principals and assistant principals who are not usually trained in counseling or counselor supervision and may not understand the goals of counseling sufficiently to function in the supervisory position necessary for counselor's growth to continue (Benshoff & Paisley, 1996; Paisley & Borders, 1995). Administrators also have their own goals and directives to meet, and don't view the world from the same perspective as school counselors (Studer & Allton, 1996). Counselors can become inducted into the culture of the school system that focuses on providing immediate results by producing a product, such as higher test scores or grade averages.

The National Standards for School Counseling Programs (1997) were developed by the American School Counseling Association to provide a model or guide to assist states, districts, and individual schools in planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating a school counseling program which is comprehensive, developmental, and systematic. Until now, the differences within or between states in
the implementation of the school counseling programs, legislative differences, and many other issues has made the task of understanding the field of school counseling monumental (Fox, Rawls, & Folger, 1994). This new document outlines three program standards: a) academic progress and development, b) personal/social development, and c) career development. Balancing of these three directives is a major challenge to the school counselor. Understanding how these roles and responsibilities assist students in their educational experience can help school counselors see their program as an integral part of the school program and not an auxiliary service (Henderson & Gysbers, 1998; Mariani, 1998; Studer & Allton, 1996).

The school counseling profession is thus faced with three challenges. The first challenge is to determine how to continue to promote growth and development of counselor's moral and conceptual levels of cognitive development after graduation and employment. Research clearly shows that adults - counselors, teachers, physicians, school principals, and parents, are more effective at higher levels of cognitive development (Foster & McAdams, 1998; Reiman, 1995; Rest, 1994; Sprinthall & Thies-Sprinthall, 1983). Evidence of effectiveness varies but includes the ability to process experience, think symbolically, act with empathy, maintain a greater focus on internal control, reason according to ethics, put one's self in someone else's shoes, maintain a third person perspective, tolerate stress, and perceive the "field" independently; some of the elements of psychological maturity (Reiman, et al., 1995; Sprinthall, 1981; Sprinthall, 1994).
The second challenge is to implement the comprehensive role statement that has recently been developed for school counselors. The American School Counseling Association (National Standards for School Counseling Programs, 1997) has produced a series of clear statements delineating the areas of responsibility and duties of school counselors but discussion and arguments about the school counselor’s role continue (Mariani, 1998). Task force reports, published surveys of counselors, principals, teachers and parents, presentations at state and national meetings have failed to definitively answer the questions about how much time counselors spend in the classroom, how much time should be spent in direct service or on administrative tasks, and whether their program focus should be developmental (Paisley & Borders, 1995; Mariani, 1998).

Supervision for existing counselors needs to be provided so that counselors can retain and grow in the skills and cognitive developmental levels already achieved, for these areas of expertise make school counselors’ contributions to the system unique and valuable (Henderson & Gysbers, 1998; Reiman, et al., 1995).

This leads to the third challenge. If the school guidance and counseling program does have a developmental focus, and a predominant sample of counselors see themselves as developmental counselors (Sisson & Bullis, 1992), then the challenge for professionals is to clearly define and understand the concept of developmental guidance. Henderson & Gysbers (1998) have recently published a manual to provide a common language and prepare those building and district individuals that are responsible for school counselors’ leadership and supervision to adequately oversee school counselors continued growth. The focus is on
developmental guidance and counseling, and its implementation would go a long way toward this understanding. Developmental guidance is more than the formulation of a scope and sequence of tasks to be learned at different ages (Baker, 1996; Borders & Drury, 1992; Henderson & Gysbers, 1998). It includes an understanding of how people at different stages learn and how they see the world. Knowledge of growth and development also helps counselors identify children’s developmental levels and thus facilitate their growth.

Hunt’s (1971) Conceptual Systems theory proposes that in order for someone to move to the next level of development, certain environmental and experiential variables must be present. In order for upward movement to happen, the counselor must provide an environment that both supports and challenges the student (Hunt, 1971; Stoltenberg, 1981). The teacher or counselor must function in a “one up” relationship with the student to help them move to the next level. Growth is produced in both counselor and student with this interaction (Reiman, et al., 1995).

Additionally, a school counselor’s ability to function in this role for their students can be enhanced if well-trained supervisors provide this support and challenge environment for the counselors. School counselors can be helped to achieve movement toward higher levels of cognitive development, conceptual functioning, and sense of efficacy if they are adequately challenged within the framework of their professional roles, both didactically and through a meaning making process (Pease, 1995; Sprinthall & Theis-Sprinthall, 1983). The challenge then is how to effect the levels of support and challenge that will contribute to the stimulation of new growth and facilitate upward movement both for students and school counselors.
Theoretical Rationale

Cognitive Developmental Theory

Cognitive developmental theories describe human thought processes and how these thought processes influence human behavior. There are a number of models of cognitive development that share similar ideas about thought processes and behavior. These ideas are that an individual’s cognitive structural development is orderly, sequential, and invariant, moving in the direction of greater complexity, differentiation, and higher order integration (Blocher, 1980). Eleven assumptions are listed by McAdams (1988):

1. There is a human motivation towards competence and mastery, which is intrinsic.
2. Cognitive development occurs in stages, and each stage represents the individual’s current style of organizing the thought processes.
3. Stage growth is a qualitative rather than a quantitative change.
4. Stage growth occurs in a hierarchical and sequential manner.
5. Stage growth occurs in one direction and is irreversible.
6. Development depends on an interaction between the person and the environment.
7. Behavior is related to an individual’s level of cognitive complexity.
8. Physiological and psychological changes are involved in cognitive development.
9. Development may occur in specific domains and not in other domains.
10. An individual may function at a level above or below their modal stage of functioning.


The two models that will be used in this study may be of particular interest to school counselors as they were used extensively in original research with schoolteachers and subsequently with school counselors and others in the helping professions (Rest & Narvaez, 1994). One is Moral Development, based on the ideas of Piaget, Kohlberg, and Rest (Kohlberg, 1977; Rest, 1986), and the other is Conceptual Development advocated by Hunt (Hunt, Butler, Noy & Rosser, 1978).

**Moral Development**

Hayes (1994) reported that Kohlberg’s work calls for a conceptualization of counseling as a developmental process of social interaction, thus defining counseling as a fundamentally social activity. This is important for counselors who may perceive a part of their task to be helping their students through this developmental process of social interaction. Kohlberg (1976) claimed that moral judgement develops through three levels in a sequence of six stages. Each level represented a fundamental shift in the social-moral perspective of the individual. The pre-conventional Level I includes the concrete individual perspectives at Stage 1, obedience-punishment orientation, and Stage 2, naive hedonistic and instrumental orientation. Individuals at this level avoid breaking rules that come with punishment, comply in obedience for its own sake, and avoid the physical consequences of an action to persons and property. Level II is the conventional or “member of society” level. Individuals at this level have a basic understanding of conventional morality, and reason with an
understanding that norms and conventions are necessary to uphold society, and they identify with these rules and uphold them consistently, viewing morality as acting in accordance with what society defines as right. This second level includes Stage 3, the “good boy”-“nice girl” morality and Stage 4, the law-and-order orientation. Level III, the Principled or Post-conventional stage is characterized by reasoning based on principles and consists of Stage 5, with a social-contract orientation, and 6, the universal ethical principle orientation.

Kohlberg believed that both the client and the counselor grow during counseling and that the listening that counselors do provides the moral and psychological growth that comes from their empathy and role taking. Thus, counselor’s growth is very important for students’ growth (Reiman, et al., 1995).

Kohlberg (1977) reviewed thousands of studies on childhood predictors of adult performance. He found that academic achievement in school was not an accurate predictor of adult success. Rather, Kohlberg discovered that psychological development predicted success, which was measured by occupational achievement, and absence of crime, mental illness, unemployment, and expert ratings of life adjustment.

**Conceptual Development Theory**

Hunt originally applied Conceptual Systems Theory to the study of the school environment, and by 1974 this theory was applied to school counseling (Holloway & Wampold, 1986). The beliefs of Conceptual Systems Theory are based in part around Lewin’s (1935) field theory that behavior is a function of the person and the environment \[B = f(P,E)\]. Conceptual level (CL) is the cognitive variable in
conceptual systems theory. It is defined by Hunt as a personality characteristic that describes persons on a developmental hierarchy of increasing conceptual complexity (differentiation, discrimination, and integration), self-responsibility and independence (Diambra, 1997; Holloway & Wampold, 1986). Hunt (1975) describes persons with higher CL as more structurally complex, more able to use responsible actions, and more capable of adapting to a changing environment than persons at lower levels of CL. There are four CL levels ranging on a continuum from concrete (low CL) to abstract (high CL). Low CL individuals need high structure and high support because they are more externally dependent, while high CL individuals require less structure and more autonomy. Counselors who are knowledgeable about CL are predicted to read and understand the student/client in order to provide the appropriate kind of intervention for the greatest student gain.

An Overview

Purpose of the Study

This proposal will describe a study that will explore the relationship between demographic and support variables reported by school counselors and their moral development, conceptual level, and self-efficacy. The specific research question is as follows: Do school counselor's levels of training, experience, supervision, and perceived levels of support influence the cognitive developmental domains of moral development and conceptual level, as well as their sense of self-efficacy? The study will include a selected review of the literature concerning the cognitive development and self-efficacy of school counselors, a synopsis of the instruments to be used to measure cognitive developmental growth and self-efficacy, and a description of the
instrument used to collect correlational personal data. Also included will be an explanation of the process of collecting the test results and information, and a critique of the weaknesses of the study.

Definition of Terms

Cognitive developmental theory. Cognitive developmental theory has as its major premise that reasoning and behavior are directly related to the level of complexity of psychological functioning (Foster & McAdams, 1998). Ego development, moral judgment and conceptual reasoning are three identified domains that display a relationship to Cognitive Development Theory.

Moral judgement. Moral judgement is a domain of Cognitive Development. Like Piaget, Kohlberg proposed that children form ways of thinking through their experiences including concepts such as justice, rights, human welfare and equality. He claimed that the process of gaining moral maturity continued into adulthood. The DIT measures levels of moral justice reasoning based on Kohlberg’s six stage theory of moral judgment development (Rest, Davison, Evens, & Thoma, 1996).

Conceptual development. Conceptual development is a cognitive developmental domain which is related to critical thinking and the concepts an individual uses to conceptualize and make meaning of experiences and interpersonal relationships (Morgan, 1998). Conceptual development scores are described in terms of a continuum from high CL (conceptual level) to low CL. High CL scores indicate that a person understands that there is inter-dependence between the self and the environment, and has a greater understanding of the self. This person will avoid dependence and welcomes external input. The low CL person on the other hand is
unsocialized and thinks concretely and simplistically. The low CL person does not tolerate ambiguity. The PCM measures conceptual level based on the conceptual development theory of Harvey, Hunt, and Schroder (1961) which explores how a person thinks.

**Self-efficacy.** Bandura (1977a) defined self-efficacy theory. It is theory which explores beliefs based on an individual’s expectations that they possess certain knowledge and skills, as well as the capabilities to take actions required to overcome problems and to succeed under the stresses and pressures of life (Sutton & Fall, 1995). Bandura (1977) theorized that self-efficacy is acquired through four sources: (a) enactive mastery (i.e., successful performance accomplishments); (b) vicarious learning; (c) verbal persuasion (e.g., support and encouragement); and (d) reductions in emotional arousal (resulting from, for example, observation models). These are listed in order of descending impact. Self-efficacy will be defined by student’s scores on the Counseling Self-Estimate Inventory (COSE) (Larsen, Suzuki, Gillespie, Potenza, Bechtel, & Toulouse, 1992)

**Research Hypotheses**

Specific research questions to be investigated include:

(1) Is the amount or type of counselor experience related to cognitive development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy as measured by the DIT, the PCM, and the COSE?

(2) Is the amount of counselor’s previous teaching experience related to their cognitive development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy as measured by the DIT, the PCM, and the COSE?
(3) Is the amount or type of training counselors receive related to their cognitive development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy as measured by the DIT, the PCM, and the COSE?

(4) Is the amount or type of supervision counselors receive related to their cognitive development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy as measured by the DIT, the PCM, and the COSE?

(5) Is the amount or type of support received by counselors related to their cognitive development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy as measured by the DIT, the PCM, and the COSE?

**Sample and Data Gathering**

School counselors in districts in North Carolina and Virginia were tested on three measures: the DIT, the PCM, and on the COSE. They also completed a survey with personal, demographic, and educational information.

**Limitations**

There are several limitations of this study. The sample was not selected randomly thus inferences from the findings are limited. All counselors at selected sites were included but the sites were based on convenience and availability. Efforts were made to match the sites as closely as possible in regards to size of system and socio-economic level but matching was not possible. Although the DIT, the PCM, and the COSE have good validity and reliability, the survey used was self-constructed. This could prove to be a second limitation. Prior to using the survey, a field-test was conducted with counselors from a third location. This should enhance the validity and reliability of the self-constructed survey.
Summary

This chapter provided an overview of school counselors’ developmental challenges and issues facing the school counseling profession. A discussion of cognitive development through the domains of moral development and conceptual development, and self-efficacy was included, as well as a rational for using these theories in relation to school counselor development. The research design was outlined and it provided a definition of the terms, a research hypothesis, and limitations of the study.
CHAPTER TWO

A Selected Review of the Literature

School Counselors’ Growth and Development

This chapter provides an overview of the current literature concerning school counselor growth and development. The frameworks used to examine counselor development are the cognitive-developmental model and the cognitive behavioral self-efficacy model. Rationale for the use of these models and the validation of the cognitive-developmental method will be presented; additionally, the concepts of cognitive-behavioral self-efficacy will be examined as related to counselor development.

Cognitive Development

Cognitive developmental theories describe human thought processes and how human behavior is influenced by these thought processes. The fundamental premise of the cognitive-developmental stage model is that an individual’s cognitive structural development is orderly, sequential, and invariant, moving in the direction of greater complexity, differentiation, and higher order integrations (Blocher, 1980). An individual’s current stage is a predictor of how that person will function in various roles, such as that of a counselor, teacher, or supervisor. Persons at higher developmental levels possess greater flexibility, respond with more empathy, are able to handle dichotomous situations more successfully, and thus are more skillfully adept professionally (Foster & McAdams, 1998; Rest, 1994; Sprinthall & Thies-Sprinthall, 1983). Cognitive-developmental theories relevant to the study of school counselors include moral development (Kohlberg, 1969,1976; Rest, 1983, 1984; Rest

Moral Development

Theories of moral development have relevance to a number of helping professions, including medicine, teaching and counseling (Rest & Narvaez, 1994). Kohlberg believed the process of counseling contributed to the development of both the counselor and the client (Hayes, 1994). He felt that “listening requires the empathy and role-taking that is important for both moral and psychological growth” (Kohlberg & Wasserman, 1980). Kohlberg wrote very little directly to counselors, but in his “just community” approach, he recommend that school counselors especially, needed to rethink their roles to be able to function as consultants and facilitators (Hayes, 1994).

Kohlberg (1976) developed a three level, six-stage progression of moral development, based on the Piagetian framework, to explain moral growth. He claimed that in order to act in a moral way, a high level of moral reasoning was required (Kohlberg, 1985). At the pre-conventional level moral value resides in external, quasi-physical happenings or quasi-physical needs, rather than in either persons or standards. Level I includes the concrete individual perspectives at Stage 1, obedience-punishment orientation, and Stage 2, naive hedonistic and instrumental orientation. Level II is the conventional or “member of society” level and includes Stage 3, the “good boy”-“nice girl” morality and Stage 4, the law-and–order orientation. At this level, moral value resides in performing good or right roles, in maintaining the conventional order, and in meeting the expectancies of others. At
level III, moral value resides in conformity by the self to shared standards, rights, or duties. Level III consists of Stage 5, social-contract orientation, and Stage 6, universal ethical principle orientation, which Kohlberg named the Principled or Post-conventional stage. Stage six was never validated and is generally not considered as a relevant part of the schema. Kohlberg, later in life, moderated his views to include the value of considering content in determining level of moral development.

Philosophical critics objected that the most advanced form of moral thinking did not have a social element but consisted of individual’s cognitions, reflecting on his/her own mind in isolation (Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau & Thoma, 1999).

Kohlberg’s theory was believed to be generalizable across cultures. He based his claims of universality on his studies in five cultural settings. Snarey (1985) conducted a meta-analysis of Kohlbergian research in a cross-cultural setting. Snarey conducted his meta-analysis on 45 studies completed in 27 cultural areas. The results indicated that in stages 1-3/4or 4 were in evidence virtually universally when age range and sample size of the population under study was taken into consideration. Stages 4/5 or 5 were extremely rare in all populations but it was evident to some degree in approximately two thirds of the subcultures sampled. This lack of higher stages is partially explained as a result of Kohlberg’s unclear definition of post-conventional stages and scoring difficulties in these stages. Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau & Thoma (1998) report that there has been movement towards looking at morality in terms of social interactions and not just as structure-content, which is used to defined Kohlberg’s Postconventionality stage. This then poses a challenge to Kohlberg’s claims of cross-cultural universality.
Gilligan (1982) challenged the implications and research evidence of Kohlberg’s theory, claiming that it was gender biased and predominately based on male psychological and moral values. According to Gilligan, women were rated lower on Kohlberg’s model, which she saw as favoring males and creating the impression that males were more morally or psychologically advanced than women (Walker, 1984). Gilligan proposed that a “different voice” or orientation might be found at different stages of moral development and in different age groups or genders. One voice is the “ethic of care” which reflects themes such as interpersonal relatedness and caring, empathy, and sensitivity to others. According to Gilligan (1982), women experience a different way of identifying ideas of self and morality and as such develop their moral perspective within a different interpretive framework that includes conceptions of self, ideas of relationship, and notions of responsibility.

Walker (1984) completed a comprehensive meta-analysis in an attempt to determine if Gilligan was correct in her assertions. His findings indicated that moral reasoning of males and females is more similar than different. In some studies, particularly with young children and early adolescents (Biaggio, 1976; Blatt & Kohlberg, 1975, study 2; Krebs & Gillmore, 1982; Turiel, 1976; Saltzstein, Diamond, & Belenky, 1972) the girls actually scored as slightly more advanced in their moral reasoning than the boys. Nevertheless, sex differences in moral reasoning are rare early in the life span, and then the infrequent differences are fairly small. When the subjects of the studies were college students, sex differences were most often non-significant. When men were rated with higher scores than women in the studies of adults, differences in sex were confounded with educational and occupational
differences. Further examination revealed that whether someone was employed was not as big a concern as the extent to which the occupation permitted responsibility, communication, and decision making opportunities (Walker, 1986).

Rest, et al. (1999) defend Kohlberg's theories as still fruitful but contends that there are some problems that need to be modified. DIT researchers are still guided by four of Kohlberg’s basic ideas. The first is Kohlberg’s emphasis on rationality; understanding how a person thinks and makes sense of the world is necessary in order to understand how that person is behaving. The construction of moral epistemology is the second. Basic moral categories such as justice, duty, and rights are self-constructed meanings by individuals. Third is development, people develop in their moral judgments, from simple to more complex ideas, over time. The fourth premise is the shift from Conventional to Postconventional thinking. It involves understanding how people interrelate to each other through laws, rules, and roles and institutions of a society. They also develop a concern with the systems morality.

Rest, et al. (1999) differed from Kohlberg on four separate points. They call their work Postconventional Moral Thinking, a neo-Kohlbergian approach, and it is on this theory the Defining Issues Test 2 is refined. Rest (1986) first challenged Kohlberg in his conceptualizations of stages. Kohlberg defined growth in hard stages, a structured wholeness where the structure is a way of thinking that is consistent across situations. Rest proposed the existence of soft stages, in which a person can use a different stage of thinking depending on the situation. Rest (1994) also differentiated between moral judgment and moral behavior. He took the position
that what a person believed was morally right was not the only factor in determining moral choice, but also how his beliefs affected his choices and behavior. Rest proposed a four component model of domains that addressed moral behavior.

Component one involves moral sensitivity or the ability to assess how one’s actions affect others. In this area, a person must discern or become aware that there is a choice of actions available. The person must recognize that actions have an impact on others and requires empathy and the ability to interpret situations accurately. This social cognition is a complicated process involving clarifying the complication in a cue detection, information integration, and inference-making that are involved in developing the ability to interpret social situations (Rest, 1986). People also have different levels of sensitivity to the needs and welfare of others, and this may affect their interpretation for this component.

The second component is moral judgment, which is concerned with the choice of actions to take. Once a person has recognized there are options, then that person must make choices by determining which option is morally right. Noting how others are affected by each action is an important aspect of moral judgment. Kohlberg’s research has given much in explaining this component. Rest (1986) proposed that three assumptions influence this component: a) how people arrange cooperative and positive social relationships b) people’s sense of fairness, giving something and getting something in return, and reciprocity c) how that sense of fairness drives the moral decision.

Moral motivation is component three, and it is the competition of moral values with other values. There are many theories as to why a person might be
motivated to choose to do what they see as morally right, rather than what is expedient, and place moral considerations above other concerns. Some theories listed by Rest (1986) include: (a) People behave morally because evolution has bred altruism into our genetic inheritance (Wilson, 1975); (b) “conscience makes cowards of us all.” That is, shame, guilt, and fear motivates morality (Aronfreed, 1968; Eysenck, 1976); (c) there really isn’t any special motivation to be moral. People just respond to reinforcement and/or modeling opportunities and “learn” social behavior that nonscientists may wish to call “morality” (Bandura, 1977; Goldiamond, 1968); (d) social understanding of how cooperation functions and how one’s own stake in building a desirable social world motivates morality (Dewey, 1959; Piaget, 1965); (e) moral motivation is derived from a sense of awe and self-subjugation to something greater than the self. One can identify with a crusade, one’s country, the sacred (Durkheim, 1961; Erikson, 1958); (e) empathy is the basis for altruistic motivation (Hoffman, 1976); (f) the experience of living in just and caring relationships and communities leads to moral commitment (Rawls, 1971; Kohlberg, 1985); (g) concern for self-integrity and one’s identity as a moral agent is what motivates moral action (Blasi, 1984; Damon, 1984).

Component four consists of moral character, which is the ability to be strong and act morally in the face of adversity. This component involves: (a) figuring out the sequence of concrete actions, (b) working around impediments and unexpected difficulties, (c) overcoming fatigue and frustration, (d) resisting distractions and allurements, and (e) keeping sight of the eventual goal (Rest, 1986). Psychologists sometimes refer to this element as ego strength. Strength in this area can be used for
good or for ill. Bandura (1977) describes how expectations of efficacy determine whether coping behavior will be initiated, how much effort will be expended, and how long it will be maintained in the face of obstacles and aversive experience.

Interactions take place among the four components and all four are involved in moral behavior and, while a combination of all four components is involved in moral decision making, there is not a linear progression from component one to component four. The important point is that moral behavior is an extremely complicated phenomenon, and no single factor is sufficiently comprehensive to represent the psychology of morality (Rest, 1986).

The second point Rest, et al. (1999) contends with in Kohlberg’s model is the end point, his stage six. Rest, among others, challenges the notion that the highest stage should be defined by the individual’s self-reflection. They would propose that the individual must interact with others to define the moral decision. Issues include such discussions as that of medical ethics. “There has been a move within moral philosophy towards seeing morality as an inherently social phenomenon, embedded in the particular experiences and deliberations of a community” (Rest, et al., 1999, p.5). The Postconventional level was never well defined by Kohlberg in his lifetime.

The third of the challenges proposed by Rest, et al. (1999) has to do with the limitations or exclusions from Kohlberg’s “justice reasoning” instrument. Personal-family dilemmas of morality or everyday morality are not dealt with in the six dilemmas of his instrument, the Moral Judgement Interview.

Fourthly, Rest, et al. (1999) believe that schema theory, as opposed to Piagetian theory, offers more advantages. The new DIT2 has been modified to reflect
this shift. “The new DIT is a device that activates moral schema (to the extent that 
the subject has developed the schemas). The items of the DIT2 balance bottom-up 
processing (stating just enough of a line of argument to activate a schema) with top-
down processing (engaging the moral schema that subsequently guides evaluation and 
action choice)” (Rest, et al., 1999, p.5). The rating and ranking activity yields 
information about which schemas were activated and to what extent they were 
activated during the test.

Some studies evaluated interventions designed to measure and promote 
growth in the area of moral development. Schlaefi, Rest, & Thoma (1985) conducted 
a meta-analysis of 55 studies of education interventions designed to stimulate 
development in moral judgment. This review revealed three important points: a) the 
dilemma discussions and psychological development programs produce modest but 
definite effects; b) treatment of 3 to 12 weeks are optimal, and c) programs with 
adults (24 years and older) produce larger effects than programs for younger subjects 
(13-23 year olds).

Sprinthall (1978) examined primary and secondary prevention attempts 
addressed at promoting competence and ego maturity while evaluating the research 
on adult mental illness and maladjustment, and concluded that secondary prevention 
attends consistently fail to produce positive change. Secondary attempts are 
treatment of existing mental health problems in clinics or by therapists. Looking at 
primary prevention designed to stimulate cognitive/development stage growth, 
Sprinthall identified research conducted on a variety of samples including teenage 
mothers, college students, principals and teachers, physicians, school counselors,
nurses, counselors, ministers, and morticians. This research indicated that higher stage corresponded to higher levels of sensitivity, more democratic approaches, and greater empathy with various populations, more humane actions in discipline and more justice in decision making.

For example, Thies-Sprinthall (1987) studied student teachers and found that higher levels of moral and conceptual development corresponded to more effective and varied responses to student needs. Sprinthall and Theis-Sprinthall (1983) identified five essential elements to promote development in educational programs. They named this developmental model of education the Deliberate Psychological Education (DPE) model and it is the basis for many cognitive developmental interventions. They include:

1. A significant new role-taking experience as a helper in a real world context such as counseling, among others.

2. Careful and continuous guided reflection where the individual is given the opportunity to reflect on new experiences and receive guidance through written instructor responses to journals or verbally processing.

3. A balance between experience and reflection.

4. Continuous program that allow enough time for significant cognitive structural growth to occur.

5. Adequate support and challenge where the learner is supported by the instructor and at the same time challenged with experiences that cause disequilibrium when trying new behaviors, ideas, and ways of approaching problems.
Sprinthall (1994) conducted a meta-analysis of 11 field studies using the DPE model. Ten of the studies used the Moral Judgment Interview or the Defining Issues Test to assess moral development. Other cognitive developmental domains were measured including Loevinger's Sentence Completion Test for ego development, and Hunt's Paragraph Completion Test to assess conceptual development. Sprinthall found significant effect sizes for moral development assessment (+.85), and ego/conceptual development assessment (+01.10).

Gerler (1992) reported two other studies, one by Herring in 1989, the other by Paisley in 1990, that showed that counselor led groups for beginning school teachers produced significant growth in the novice teachers, who progressed from concerns about themselves to concerns about student growth. School counseling mentors, involved in a program to promote cognitive development in other counselors, showed that increases in moral reasoning and conceptual development correspond to increases in their ability to provide effective supervision (Peace, 1995).

Peace (1995) developed a program to prepare experienced school counselors to mentor novice counselors. The focus was on promoting the developmental growth of both the experienced counselor and novice counselor, based on previous research indicating that a person's developmental stage is a predictor of how that person will function in complex helping roles, such as teaching or counseling. Empathy and the ability to think in more complex ways, which are qualities found at higher developmental levels, have been linked to more skillful professional performance. Research also has linked higher developmental levels with more effective counseling skills (Holloway & Wampold, 1989). Studies show that stage growth can be...
facilitated in adults with a carefully prepared curriculum while assuming a new role. Thus the major emphasis of her program was to promote the developmental growth of all of the counselors participating, while simultaneously including a skills training element.

Peace (1995) established five conditions for promoting developmental growth: role taking, guided reflection, balance between experience and reflection, support and challenge, and continuity. Experienced counselors were taught to use focused feedback with a variation of the clinical model of Cycle of Assistance. Cycle of Assistance is a supervisory technique that includes focusing supervision on one counselor behavior and using a counseling tape for observation.

Results indicated that moral reasoning and conceptual development increased during the two-semester program with the most significant gain in conceptual level coming after the practicum element. Both quantitative information and qualitative evidence of growth were provided.

Much can be learned by those engaged in the profession of school counseling by looking at research and development in the field of moral development. If higher levels of moral development are considered to be better for school counselors and their clients and peers, than promoting growth in school counselors to higher levels should be an important priority.

**Conceptual Systems Theory**

Conceptual systems theory (Harvey, Hunt, and Schroder, 1961) provides a relevant framework within which to further examine the effects of conceptual development on the processes involved in one’s ability to first recognize and decide
on a course of action and then to have the ability to sustain the effort that it takes to proceed. Conceptual Systems Theory refers to a developmental system of organizing personality based on individual differences in social cognition. Hunt proposed Lewin's classic formula \( P = f(P, E) \), behavior is a function of the person and the environment (Khalili & Hood, 1983) and that the interaction between the person and the environment impacts a person's conceptual structure. The Paragraph Completion Method used in this study is a semi-projective measure designed to assess Hunt's construct of conceptual level through the completion of six sentence stems, which yield a single conceptual level (CL) score. Inter-rater reliabilities as high as 0.95 and test-retest reliabilities of 0.67 over a 3-month period and 0.59 over 9 months have been reported. Construct validation of the PCM has been obtained in studies in which student clients have been matched on conceptual level with instructor therapists with outcomes in the expected direction. Hunt (1971) claims that the PCM has also been shown to have moderately positive relationships with Kohlberg's (1969) Moral Maturity Scale (0.34), Loevinger's (1970) Scale of Ego Development (0.23), and a scholastic aptitude test (0.27) (Khalili & Hood, 1983).

A conceptual system is defined as "a schema that provides the basis by which the individual relates to the environmental events he experiences" (Hunt, 1971, p. 244-45). Hunt was the first to suggest matching or mismatching counselor and student conceptual levels to promote optimal development by creating a matching environment. Hunt first applied this theory to teacher behavior and learning, and subsequently to counseling. According to this framework, individuals progress on a continuum of functioning from concrete to abstract. Higher levels of abstract
functioning provide individuals with multiple alternatives in evaluation and behavior, allowing them to respond more relativistically and less dichotomously (Holloway & Wampold, 1986). As applied to counselors, trainee’s progress through sequential, hierarchical stages as they gain more advanced conceptual and behavioral counseling skills. A counselor with low CL is more likely to need a high-structure environment, think in concrete terms, and see the world as dualistic; right or wrong, black or white. The four levels include:

Stage -0.0: A person who is unsocialized and processes concretely and simplistically. The individual at this level cannot tolerate ambiguity and resists external imposition.

Stage – 1.0: A person thinks in dualistic terms and behaves in socially acceptable ways. Processing occurs in a dualistic fashion.

Stage – 2.0: A person begins to question and challenge absolutes and becomes more open to and interested in other’s ideas. This person is striving for independence and is capable of tolerating ambiguity.

Stage – 3.0: A person understands there is interdependence between the self and the environment, and has greater understanding of the self. This person avoids dependence and has a selective openness to external imposition (Khalili & Hood, 1983).

Studies found that higher levels of cognitive development relate to more effective clinical hypotheses (Holloway & Wampold, 1986), more sophisticated, interactive descriptions of clients (Borders, 1989; Borders, Fong, & Neimeyer, 1986), and more parsimonious conceptualization of specific counseling situations (Fong,
Khalili and Hood (1983) conducted a longitudinal study on college students to measure their conceptual level at entrance and after four years of study. Hunt's paragraph completion method (PCM) was administered to a random sample of 169 entering freshmen attending the University of Iowa. The first follow-up study of these students was completed during their second semester when half were asked to return. Students were chosen on the basis of their social security number. Odd numbered social security numbers were chosen and, after follow-up calls, 38 students were re-tested. In the spring of the original students senior year, the 101 remaining were again asked to re-take the PCM. Mailings, phone calls, and location of convenient sites for test taking, resulted in 76% of the remaining 101 completing the test. A brief demographic questionnaire was also administered.

Results showed a statistically significant increase over the four-year period. The average growth was one half of a conceptual level. Females showed higher levels initially, one eighth of a level, but these differences were not maintained. CL levels during freshman year had no relationship to staying in college and there was little significant correlation of the demographic variables collected at the final testing. Business majors had the smallest amount of change and Humanities majors the largest, but the numbers were too small to reach significance (Khalili & Hood, 1983).

Results of this study support the contention that students need structure at the beginning of their college experience. The theory suggests students at higher CL levels can function at lower CL levels but low CL students cannot function in low
structure environments. Thus matching of structured learning experiences at the beginning of students' college experience would be beneficial to many with low CL's and not detrimental to those with higher CL's.

Fong, Borders, Ethington, and Pitts (1997) conducted a longitudinal study of school counseling in an CACREP-accredited program at a large southeastern state university. Forty-eight students volunteered for the study, which began at the inception of their masters degree program and commenced upon graduation. Students were assessed at four points in the program; the beginning; after completing the first semester counseling-skills training course; the end of the practicum; and the end of their second internship which was the completion of their program. Audio taped segments were obtained at the beginning and end of the counseling skills training course. Otherwise, written measures were taken at all other points of evaluation. Three consecutive semesters of new students were included and the study ran from 1989 through 1994 when they all completed the program.

Students were assessed with a variety of measures. Student cognitive development was looked at from two perspectives; indicators of cognitive functioning and indicators of actual counseling performance (considered to be directed by the student cognition's). Cognitive functioning was assessed in the three levels proposed by Meichenbaum and Cameron (1981): discrete thoughts about the client (cognitive events), cognitive appraisal of counseling (cognitive processes), and ego development level (cognitive schema). Thoughts about the client were evaluated by categorization of five adjectives they used to describe their clients. After being coded, they were placed in one of four categories and graduate level counselor educators independently
classified each word according to category. Initial agreement of 90% was found with the remaining disagreements being resolved by discussion and consensus. Counselor self-appraisal was assessed using the Stress Appraisal Scale (SAS; Carpenter & Suhr, 1988). This test uses a 4-point Likert scale and reports an internal consistency ranging from .77 to .90 coefficient alphas. The Sentence Completion Test for Ego Development-Form 81 (SCT; Loevinger & Wessler, 1970) was used to assess ego development. The authors reported that the SCT is adequate for research purposes, based on evidence for reliability and validity.

Counseling response modes were assessed by means of the Hill Counselor Verbal Response Category System (HCVRSC; Hill, 1985). These responses were rated independently by two raters with interrater reliability ranging from $r = .82$ to $r = .93$. The Global Rating Scale (Gazda, Asbury, Balzer, Childers, & Walters, 1988) was used to evaluate the effectiveness of counselor responses. This was modified and contained an 8-point continuum of response effectiveness. Interrater reliability was high at $r = .88$.

Results of this study did not show significant change in ego development over the course of the program. The authors were uncertain about the cause of these results and suggest, in future tests, using an instrument that assesses more content-specific areas, such as cognitive mapping procedures (Martin, et al., 1989). The study did show that an increase in self-appraisal and confidence occurred after the supervised practicum experience and at the end of the second semester of internship. This may suggest the need to work with actual clients before self-efficacy, a component of cognitive development, improves. From a self-efficacy perspective,
such appraisals of self and task would tend to hinder initiation and maintenance of new counseling behaviors, particularly in the face of obstacles and could create psychological stress (Carpenter & Suhr, 1988).

Crutchfield and Borders (1997) explored cognitive development from two perspectives: indicators of cognitive functioning and indicators of actual counseling performance. The authors investigated two models of clinical peer supervision and their effect on job satisfaction perceptions, counselor self-efficacy, and counseling effectiveness. Twenty-nine practicing school counselors from a rural area in the Southeast volunteered to participate. Three group assignments were made, eight to dyadic, ten to peer-group, and eleven to the unstructured control group. Assignment to groups was not random but due to feasibility of membership such as location and previous experience. Each participant received a small stipend.

The Job Satisfaction Blank (JSB; Hoppock, 1977) was used to measure job satisfaction. It has a Likert-scale format and the authors presented good evidence of the reliability and validity of the instrument. The Counseling Self-Esteem Inventory (COSE; Larson, et al., 1992), a self-report, 37 question Likert-type scale was used to measure individualized judgment of their capacity to perform satisfactorily in given counseling situations. This was the only instrument measuring counselor self-efficacy with validity and reliability information. Three instruments were used to measure different aspects of counseling effectiveness. The Index of Responding Empathy Scale measured empathic responding. The Counselor Behavior Analysis Scale, a 24 item, self-report measure measured flexibility of response. Form B, a shortened version was actually used. The Teacher Report Form, a standardized
measure of teacher judgment regarding students' adaptive functioning and problems in school measured client change, the third aspect of counseling effectiveness. The authors provided comprehensive information about the reliability and validity of these instruments, including cautions. For exploratory purposes, they also used the Post-Session Helpfulness Questionnaire, an adaptation of Hill's (1989) Client Post-Session Questionnaire, to ascertain the helpfulness of the supervision sessions.

Results of the study showed that clinical peer supervision did not have a statistically significant impact on job satisfaction, self-efficacy, or counseling effectiveness of school counselors participating in the study. However, when change occurred, it was in a positive direction. The item of particular interest in reporting the findings was that the scores on the counselor empathic responding remained low. It appeared that counselors tended to problem solve rather than respond empathetically. This finding is particularly intriguing. Questions raised by these results include the following: Do school counselors lack ability in this most basic common therapeutic component and one of Rogers' core conditions? Does regression occur without ongoing supervision? Were the counselors adequately trained initially? Or does the nature of the job, which may require a brief solution-focused approach to therapy suggest that a different measure of counseling effectiveness is needed when working with this population? Can improved self-efficacy change the results? The authors suggested that videotape evaluations might provide a more adequate evaluation. Nevertheless further research is needed to identify and address the needs of currently practicing school counselors.
Diambra (1997) assessed 400 randomly selected National Certified Counselors (NCCs) to examine the relationships between experience, credentials, ego development, and conceptual level. Each completed the Sentence Completion Test (SCT), Paragraph Completion Method (PCM) and a General Questionnaire, returning it by mail, with a return rate of 33.5%. NCCs in mental health and community settings had statistically significant higher ego development scores than NCCs in school settings. Once again speculations about the reason for this were set forth; perhaps the client’s ego developmental level had an effect on the counselor response level. This may have implications for the long-standing debate about the requirement that counselors must have been teachers first. Further questions about the adequacy of training are raised. Since the tests were correlational, cause and effect can not be inferred. Nevertheless these results raise the call for further study.

Reiman, Bostick, Lassiter, & Cooper (1995) conducted a study to assess the effect of a collaborative system of support for new teachers. Mentor school counselors and mentor teachers joined forces to provide novice educators with support during their induction into the profession. Siting concern for needs of new educators, the researchers initiated a pilot support program for 190 first-year teachers with the goal of providing for their psychological support and technical assistance by drawing on the expertise of counselors and teachers.

Hunt’s Conceptual Systems theory and Loevinger’s ego development theory were the basis for this attempt to ascertain whether stage growth could be promoted. Sprinthall’s Deliberate Psychological Education (DPE) was the method used.
Components included; (a) role-taking, (b) guided reflection, (c) balance between experience and reflection, (d) continuity, and (e) support and challenge.

Reiman, et al. (1995) identified five objectives build on the expectations of this cognitive developmental research. The first was to select an exemplary mentor counselor and mentor teacher to serve in leadership roles with the pilot support program. The second objective was to develop support groups with mentor counselors and mentor teachers as leaders in each school. Third, they required first-year teachers to participate in support meetings. Each completed eight sessions, an orientation, and readings. The fourth objective was to keep mentor teachers and counselors informed of the rationale of the support group program. This elicited their continued support. Finally, assessment and evaluation of the first-year initiative was conducted.

Although actual measures of cognitive development at the beginning and end of the experiment were not taken, reports of the helpfulness and efficacy of the program were reported. Seventy-five percent of the respondents reported that the support group made a difference in their lives. Ninety percent agreed that their concerns were addressed.

**Self-Efficacy**

Higher levels of cognitive-development also result in counselors becoming more insightful about themselves. Research in social learning approaches to psychotherapy and attribution theory, such as those developed by Bandura and his associates, draw heavily on constructivist concepts and are now supported by impressive arrays of empirical evidence (Blocher, 1980). Self-efficacy is defined by
Bandura (1986) as “people’s judgements of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances” (p. 391). This definition was expanded by Bandura and Wood to include that self-efficacy “refers to beliefs in one’s capabilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to meet situational demands” (Harrison, Rainer, Hochwarter, & Thompson, 1997, p. 408). Bandura (1977) theorized that self-efficacy is acquired through four sources: (a) enactive mastery (i.e., successful performance accomplishments); (b) vicarious learning; (c) verbal persuasion (e.g., support and encouragement); and (d) reductions in emotional arousal (resulting from, for example, observation models). These are listed in order of descending impact.

Self-efficacy appears in Kohlberg’s stages of moral development. He describes the post-conventional level, which included Stage 5, contractual legalistic orientation and stage 6, conscience or principle orientation, as the level where moral value resides in conformity by the self to shared (or shareable) standards, rights or duties. Positive self-efficacy is necessary to accomplish these tasks or move to these levels.

Hunt (1978) described conceptual levels as a “personality characteristic that describes persons on a developmental hierarchy of increasing conceptual complexity, self-responsibility and independence (p. 78). Those counselors low in the concrete abstract continuum require much more reinforcement and support. As a counselor’s conceptual level develops on the hierarchy, they demonstrate conceptual complexity and internal, interdependent orientations to interpersonal affairs. (Holloway & Wampold, 1986). This description correlates with measures of self-efficacy.
Bandura (1997) stated, "to realize their aims, people try to exercise control over the events that affect their lives. They have a stronger incentive to act if they believe that control is possible – that their actions will be effective. Perceived self-efficacy or a belief in one's personal capabilities regulates human functioning in four major ways: cognitive, motivational, mood, and affect" (p. 1). As noted earlier, Rest (1994) proposed a four component model of cognitive development after examining readings on morality from social learning, behavioral, psychoanalytic and social psychological approaches (p.22). The fourth component, execution and implementation of the plan of action, falls clearly along the lines of Bandura's ideas of efficacy (Bandura, 1977).

Self-efficacy of school counselors may be compared to the sense of efficacy in teachers. Denham and Michael (1981) describe a teacher sense of efficacy as having two components, cognitive and affective. The cognitive aspect has two parts: 1) a sense of the likelihood that the ideal or normative teacher can bring about positive changes in the student; and 2) an assessment of the teacher's own ability to bring about such changes. The affective component is the pride or shame associated with the sense of efficacy. Using this conceptualization for the counselor, self-efficacy would be defined as identifying the likelihood that a competent counselor could be helpful to a student/client and bring about changes. Then, counselors assess their own ability to bring about those changes. How the counselor feels about either of these aspects affects their sense of efficacy. Counselors often feel confused by a lack of definition in their role (Carter, 1993; Coll, & Freeman, 1997; Carroll, 1992; Hardesty & Dillard, 1994; O'Dell, Rak, Chermonte, Hamlin, & Waina, 1996; Paisley &
Borders, 1995; Whittmer, 1993). If school counselors are asked to assume duties unrelated to counseling students, and that prevents interaction with students they know they can help, resultant feelings of frustration are likely to arise. Another issue impinging upon school counselors’ sense of efficacy is lack of adequate supervision. When supervision is not provided, school counselors’ are less able to hone their skills, challenge themselves to grow, or reflect on their struggles and successes (Crutchfield & Borders, 1997; Peace, 1995).

Sutton and Fall (1995) conducted a survey of school counselors to measure the relationship of Bandura’s (1977b) concept of self-efficacy with school climate, counselor roles, and a variety of demographic variables. A questionnaire was mailed to all public school counselors in the state of Maine. Three hundred and sixteen surveys were returned for a return rate of 83%. The Counselor Self-efficacy Scale (CSS), which was modified from the teacher efficacy scale by Gibson and Dembo (1984), was included with the survey as well as an introductory letter. Care was taken to retain the measures of self-efficacy and outcome expectancy with modification or deletion of those questions directly related to teaching. The authors found credence for their beliefs that higher levels of administrative and staff support corresponded to higher levels of self-efficacy. Survey results also suggested that fewer non-counseling related jobs resulted in higher levels of self-efficacy as well.

These survey results suggest that colleague support was the strongest predictor of efficacy and outcome expectancy. Administrative support for the counselor and the school-counseling program was shown to influence both outcome expectancy for the counselor’s behavior and efficacy expectancy for individual counselors. Because
the CSS scale was adapted from a teacher scale, the authors indicated that it still needs validation and refinement. Exploring why some school counselors are more successful than others was identified as an important goal for counselor research. The authors believe that self-efficacy may be an important variable in understanding and improving services and counselor performance.

Isaacs, Greene, & Valesky (1998) conducted research aimed at ascertaining the potential for success of the inclusion movement in the state of Florida. Questionnaires were mailed to school principals, who distributed them to teachers, counselors, assistant principals, and other professional educators in their building. The 31 questions included 21 assessing feelings of competence with inclusion and 10 surveying their beliefs about inclusion. This article focused specifically on the responses of school counselors. The researchers wanted to determine if school counselors, who have been tasked to provide developmental, preventative, and responsive services for all students including those with disabilities, felt able to accomplish this task.

A stratified sample was drawn for all the schools in Florida. Response from selected schools was 43%, resulting in 569 counselor responses. Of these, 30% were secondary counselors, 30% middle school counselors, and 40% were elementary counselors. Results were also obtained for the following variables: years of experience, highest degree earned, number of special education courses completed, number of regular education courses with modifications for exceptional children, number of field experiences with exceptional students, and number of days of in-service training about inclusion in the last 3 years. Significance was determined for
the overall F statistic if $p < .0003$ (which divides alpha of .01 among the 31 questionnaire statements.)

Results indicated that elementary school counselors overall felt the most confident of their abilities to provide consultation services to special education populations. Middle school counselors were less confident and secondary school counselors least confident. The difference between elementary school counselors expressed feelings of self-efficacy with consultation tasks was significant greater than their upper level school counselor counterparts.

An additional finding of import was the level of education and training necessary for school counselors to feel self-efficacious with this consultation aspect of their role. Taking special education courses, having engaged in field experiences that included special education students, and having participated in in-service training in the last three years were the variables that were most salient in producing higher self-efficacy scores.

**Summary**

Overall, it appears that an application of a cognitive-developmental approach to the examination of school counselor growth and development is supported by the research examined in this chapter. Specifically, cognitive developmental models that address moral development theory and conceptual systems theories appear useful for exploring the psychological development of school counselors. Self-efficacy, while the measurement of social learning theories and cognitive behavioral theory, has components that may be relevant to the overall understanding of the cognitive developmental process and other characteristics related to effective school
counseling. Questions remain to be answered. Why are some practicing school
counselors more successful than others? What variables promote developmental level
growth in counselors? Can existing counselors grow or is their developmental level
already established? Why do some research findings show school counselor empathy
levels low or lower than clinical counselors? The research findings point to
information that higher developmental levels in school counselors will produce more
effective counselors. These counselors will be better able to empathize with their
students; will be able to assume roles that are adequate and appropriate in the
multiplicity of functions required of them; and will be adept at handling the
complexity of the school counselor's role. The research also addresses the added
component of self-efficacy as a predictor of counselor performance. This study will
look at these questions.
CHAPTER THREE

Research Design and Methodology

The purpose of this research was to obtain information about variables that promote success and productivity in school counselors already working in the schools. The data collected provides counseling educators with information about the educational backgrounds and personal strengths found in school counselors who have moved to higher levels of moral cognitive development. It also provides information about the some ways to promote higher functioning in the school counselors through supervision.

This chapter will describe the proposed research design and methodology. It will cover the following areas: a) population and sampling - survey design; b) data collection procedures; c) instrumentation; d) research design; e) variables in the study; f) null hypothesis; g) limitations; h) ethical considerations; i) population and sample.

Population and Sampling

This study was conducted with school counselors from two separate states, Virginia and North Carolina. The sample was not randomly selected or assigned but was chosen for accessibility. There were a total of 108 respondents from both states; 79 elementary school counselors, 15 middle school counselors, and 14 high school counselors. There were 22 respondents from North Carolina and 86 from Virginia. The rationale for using counselors from two states was to explore the possibility of different levels of support for counselors in different school systems, as well as
different approaches to education or supervision in each state. The large difference in size precluded comparison between the two states, as the numbers were so unequal.

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection for this study was accomplished in two possible ways. Administrators from each system chose to distribute the instruments either through an in-service setting where the instruments were completed and returned immediately, or they distributed the instruments independently and the counselors returned them through the inter-school mail system to a designated collector. The advantage of the single stage survey was the high return rate. Individual distribution and return at their convenience produced a substantially lower return rate. Some administrators chose to distribute the instruments to all the counselors in their systems and others chose only one level. An advantage of the self-contained method of data collection was the rapid access to the results and that fact that there was no need to do follow up with non-respondents on the tests and survey. There also were no postage expenses or loss of tests or instruments due to non-response. Unfortunately only one of the three systems participating chose the single stage method.

Three school systems from Virginia and North Carolina gave permission to conduct research with the school counselors in their respective systems. One was an urban school system, the second, a suburban system, and the third a rural system. Distribution and collection of research packets was different in each system. The first, an urban system, presented packets to each middle and high school counseling director for distribution, and elementary counselors received them individually at a monthly meeting. Completed packets were then sent via interoffice mail to a local
designated counselor. In this system, where a fellow counselor was the designee for collection, the researcher did follow up phone calls.

Only one of the three systems elected to distribute and collect the research packets the same day, the suburban system, but restricted collection to elementary school counselors. This second system allowed all elementary counselors to complete the packets during a regularly scheduled meeting and completed packets were collected at the site by the researcher.

In the third system, the researcher sent the research packets to the director of the rural system. This counseling director distributed and collected the packets from counselors by means of interoffice mail. Completed packets were then sent by mail to the researcher. In this third system, the director of guidance was the designee and did some follow up phone calls.

Research packets included the Defining Issues Test, The Paragraph Completion Test, the Counseling Self-Estimate Inventory, the survey, a consent form and an introductory letter with candy lifesavers attached for a thank-you.

**Instrumentation**

There were three tests and a demographic survey completed by each subject. The Defining Issues Test (DIT) was used to measure the level of moral reasoning, the Paragraph Completion Method (PCM) measured the conceptual complexity, and the Counseling Self-Estimate Inventory (COSE) assessed the self-efficacy of counselors. The survey was constructed to gather demographic information in order to correlate with the test results.
**Defining Issues Test (DIT-2)**

The Defining Issues Test is a paper and pencil measure of moral judgment based on Kohlberg’s theories (Kohlberg, 1986). DIT-2 is an updated version of the original DIT devised 25 years ago. It has updated stories and is also a shorter test, has clearer instructions, retains more subjects through subject reliability checks, and in studies so far, does not sacrifice validity. The DIT-2 presents five moral dilemmas and asks participants to rate and rank the importance of 12 different items according to the value used in making a decision about the dilemma presented. A 5-point Likert scale ranging from “no” to “great importance” is used for this rating. Subjects are then asked to rank order the four items that they consider most important in making their decision and to indicate their final judgment decision on the situation presented.

The N2 scores and the P scores are reported for each index. The N2 is a new index (Rest, Narvaez, Thoma & Bebeau, 1997) for moral judgment development. Generally it is the most valid single score (Rest & Narvaez, 1998). It takes two types of information into account; (a) the extent to which the subject ranks in top place the Postconventional items – these are very similar to the familiar P score; and (b) the difference in the ratings of items of stages 2 & 3 from stages 5 & 6 (Rest, et al., 1999). The P index is also used because it has been used in most of the literature. The P scores are obtained by rating the ranking of items for each dilemma along three activating schemas, rather than the Kohlberg’s 6 states. The scores represent the degree to which a subject uses the Personal Interest, Maintaining Norms, or Postconventional Schema. The schemas have a close relation to Kohlberg’s stages, yet they are different. As with Kohlberg’s theory, the schema scores purport to
measure developmental adequacy—in particular, how people conceptualize how it is possible to organize cooperation in a society. In short, the DIT2 is a measure of the development of concepts of social justice (Rest and Narvaez, 1998). The aggregate scores of these stages are used in determining the P Index, which represents the individual's use of principled reasoning in his or her decision making. This score is reported as a percentage from 0 to 95 (Rest, 1986b). For comparison, norms for the mean P % score for the DIT1 are; Junior high school = 20.0; Senior high = 31.0; College students = 43.2; Grad students = 44.9; Moral philosophers = 65.1

The N2 score and the P score are highly correlated and are redundant with each other. The N2 score was an additional measure developed to address criticisms directed at Rest charging that the P index was not an accurate reflection of Rest's qualitative/quantitative stage conceptualization because it eliminated any usage of lower stage's reasoning. It is recommended that researchers use both scores, even though the N2 score has been shown to slightly outperform the P score. The type of study and sample selection may influence results.

The DIT includes several sub-scales. One sub-scale is the M or Meaninglessness score, which indicates the extent to which subjects choose lofty sounding but meaningless statements. The second is a Consistency Check, which controls for an excessive number of invalid responses by comparing the ratings and rankings, revealing the degree of the subject's seriousness in responding and understanding of instructions in taking the test. The A-score provides evidence of anti-establishment attitude. Interest in this score came from the ideas that an anti-establishment attitude was included in a possible transition stage between stages
represented by conventional morality and principled morality. For most purposes, the A-score is not considered. (Rest, 1986b). Finally, the U score indicates the degree that a subject's moral judgement is related to the subject's concepts of justice.

Validity. There is considerable evidence of construct validity (Rest, 1986b). Longitudinal studies show significant upward trends over time, with education and life experiences impacting the changes (Rest, 1986b; Rest, Davidson, & Robbins, 1978). Years of formal education correlate highly with the DIT (Rest, 1986b). Convergent-divergent correlations to other measures of intelligence and cognitive development range from .20 to .50. Socioeconomic status, sex, political orientations, attitude, and personality are usually non-significant or have very low correlations. The DIT measures moral judgment, which is not the same as morality. The correlation between the DIT and moral behavior is significant, but not strong, with most correlations ranging between .30 and .40 (Rest, 1994). The DIT shows discriminant validity from verbal ability/general intelligence and from Conservative/Liberal Political attitudes—that is, the information in a DIT score predicts to the seven validity criteria above and beyond that accounted for by verbal ability or political attitude. The DIT is equally valid for males and females. No other variable or other construct predicts the pattern of results on the seven validity criteria as well as moral judgment (Rest & Narvaez, 1998). The seven validity criteria as proposed by Rest, et al., (1999) include; (a) differentiate groups assumed to be of greater or lesser expertise in moral reasoning (e.g., moral philosophers are expected to show higher scores than junior high school students); (b) show significant upward change in longitudinal study; (c) be sensitive to interventions designed to improve
moral reasoning (e.g., show pre-post test gains on moral education programs); (d) show evidence of a developmental hierarchy (i.e., that higher is “better” or more advanced); (e) significantly predict to political attitudes, political choices, and the way in which a person participates in the larger society; (f) have adequate reliability.

**Reliability.** Reliability is adequate. Test-retest reliabilities have ranged from the .70s to .80s over periods ranging from a few weeks to a few months. Cronbach’s alpha index of internal consistency is generally in the high .70’s /low .80’s (Rest, 1986b; Rest & Narvaez, 1998).

**Paragraph Completion Method (PCM)**

The Paragraph Completion Method is a semi-projective measure that will be used to assess conceptual development (Hunt, Butler, Noy, & Rosser, 1978). The results of the measure will place an individual on a continuum of conceptual level rather than at a discrete stage. Participants were asked to write at least three sentences describing their ideas and opinions on each of six different, open-ended topics. These topics have been designed to assess how a person thinks. Attention is given to both the contents of the response and the structure underlying the response, with regard to rule structure, relations to authority, and handling of conflict and uncertainty. Scorers are trained to rate the responses on the PCM. Hunt’s corresponding stage scores ranging from zero to three are assigned to each item response. The total CL score is found by averaging the three highest responses.

**Validity.** Concurrent validity was reported at the .20 to .30 range when correlated with tests of intelligence and at .40 when correlated with the Kohlberg Moral Maturity Scale (Hunt, 1970; Hunt, et al., 1978). Studies in which the sample
was similar in intelligence yielded significant but small correlations (less than .10) between CL and intelligence (Hunt, 1971, p39).

Reliability. The median inter-rater reliability coefficient found for 26 studies is .86. One year test-retest reliability for studies involving subjects grades six through eleven was reported as ranging from .45 to .56 (Hunt, et al., 1978).

Counseling Self-Estimate Inventory (COSE)

Larsen, Suzuki, Gillespie, Potenza, Bechtel, and Toulouse (1992) developed the Counseling Self-Estimate Inventory through five studies. It was created to measure the construct of counselor trainees’ expectancy for success in a counseling situation or judgments of their capabilities to counsel successfully in counseling situation. The self-report, 37-item questionnaire uses a 6-point Likert-type rating scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). The highest possible final score (item score sum) is 222; higher scores indicate higher self-estimates of counseling efficacy (Larsen, et al., 1992). This instrument is the first general measure of counseling self-efficacy to be developed, and the only one with reliability and validity information (Crutchfield & Borders, 1997).

Study 1 measured for scale construction, factor analysis, and initial validity and reliability estimates. This showed that there was no significant main effect for race between the two groups (Asian vs. white), nor was there a significant interaction between gender and university reported, F (2.210) = .681, p > .05. Participants were considered as one sample (regardless of ethnicity, gender, or university.)

A factor analysis (N = 213) yielded five factors around which the 37 questions retained were clustered: Microskills (alpha = .88), Process (alpha = .87),
Difficult Client Behaviors (alpha = .80), Cultural Competence (alpha = .78), and Awareness of Values (alpha = .62). Alpha of .93 was the internal computed consistency for the total inventory. Examples of questions used in each section are:

Microskills - “I feel confident that I will be able to conceptualize my client’s problems.” Process – “I am uncertain as to whether I will be able to appropriately confront and challenge my client in therapy.” Difficult Client Behaviors – “I do not feel I possess a large enough repertoire of techniques to deal with the different problems my client may present.” Cultural Competence – “I will be an effective counselor with clients of a different social class.” Awareness of Values – “I am likely to impose my values on the client during the interview.”

Convergent validity evidence is reported across the studies. Counselors with higher self-efficacy scores reported higher self-concepts and lower state and trait anxiety. They perceived themselves as more effective problem solvers and indicated more satisfaction with prepracticum class performance. They had more positive outcome expectancies regarding a mock interview and the execution of microskills in a mock interview.

Preliminary evidence for the discriminant validity of the COSE was shown by the low correlation of the COSE with measures of defensiveness, aptitude, and academic achievement and personality type. COSE scores also did not differ across theoretical persuasions of counseling psychologists.

Study 2 measured test-retest reliability. A short form of the COSE (COSE-SF) with 30 items correlates highly (.99) with the COSE total score and has 3-week test-retest coefficients of .87 for COSE-SF total, .83 for Awareness of Values, .80 for
Difficult Client Behaviors, .74 for Process, .71 for Cultural Competence, and .68 for Microskills.

Study 3 measured sensitivity to change across counseling professionals. There was no significant main effect for level of training $F(2, 314) = 4.17 \ p > .001$, nor for gender ($ps > .05$). Bachelor's level counseling students had significantly lower self-efficacy scores than Master's level counselors or the counseling psychologists. A significant main effect was found for years of experience $F(2,314) = 53.75, \ p < .001$. Likewise, there was a main effect for semesters of supervision $F(3,305) = 33.46, \ p < .001$.

Study 4 measured change over time. Due to the small sample size of this measure and a resultant lack of power, a repeated measures ANOVA was not done. All but one student's scores did increase over time.

Study 5 measured criterion validity. The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) Trait Anxiety scale and the COSE total pretest scores were both significant predictors of the Behavior Rating Form (BRF). As predicted by self-efficacy theory, trait anxiety and counseling self-efficacy made significant contributions (29% of the variance) to counseling performance as measured by the BRF ($M = 69.21, \ SD = 8.50$).

There are several limitations of the study. Study 1 limitations include that 75% of the participants in the study were women and predominantly white, so the study cannot be generalized to other ethnic groups. Nevertheless 14% of the participants were Asian, an under-represented population in research, and there was
no difference found between the two groups. Small sample sizes continue to be problematic when conducting research of this type.

A limitation of studies 3, 4, and 5 is that there was no criterion check to ensure that the behavioral enactments in the counseling interview were performance accomplishments, which would increase self-efficacy, and not performance failures, which would decrease self-efficacy. Other limitations of Studies 4 and 5 include the lack of a control group, the minimal reliability and validity of the MOE and the BRF, and the small sample sizes.

Despite these limitations, the studies provide initial reliability and validity estimates for the COSE (Larsen, et al., 1992).

**Research Design**

A multiple regression and correlation (MRC) was used to determine relationships between variables. According to Grimm (1997), “It is common to divide studies using multiple regression/correlation into two types: (a) those that attempt to predict events or behavior for the practical decision-making purposes in applied settings, and (b) those that attempt to understand or explain the nature of a phenomenon for purposes of testing or developing theories.” This study did not attempt the first of those choices, prediction. Understanding and explanation is the primary purpose of the study.

**Variables in the Study**

The demographic survey included items directly related to the school counselor’s experience, training, supervision, and support. The responses were then correlated to the results of the DIT, the PCM, and the COSE.
Experience: Items in this segment included:

1. Number of years as a school counselor
2. Number of years of teaching experience
3. Counseling location; elementary, middle, high school

Training: Items in this segment included:

1. Number of credits in Counseling Master’s degree program
2. Number of credits beyond the masters degree
3. Licensure/Certification

Supervision: Items in this segment included:

1. Types of supervision currently received by counselor
   a. Clinical/Individual or Group
   b. Interest in receiving supervision
2. Frequency and duration of supervision
   a. Clinical/Individual or Group

Support: Items in this segment included:

1. Support provided by school administration and teachers
2. Support provided by school division
3. Support provided by state school board and legislature
4. Support provided by Professional organizations

In addition to these variables, several questions were asked for descriptive purposes. They included gender, race/nationality, and age. Age was used as a control and was introduced first to eliminate any confounding effects it might have had. A final question about job satisfaction was included.
Null Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis 1: The amount or type of experience as a counselor is not related to moral development, conceptual level or self-efficacy as measured by the DIT, the PCM, or the COSE.

Null Hypothesis 2: The amount or type of experience as a teacher is not related to moral development, conceptual level or self-efficacy as measured by the DIT, PCM, or the COSE.

Null Hypothesis 3: The amount or type of education and training is not related to moral development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy of school counselors as measured by the DIT, the PCM, or the COSE.

Null Hypothesis 4: The amount or type of supervision is not related to moral development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy of school counselors as measure by the DIT, the PCM, or the COSE.

Null Hypothesis 5: The amount or type of support received by counselors is not related to moral development, conceptual level or self-efficacy of school counselors as measured by the DIT, the PCM, and the COSE.

Limitations

One of the limitations of this type of study is that cause and effect relationships between variables that are correlated are not necessarily established. Therefore care will be taken to report only correlation and not cause and effect. Another limitation according to Grimm, (1997) is that “statistical control should never be equated with experimental control. MRC’s partialing procedures cannot rule out the possibility of reverse causation and may result in altered variables that have
no reasonable theoretical meaning or representation in practical reality.” Reliability and validity of the measures for the purposes of investigation, as well as the representativeness of samples, will be evaluated carefully (Grimm, 1997).

History needs to be considered as a confounding event because of a possible difference in political climate toward counselors in Virginia and North Carolina. Certain events were occurring in legislative matters in Virginia that were not occurring in North Carolina. The fact that the school systems that participated in the study were not well matched by numbers (Virginia N = 86, North Carolina N = 22) is also to be considered.

**Ethical considerations**

This research study was submitted and approved by the Committees for Research on Human Subjects at the College of William and Mary before the research was begun. Approval also was requested by the school systems involved in the study before the measurement is undertaken. Subject confidentiality was assured.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter provides the results of this study. Five hypothesis were proposed which examined school counselor's experience, training, supervision, and support as they relate to the results of scores on the Defining Issues Test (DIT2), the Paragraph Completion Test (PCM), and the Counseling Self-Estimate Inventory (COSE).

Data

Three school systems participated in data collection, two in Virginia and one in North Carolina, with a total return of 108 survey packets. The original plan was to work with two large systems, one in Virginia, the other in North Carolina, provide an in-service for all of the school counselors, and have them complete the research packets on location. Each system had between 180 and 225 counselors. After initial interest, the large school system in North Carolina chose not to participate. The large system in Virginia chose to distribute the research packets independently, rather than at an in-service setting, allowing school counselors to complete them on their own time. The result was a reduced return rate. Several additional school systems were then approached about inclusion in the research; two agreed to participate. One school system allowed elementary school counselors to complete the research at their regularly scheduled meeting. This system was the only one where the research was completed on site. The remaining high school and middle school counselors in the school system were not included because of the time of year, late spring, when testing, registration, and college referrals were at their peak. One small school system in North Carolina also agreed to participate in the research. This research was
accomplished through the mail. The research packets were sent to the Director of Guidance, who then distributed them to the school counselors from all levels, elementary, middle, and high, through the inter-school mail system. Those counselors who completed the research packets, returned them by inter-school mail to the director, who then mailed them to the researcher. The large Virginia school system completed 46 out of 180 research packets, yielding a 25.5% return rate. The researcher did make follow up phone calls to some school in the district. Elementary counselors in the second system complete 40 out of 40 research packets for a 100% return rate. The third system returned 22 out of 50 research packets for a 44% return rate. The Director of Guidance sent a follow-up letter to encourage participation. Data collection began in January 1999 and the final packets were received in May 1999.

Table 1

Data Collected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School sys.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>N returned</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample Demographics

The ages of the sample ranged from 24 to 65 years of age, with a mean age of 47.13 years and a standard deviation of 9.42. Seventy-nine counselors worked in the elementary school setting, comprising 73.1% of the respondents. Fifteen middle-school counselors accounted for 13.9%, leaving 13% or 14 counselors from high schools. Females were most strongly represented as 97 counselors or 89.8% were
women. Eleven (10.2%) were male. Respondents’ race consisted of 94 White (87%), 7 African American (6.5%), 7 Multi-racial (6.5) and 0 Asian/Indian (0%).

Table 2

Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Standard Dev.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24 – 65</td>
<td>47.1308</td>
<td>44.00</td>
<td>48.00</td>
<td>9.4181</td>
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Table 3

Gender

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Gender</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>89.8%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 4

Work Setting

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Work Setting</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>73.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5

Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-racial</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Indian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Years of experience as a counselor ranged from zero to 30 years (Mean = 9.45, SD = 6.3). The respondent who reported no experience was completing a practicum as a counselor when the research was conducted, and four counselors were
in the middle of their first year. These five accounted for 4.9% of the sample. The remaining 95.1% of counselors had 1 to 30 years of experience.

Years of experience as a teacher ranged from zero to 35 years (Mean = 7.70, SD = 7.74). Twenty-eight counselors (25.9%) had no experience as a teacher before they began their counseling career. The remaining 74.1% had teaching experience ranging from 1 to 35 years.

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years As Teacher</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7.7037</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7.7433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years As Counselor</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9.4452</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.2974</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Master's degree credits ranged from 30 to 60 credits (M = 39.39, SD = 7.84). Twelve counselors did not answer the question; some indicated uncertainty or couldn't remember. Ninety-six counselors reported that they completed an internship as part of their training. Eleven reported that their programs did not include an internship; one person did not respond. This indicates that 88.9% of counselors had an internship experience. When asked about how many credits they had completed beyond their master's degree, the responses ranged from 0 to 120 (M = 14.83, SD = 21.97). No further credits beyond their masters were reported by 37% of the respondents. The other 63% had credits ranging from 3 to 120.
Table 7

Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Credits-Masters</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>39.385</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7.8397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credits beyond Masters</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.832</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21.974</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sample was asked about additional professional certifications. Only 13 school counselors had received these certifications. Three (2.8%) were National Certified Counselors (NCC), three (2.8%) National Certified School Counselors (NCSC), four (3.7%) Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC), two (1.9%) Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFT), and one (.9%) National Certified Career Counselor (NCCC). Two additional questions determined whether school counselors were currently engaged in clinical supervision, which was defined as “regularly conducted supervision sessions with an experienced counselor, either individually or in a group. In these sessions you critique your counseling skills, techniques, and methods.” Five (4.6 %) of counselors were engaged in this type of supervision. Four of the counselors met with their supervisor weekly and one met bi-weekly.

The last six questions on the survey were answered on a Likert scale that ranged from one to six, with 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Moderately Disagree, 3 = Slightly Disagree, 4 = Slightly Agree, 5 = Moderately Agree, 6 = Strongly Agree. The first four support questions were queries about how much support school counselors believed they received from their local school administrators and teachers, system-wide administration, state school board and legislature, and professional organizations. Question 13: Teacher/administration support asked if the
administrators and teachers in their school were supportive of school counselors in general and how they showed that support. The results showed that school counselors appear to feel highly supported by their local schools (Mean = 5.15, SD = .86). Results are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8

**Question 13: Teacher/Administration Support**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.1435</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>0.8594</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 13: Teacher/Administration Support Frequencies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>59.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second support question was Question 14: District support and it asked how supported the counselor felt in their school division and how their school division demonstrated that support. The results show rather strong feelings of support (M = 4.04, SD = 1.25). The results are reported in Table 9.
Table 9

Question 14: District Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Fourteen: District Support</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0385</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.2535</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
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<td>2.0</td>
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<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>29.0</td>
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<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>104.0</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scores looked different on Question 15: State Support, which asked counselors their feelings of support from their state legislature and state school board. Here the results show low feelings of support (Mean = 2.91, SD = 1.37). Results are reported in Table 10.

Table 10

Question 15: State Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Fifteen: State Support</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>103</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>2.9126</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.3656</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 15: State Support Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>95.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Missing System 5 4.6

Total 5 4.6

Total 108 100.0

Question 16: Professional Organizations Support dealt with counselor’s perception of support by their professional organizations such as the American School Counseling Association (ASCA), the American Counseling Association (ACA), or their state (VCA) or regional counseling associations. 11 respondents (10.2 %) failed to answer this question. However, those respondents who did respond felt highly supported by their professional organizations (Mean = 5.12, SD = .95). Results are reported in Table 11.

Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Sixteen: Professional Organizations Support</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.1237</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School counselors were asked about their willingness to seek additional training or supervision outside of school time. This was Question 17: Willingness to get Training/Supervision and results show high interest in receiving training and supervision (Mean = 4.63, SD = 1.49). Table 12 shows the results.

Table 12

Question 17: Willingness to get Training/Supervision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Seventeen: Willingness to get Training/Supervision</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>N Missing</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.625</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.4947</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 17: Willingness to get Training/Supervision Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
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<td>13</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>64.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 108 100
The final was Question 18: Choose School Counseling and it asked, “If I could do it over again, I would still choose to be a school counselor.” Why not? It would appear that school counselors have high satisfaction with their jobs (Mean = 5.39, SD = 1.03). Results are reported in Table 13.

Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Eighteen: Choose School Counseling Again</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13

Question Eighteen: Choose School Counseling Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 108 research packets returned, one counselor did not include his/her age, one failed to record how many credits they had taken after their master’s degree. One did not report if they had taken an internship. 12 respondents failed to include the number of hours in their masters programs, some indicating they could not remember. Four counselors did not indicate on the Likert scale how supported they felt by their school division, five did not indicate how supported they felt by their
state school board and legislature, and 11 failed to mark how supported they felt by their professional organizations. Finally, one did not indicate on the Likert Scale how likely it would be that they would still choose to be a school counselor if they could do it over again.

Respondents did not complete all of the dependent measures. Two Counseling Self-Estimate Inventory (COSE) instruments were not completed, as well as one Paragraph Completion Method (PCM), and two Defining Issues Tests (DIT2). In addition, 13 DIT2's were purged when they were scored because of inconsistencies in rate/rank, endorsement of meaningless but high sounding items, missing ranks, and non-differentiation of ratings or rankings. This left 93 valid DIT2 scores, 106 COSE scores, and 107 PCM's.

**Statement of Hypotheses**

Null Hypothesis 1: The amount or type of experience as a counselor is not related to moral development, conceptual level or self-efficacy as measured by the DIT, the PCM, or the COSE.

Null Hypothesis 2: The amount or type of experience as a teacher is not related to moral development, conceptual level or self-efficacy as measured by the DIT, PCM, or the COSE.

Null Hypothesis 3: The amount or type of education and training is not related to moral development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy of school counselors as measured by the DIT, the PCM, or the COSE.
Null Hypothesis 4: The amount or type of supervision is not related to moral development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy of school counselors as measure by the DIT, the PCM, or the COSE.

Null Hypothesis 5: The amount or type of support received by counselors is not related to moral development, conceptual level or self-efficacy of school counselors as measured by the DIT, the PCM, and the COSE.

Four stepwise regressions were used to test the five hypotheses. Age, which was used as a control variable, was forced as the first variable in the stepwise procedure. The stepwise regressions were run for each dependent variable within the hypothesis; one for the COSE, one for the PCM, and two for the DIT2, using the P score and the N2 score. Alpha was set at .05 both for stepwise inclusion and for significance.

Findings

The DIT2 measures levels of Postconventional principled reasoning and rejection of lower state moral reasoning (P and N2 scores). For comparison, norms for the mean P score for DIT are: Junior high school = 20.0; Senior high = 31.0; College students = 43.2; Grad students = 44.9; Moral philosophers = 65.1.

In this study, the P scores ranged from 10 to 82 with the Mean = 44.1, SD = 14.83. This mean lies somewhere between the mean for College students scores (43.2) and Graduate students scores (44.9). Table 14 shows the mean scores for both the P and the N2 of the Defining Issues Test 2.
Table 14

DIT2 Mean Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>44.0860</td>
<td>42.0000</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>14.8343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N2</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>42.4502</td>
<td>42.8560</td>
<td>7.52a</td>
<td>14.3716</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown.

The Defining Issues Test (DIT2) P score and N2 score are highly correlated with each other in this research (p> .000). Each variable was entered in the stepwise regression separately. Consistent with earlier studies, they produced very similar results. When controlling for age, the stepwise regression of N2 showed that Question 17: Willingness to get Training/Supervision accounted for 10% of the variance, and Question 15: State Support, adding an additional 4% of the variance, for a total variance of 14%.
Table 15

DIT2 Stepwise Regression (N2) Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Variables Entered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Question 17: Willingness to get Training/Supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Question 15: State Support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.098a</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>-.004</td>
<td>14.5310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.325b</td>
<td>.105</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>13.9052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>.391c</td>
<td>.153</td>
<td>.118</td>
<td>13.6218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), AGE
b. Predictors: (Constant), AGE, QUESTN17
c. Predictors: (Constant), AGE, QUESTN17, QUESTN15

Coefficients*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
<td>48.752</td>
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<td>5.985</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
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<td>AGE</td>
<td>-.146</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>-.098</td>
<td>-.850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Constant)</td>
<td>34.865</td>
<td>9.244</td>
<td>3.772</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>-.141</td>
<td>.165</td>
<td>-.094</td>
<td>-.853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTN17</td>
<td>2.991</td>
<td>1.070</td>
<td>.309</td>
<td>2.795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (Constant)</td>
<td>42.580</td>
<td>9.830</td>
<td>4.332</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
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<td>.161</td>
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<td>-.877</td>
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<td>-2.394</td>
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</table>

a. Dependent Variable: N2
Table 16
DIT2 Stepwise Regression (P) Results

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Variables Entered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Question 17: Willingness to get Training/Supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Question 15: State Support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Model Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>0.075</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.167</td>
<td>0.132</td>
<td>14.1403</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), AGE  
b. Predictors: (Constant), AGE, QUESTN17  
c. Predictors: (Constant), AGE, QUESTN17, QUESTN15

**Coefficients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>45.598</td>
<td>8.563</td>
<td>5.325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>-4.6E-02</td>
<td>0.181</td>
<td>-0.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>-4.0E-02</td>
<td>0.173</td>
<td>-0.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>QUESTN17</td>
<td>3.173</td>
<td>1.124</td>
<td>0.314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>40.474</td>
<td>10.204</td>
<td>3.966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>-4.1E-02</td>
<td>0.167</td>
<td>-0.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>QUESTN17</td>
<td>2.953</td>
<td>1.092</td>
<td>0.292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>QUESTN15</td>
<td>-2.981</td>
<td>1.232</td>
<td>-0.261</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: P
The P scores likewise showed Question 17: Willingness to get Training/Supervision accounting for 10% of the variance and Question 15: State Support adding an additional 7%, for a total variance of 17%. This indicates that Question 17: Willingness to get Training/Supervision, which asked the question about how likely counselors would be to seek out training and/or supervision to increase their counseling skills outside of school time, is positively correlated to higher scores on the DIT2. At the same time, Question 15: State Support, which asked how supported the counselor felt by the state legislature and state school board, is negatively correlated with higher scores on the DIT2. This finding indicates that higher scores on the DIT2 correlate with counselors' self-report of their willingness to get training or supervision on their own time. They also correlate negatively with the counselor's feelings of being supported by their state legislature and/or their state school board.

The Counseling Self-Estimate Inventory (COSE) was developed by Larson et al. (1992) to measure counselor trainees' expectancy for success in a counseling situation or judgments of their capabilities to counsel successfully in counseling situation (1992). The self-report, 37-item questionnaire uses a 6-point Likert-type rating scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). The COSE inventory measures self-efficacy with scores that range from 37 to 222; higher scores indicate higher self-estimates of counseling efficacy.

Respondent scores in this study ranged from 125 to 219 with the Mean = 182.12, SD = 18.78. The COSE was also run with an alpha of .05 in a stepwise
regression with age entered first as a control variable. It did not produce any significant results.

Table 17

COSE Mean Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COSE</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>182.1226</td>
<td>183.0000</td>
<td>185.00</td>
<td>18.7772</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Paragraph Completion Method (PCM) is a semi-projective measure that is used to assess conceptual development (Hunt, Butler, Noy, & Rosser, 1978). The results of the measure place an individual on a continuum of conceptual level rather than at a discrete stage. The PCM scores in this study ranged within the three highest of Hunt’s four stages with the Mean = 1.92, SD = .29.

Table 18

PCM Mean Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
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<td>1.9290</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>1.70a</td>
<td>.2852</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

When the stepwise regression was run with the PCM, significance was found with the Question 18: Choose School Counseling variable. The question of Question 18: Choose School Counseling accounted for 10% of the variance. Question 18: Choose School Counseling asked the question, “If you could do it over again, would
you still choose to be a school counselor?". While this question did not spring from one particular hypothesis, it was asked as a way of gaining some sense of the counselors’ satisfaction with their job. It was found that higher PCM scores correlate with higher scores on Question 18: Choose School Counseling.

Table 19

PCM

Stepwise Regression Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Variable Entered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Question 18: Choose School Counseling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.2872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.332</td>
<td>.110</td>
<td>.089</td>
<td>.2742</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), AGE
b. Predictors: (Constant), AGE, QUESTN18

Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>1.775</td>
<td>.157</td>
<td>11.274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>3.45E-03</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>1.390</td>
<td>.197</td>
<td>7.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AGE</td>
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<td>.003</td>
<td>.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>QUESTN18</td>
<td>8.21E-02</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.315</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: PCM
Review of Null Hypotheses

Five hypotheses were examined in this research. The scores of the four dependent variables, the P and N2 of the DIT2, COSE, and PCM were calculated and run individually with the independent variables in a stepwise multiple regression. Age was used as a control variable.

There were 13 independent variables used in the regression. Gender provided two variables, male and female. Race divided the respondents into white and non-white, two variables, because of the small number of minority responses. There were four variables from the experience questions including; queries about the number of years as counselor, number of years as a teacher, level of counseling placement; elementary, middle, or high school.

Education and training was another category which produced two variables with questions about the number of credits in the counselor's masters degree program, and the number of credits taken beyond the masters degree. Counselors were queried about an internship experience, but 90% of counselors indicated they had received an internship experience, so there was not enough variance to include it as a variable. Also excluded were the questions about counselor accreditation because of the small percentage of counselors who were accredited. Supervision questions were two-fold. The first asked if counselors were receiving supervision. This was excluded as a variable because of the low number of counselors receiving supervision on their own; very interesting information. The second was included and asked if they would be likely to seek out training/supervision on their own time.
Three of four support questions were included; support by school systems, support by state legislature and school board, and support by professional groups. The question about how supportive the administrators and teachers in their school were was excluded because of the similarity of the responses.

Null Hypothesis One

The amount and type of experience as a counselor is not related to moral development, conceptual level or self-efficacy as measured by the DIT2, the PCM, or the COSE.

The stepwise regressions found that none of the variables such as length of time as a counselor or location of counselors work experience, either elementary, middle, or high school contributed significantly to measures of moral development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy after age was controlled for. Therefore the null hypothesis was confirmed.

Null Hypothesis 2

The amount or type of experience as a teacher is not related to moral development, conceptual level or self-efficacy of school counselors as measured by the DIT2, the PCM, or the COSE.

The stepwise regressions found no evidence that experience as a teacher contributed in a significant way to higher scores on the measures of moral development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy. Therefore the null hypothesis was confirmed.

Null Hypothesis 3
The amount or type of education and training is not related to moral development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy of school counselors as measured by the DIT, the PCM, or the COSE.

The results of the stepwise regressions did not show that amount or type of education and training were significant in affecting the level of moral development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy. There the null hypothesis was not rejected for the COSE and the PCM. However, there was significant correlation of the DIT2 with Question 17: Willingness to get Training/Supervision where counselors were asked if they were likely to seek out training or supervision on their own time. It found that counselors with higher P or N2 scores were more likely to have indicated a higher willingness to seek training and/or supervision on their own. Thus, the Null hypothesis for the moral development question is rejected.

Null Hypothesis 4

The amount or type of supervision is not related to moral development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy of school counselors as measured by the DIT, the PCM, or the COSE.

This hypothesis also has mixed results. There were not enough respondents receiving supervision for the question to be included in the stepwise regression. However, there was a significant correlation between the P and N2 scores of the DIT2 and Question 17: Willingness to get Training/Supervision (See Tables 15 & 16) which posed the question about the likelihood that they would seek out training and/or supervision outside of school time to increase their counseling skills. Although this does not measure actual time spent in supervision, it does indicate a
willingness to seek out supervision. The null hypothesis for the measures of self-efficacy and conceptual level is not rejected. But the null hypothesis is rejected for the DIT2.

Null Hypothesis 5

The amount or type of support received by counselors is not related to moral development, conceptual level or self-efficacy of school counselors as measured by the DIT, PCM, and the COSE.

The amount of support did relate to the level of moral development, as measured by the DIT2. It was negatively related to higher scores on the DIT2. Therefore, for the measure of moral development the null is rejected. (See Tables 15 & 16) However, for the measures of conceptual level (PCM) and self-efficacy (COSE), which were not significantly correlated to the independent variables, the null hypothesis for those two variables was not rejected.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This research was undertaken to investigate school counselors and the relationship between their experience, credentials, moral development, conceptual level, and self-efficacy. Specifically, the study sought to determine if there were any variables in school counselor’s lives that were related to higher levels of cognitive development, including support or lack of it. Research cited in this study has shown that higher levels of cognitive development and self-efficacy seem to give school counselors the tools to more effectively deal with the changing nature and demands of their work.

During this century, counseling has changed consistently to meet the needs of a changing population (Keys, Bemak & Lockhart, 1998; Paisley & Borders, 1995; Sink & MacDonald, 1998). Keys, et al. (1998) delineate this change; the focus was on vocational guidance (pre-1950’s), and changed to fostering personal growth (1950’s), to enhancing individual development (1960’s), to implementing comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling programs (1970-present). The American School Counseling Association has recently published the National standards for school counseling programs promoting this developmental approach (Mariani, 1998). Some counselor educators, advocating for further transformation in the twenty-first century, believe counselors need to address the mental health needs of at-risk students and their families (Keys, et al. 1998). With so much change, flexibility and adaptability are two important characteristics that counselors must possess if they are going to be able to meet the needs of their job.
Research has shown that higher levels of cognitive development are good predictors of success in stressful and changing times (Rest & Narvaez, 1994; Sprinthall, 1994). Qualities of people with higher levels of cognitive development include being better able to flex to meet needs, having the ability to take multiple perspectives, utilizing higher empathy levels, and maintaining a more altruistic outlook (Peace & Sprinthall, 1998).

Descriptive Results

This study was conducted with school counselors from three different school systems resulting in 108 responses. Analysis of the demographics yielded information that may have a bearing on the lack of expected results. Survey packets, which included the DIT2, the PCM, and the COSE, as well as an informational survey, were distributed and collected, some in person and some by mail. It took a minimum of 50-60 minutes to complete this packet. This was an important drawback and perhaps a reason for the somewhat low response rate. Comments by various school counselors to the researcher upon completion of the packet would seem to support this supposition. The complexity of the instruments, requiring counselors to give more than simple answers, was also mentioned as a difficulty. Individual stepwise regressions were conducted with each of the three dependant variables and the thirteen independent variables.

A typical counselor profile emerged from the respondents of this survey. The majority were white (87%), middle age (M = 47.13, SD = 9.42), female (89.8%), and at the Elementary level (73%). In comparison with other research, it appears that this profile of respondents is not unusual for school counselor research (Benshoff &
Concerns were raised by Diambra’s (1997) research that school counselors had lower moral development scores than agency or community counselors. However, school counselors’ moral development means in this study (M=44.1, SD=14.83) were appropriately found between College student scores and Graduate student scores. The DIT2 scores did however range from 10 to 82, and those school counselors who scored in the lower ranges should raise concerns. How can a school counselor who scored on or below a junior high school level (20.0) possible provide the support and challenge necessary for growth to occur in senior high school students?

Self-efficacy appears to be more closely related to moral behavior and competency in tasks. It appears to correspond to the fourth of Rest’s (1999) components, execution and implementation of a plan of action. And so, because of the different nature of self-efficacy, and the fact that there were no significant correlations found in this study, it will be addressed separately from conceptual level and moral development, when appropriate. Along with the statistically significant findings revealed by the regression, additional findings were found. These findings are examined by hypothesis.

**Examination by Hypothesis**

**Hypothesis 1:** The amount or type of experience as a counselor will be related to higher scores in moral development, conceptual level, and self-efficacy.

This hypothesis was included to assess the importance of counseling experience on cognitive development, conceptual level, and counselor self-efficacy.

Is simply being a counselor, with all that it entails, enough to promote counselor
moral development or cognitive complexity, or even develop a strong sense of self-efficacy? Skovholt & Ronnestad (1992) conducted a longitudinal study using a developmental framework for counselor growth. They found that counselors moved through developmental stages in ways that defined cognitive development and conceptual growth. The movement went (a) from an imitation of others to confidence in themselves, (b) from reliance on techniques to a trust in the process, (c) from a distinct personal and professional life to an integration of the self, and (d) from being overwhelmed with attempts to integrate data to trusting their own accumulated wisdom (Granello & Hazler, 1998). The question here is how do counselors accomplish this movement? The results of this survey would seem to indicate that neither number of years as a counselor nor counseling placement (elementary, middle, or high school) correlate significantly with movement to higher levels of cognitive development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy. Certainly we would expect an experienced counselor to be more knowledgeable about the role of a counselor in the school than a novice counselor. However, movement within the developmental framework is not a given. It would appear that something more than longevity plays a role in higher moral and conceptual developmental levels of school counselors.

Research conducted by Peace (1992) was concerned with new school counselors being inducted into the system without support or supervision. She found that new counselors can make this kind of growth progression with supervisory intervention that includes a chance to reflect and make meaning of their experiences. Rest, et al. (1999) indicate that development is affected more by “richness of experience” and “stimulating experiences”, than just time passing. In addition, the construction of
moral meaning about those experiences over time is a crucial element in promoting growth.

The lack of results for this variable is not surprising in the light of current research. School counselors are often placed in schools and then abandoned to function in isolation from their peers (Borders & Usher, 1992; Crutchfield & Borders, 1997). Some school counselors are the lone counselor in a school or may even travel to more than one school. Some school counselors have only principals and assistant principals to supervise them. Principals, although well meaning, may not have been adequately trained to provide the kind of supervision needed for higher level growth to occur (Benshoff & Paisley, 1996; Henderson & Gysbers, 1998). Each system does have a guidance director who provides training and counselor group meetings, but individual supervision or even small group supervision on a regular basis is not provided. The size of the system also affects the amount of individual attention counselors are able to receive from guidance directors.

A challenge for school systems is to find ways of providing the kind of support and supervision that would enhance the growth of the school counselors in those systems, especially considering that experience alone does not produce growth. One possible avenue for further research could examine the nature of the relationship of the Director of Guidance with the school counselors in their district in a more qualitative fashion, with the result of identifying those elements that are most useful in promoting growth and development in school counselors. Another challenge for further research with school counselors would be to explore new ways of measuring “richness of experience” and perhaps find additional ways for meaning-making and
reflective experiences (Rest, et al., 1999). This research could inform school systems of ways to promoting higher levels of growth. Henderson & Gysbers (1998) recently published a manual to inform those that are in positions of leadership with school counselors about the necessity of and ways to promote growth through appropriate supervision. The Henderson/Gysbers model encourages supervision that includes three perspectives; (a) clinical supervision for skill development, which could measure success with higher self-efficacy levels; (b) developmental supervision for moral and conceptual level growth; and, (c) administrative supervision for assessing programs and their implementation. Future research with school systems that are implementing the Henderson/Gysbers model of supervision would be of inestimable value. Outcome measures of a school’s success in the promotion of school counselor’s growth and development would be invaluable. A local high school recently implemented the Henderson/Gysbers model of comprehensive developmental guidance, and much could be learned from chronicling the transition from a traditional approach to the new comprehensive developmental approach. Other research could measure the success of the transformation and possible effects the model has on the counselors, teachers, administrators, students, and parents. Hypothesis 2: The amount or type of experience as a teacher is related to higher levels of moral development, conceptual level, and self-efficacy.

No significant difference was found with this hypothesis, and that is not surprising, for many of the same reasons that counselor experience is not significant. Teachers are often supervised from a clinical (skills and classroom management) perspective. However, they are not often given the chance for guided reflection,
which promotes cognitive developmental growth. There is still considerable debate
over the necessity for school counselors to have been teachers before they can be
counselors. One side indicates that teaching experience is necessary for school
counselors to understand the system they are entering, as well as possess the skills of
lesson planning and classroom management. The other side argues that counseling
calls for different skills such as empathy and reflective listening that are more
difficult to employ when previous teacher training has emphasized goal setting and
measurable outcome. Many states mandate that counselors have teaching experience;
some enforce the mandate. Some universities have a dual school counseling
certification program with one track for teachers returning for credentials in
counseling, the other for non-teachers. The second track requires additional
education classes as well as supplying a student teaching element. Supply and
demand is often a factor in whether the teaching experience requirement is waived or
special arrangements are made. Some states are allowing school counseling students
who have not yet completed their masters degree in counseling to begin as school
counselors with a three year provision to complete the degree. Virginia had a
requirement for previous teaching experience. But the requirement can now be met
with the first two years of counseling under a provisional license. North Carolina has
the same stipulation. Twenty of the 28 counselors with no teaching experience come
from Virginia, the other eight from North Carolina. When elementary school
counselors were mandated in Virginia in 1989, the overwhelming need for, and lack
of credentialed counselors, precipitated a waiving of teaching experience. There are
pros and cons on each side of the debate about prior teaching experience, but it
appears these data will not lend any conclusive evidence to either side, at least as far as the cognitive development, conceptual thinking, and self-efficacy framework is concerned. Twenty-eight (25%) of the 108 school counselors in the study had no experience as a teacher before they became counselors. One counselor had 35 years of teaching before becoming a school counselor. The mean number of years of teaching experience was \( M = 7.7 \) \( SD = 7.74 \). However, teaching experience did not significantly correlate with higher scores on any of the three measures, moral development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy.

Rest, et al., (1999) indicates that when people leave formal education, they tend to stabilize at the developmental level they have achieved in moral reasoning. There is even evidence that some people regress after leaving college (Peace, 1998) if they do not receive support and a chance for guided reflection. Rest’s “soft stages” identify people functioning at times at a level somewhat ahead or behind their stabilized stage (Rest, 1999), and when a person is in a new or uncomfortable environment, regression to a lower stage is possible. Crutchfield & Borders (1997) also report that counselors may even become less skilled than they were on graduation if they are not provided support in their challenging new role. Peace (1998) reported on several different research studies in which counselors and teachers, who evidenced positive effects of training in graduate school, had regressed after graduation when supervision and coaching on the job were not provided.

**Hypothesis 3:** The amount and type of education and training is related to higher levels of moral development, conceptual level, and self-efficacy.
Measures of actual education and training received by school counselors were not found to add significantly to the variance in this study. This may have been due to the number of respondents who did not report the number of credits in their masters program. However, much research has been conducted on the effect of education on cognitive development (Colby, et al., 1983; Kohlberg, 1977; Perry, 1970; Rest, et al., 1999; Walker, 1984). Some findings would seem to indicate that there is definite upward movement associated with higher education. In fact, Rest, et al. (1999) states that formal education is by far the most powerful correlate of the DIT scores. Kolbert's (1998) research found no significant difference between counselor education students and higher education students in pre and post test measures of cognitive development; both evidenced growth. So it seems that education itself seems to provide the environment for developmental growth to occur. All school counselors must have a master's degree of at least thirty credits, and so they have been afforded the opportunity to received educational support and challenge to promote growth. Therefore education alone did not account for the differences in school counselor's scores on the measures for moral development, conceptual level, or self-efficacy.

Some counselors indicated that they graduated from programs with many more than thirty credits. Counselor education programs have changed over the years. Some counselors in this study have been working in the field for as long as 30 years. Expectations are that the counselor training received 30 years ago would be markedly different from training received by counselors graduating within the past few years. Master's program requirements have changed. Thirty credits were often the
requirement in early master’s programs. Schools accredited by the Counsel for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) require school counselors to have 51-54 hours for graduation, depending on whether students seek endorsement in elementary counseling. This would mean that newer graduates are receiving nearly twice as much education and training as counselors who graduated ten years or more ago. Nevertheless, education and training was not found to contribute significantly to higher scores. It appears that something else may be necessary for continued growth.

Significance was found however with higher DIT2 scores, measures of moral development, and school counselors who expressed a strong interest in obtaining continued training or supervision. While most systems have programs that encourage counselors and teachers to continue their education, it may be that more needs to be done to bring school counselors up to date with the field. Perhaps incentives of higher pay scales could be implemented for those who receive their license as an LPC or NCC. This would encourage school counselors to seek out their own systems of growth promoting supervision and training. Counselors with higher cognitive developmental levels are more interested in receiving further training and supervision, according to the findings of this study. Because of their ability to see the “big picture”, counselors may be better able to see that the world of counseling is constantly changing, and in order to keep up with it, they need more education and supervisory experience to hone their skills and promote personal developmental growth.
Melchert, Hays, Wiljanen, & Koloczek (1996) report that at least five studies on self-efficacy and counselor development support the theory that more education and training produced higher levels of self-efficacy. Therefore, expectations were that higher amounts of counselor education would correspond with higher self-efficacy levels. The results of this study did not find a significant correlation between the number of credits in the masters program with higher scores on the self-efficacy measure. Nor were there significance relationships with additional credits, a separate question. Results may have been affected because all of the respondents did not answer the question about how many hours were in their master’s degrees. Some who did complete this question, nevertheless included question marks, or wrote, “I think” beside their answer. It seemed that they were not certain how many credits were in their master’s programs. This is understandable considering that some of them completed their master’s degrees a long time ago. Nevertheless, low frequency of responses may have had an effect on the results of the regression.

Some school counselors receive additional training when they attempt to obtain credentials such as National Certified Counselor (NCC), Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT), National Certified Career Counselor (NCCC), or National Certified School Counselor (NCSC). These certifications require counselors to complete additional course work and/or receive clinical supervision. It would appear that counselors who engage in the challenge of expanding their skills and trying on a new role, that of clinical counselor, while simultaneously receiving the support of clinical supervision, would find themselves in the rich environment where cognitive development occurs. Other
professional certifications take effort to achieve as well. Therefore it was anticipated that these additional training activities would promote or at least correlate with higher scores on the DIT, the PCM, and the COSE. However, only 13 (12%) of the 108 school counselors who responded to the study had received additional certifications. Thus, the sample was too small to use in correlational analysis.

Hypothesis 4: The amount or type of supervision is related to higher moral development, conceptual level, and self-efficacy.

Peace's (1992) study showed emerging evidence of the possibility of fostering cognitive developmental growth in school counselors when supervision is employed properly. Conditions included elements of action and reflection. Action involves social role-taking as well as new and challenging situation. This is usually provided by the challenge of school counselor's job. Reflection occurs in a supportive seminar group conducted by trained supervisors in which requisite skills are learned and experiential learnings are integrated (Chase, 1998). This supervision is different from the type of supervision provided by building principals during annual reviews. It includes role-taking experiences, reflection and discussion over a significant period of time. Benshoff and Paisley (1996) created the Structured Peer Consultation Model for School Counselors (SPCM-SC) which included those elements and found that it was well supported by participants who felt they had benefited from peer supervision. This study was validated when the SPCM-SC model was used in research conducted by Crutchfield, Price, McGarity, Pennington, Richardson, & Tsolis (1997). However, administrators and school systems must acknowledge the value of supervision experiences before they will allocate the time and funds for them.
Results of this study quantified the supervision experience of the respondents and found that only five (4.6%) of the 108 school counselors were receiving clinical supervision. Clinical supervision was defined, within the question, as consisting of "regularly conducted supervision sessions with an experienced counselor, either individually or in a group. In these sessions you critique your counseling skills, techniques, and methods." This description was included to help respondents distinguish clinical supervision from administrative supervision by their principal or other administrator. Because of the small number of respondents to this question, it was not included in the stepwise regression. Therefore results could not be considered for this aspect of the hypothesis. However, Question 17: Willingness to get Training/Supervision asks how likely they would be to seek out training and/or supervision on their own time, and there was a significant positive correlation between this question and higher scores on the P or N2 scores of the DIT2 (10% of the variance). It appears that school counselors who score higher on this measure are more likely to express interest in receiving training/supervision. They are even willing to get supervision or training on their own time. This corresponds with results found by Borders & Usher (1992) in their survey of NCC counselors. They found that school counselors reported receiving little supervision after graduation, were more likely to report being supervised by an administrator, and overwhelming indicated a desire for supervision. These findings are supported by research that shows school counselors at higher levels of moral development more intrinsically motivated and looking to widen the scope of concerns and problems addressed (Peace, 1992; Rest & Narvaez, 1994).
These results would seem to be a case of reaffirmation of the concept that “higher is better” (Sprinthall, 1974). Peace & Sprinthall (1998) point out that higher is better especially in situations requiring complex performance, like counseling and supervising. When the task requires the ability to conceptualize, to be able to see the other’s position, to behave in a consistently humane manner, then higher stages predict higher levels of professional effectiveness. School counselors who scored higher on the DIT2 would also be more eager to expand their horizons, learn new skills, and engage in role-taking experiences in an effort to become more competent and professional in their work, even at the expense of their own time.

Henderson & Gysbers (1998) delineate three types of school counselor supervision; clinical, developmental, and administrative. Each of the three types of supervision may result in different outcomes and employ different methods, but all are needed to promote the development of school counselors. Clinical supervision for school counselors “targets the professional skills and processes used in the delivery of a building’s comprehensive guidance program to or on behalf of students” (p.199). It assesses whether or not the counselor has the technical skills to provide guidance, counseling, consultation, assessment and coordination of resources. Developmental supervision is concerned with the cognitive and affective growth of school counselors as professionals. Henderson & Gysbers (1998) define higher levels of cognitive development or conceptual levels as professionalism. Administrative supervision is the third type of supervision and it assesses the school counselor’s professional judgment, mental health, work habits, standards compliance, inter- and intrapersonal relationships.
The previously cited supervision research in this study defines supervision as a combination of Henderson & Gysbers' (1998) clinical and developmental supervision. Peace (1992) addressed both (clinical) skills and developmental growth elements in her research. This further delineation of the different forms of supervision could be helpful for future research: researchers can measure them separately, and different professionals may provide different supervision. The administrative supervision described by Henderson & Gysbers (1998) is a more comprehensive form of what is already being provided by principals or administrators currently designated to evaluate school counselors.

These results raise a number of very important questions. Why are there so few supervision experiences available if school counselors perceive a need for supervision and indicate a willingness to receive it? Crutchfield & Borders (1997) would suggest that there is not enough time, and that it may not be fiscally feasible for school systems to provide individual clinical supervision for school counselors. Is the problem a lack of trained personnel? Benshoff and Paisley (1996) have developed a model that proposes to use peer supervision for school counselors. They found that either giving or receiving supervision promotes growth. School counselors who participated in the experiment lauded it and reported that is was very beneficial to both supervisors and supervisees. Crutchfield and Borders (1997) discuss the use of counseling educators for supervision, but that resource is limited by availability. Many school systems do not have access to a nearby university with counseling education professors and classes. Those systems that do have access to a college or university may find counselor educators with limited time to provide supervision.
experiences for school counselors. Crutchfield and Borders (1997) also cite concern by administrators about loss of counselor time spent in direct service to students if time is taken for away for supervision. Outcome research is need to produce evidence that time spent in promoting growth in counselors is a valuable investment that produces more professional and successful school counselors who are more proficient in working with students.

**Hypothesis 5:** The amount or type of support received by counselors is related to higher levels of moral development, conceptual level, and self-efficacy.

Sutton and Fall's (1995) research raised expectations that higher levels of support by faculty and administrators would correlate with higher self-efficacy scores. Larsen, et al. (1992) reported that people with one semester of supervision or more report higher COSE scores than people with no supervision. She has shown that counseling self-efficacy is embedded in social cognitive theory presented by Bandura as a way to measure how counselors learn how to become effective with clients. Leach, Stoltenberg, McNeill, & Eichenfield (1997) indicated that higher levels of counselor development were expected to yield higher self-efficacy ratings.

Disappointingly, the COSE was not selected as a significant variable on any of the stepwise regressions completed on the data. A possible explanation for this lack of significance could be that school counselors are knowledgeable about test taking, and as such are able to prejudice their test results. They may be somewhat knowledgeable about the construct of self-efficacy because of working with students to develop feelings of self-confidence and worth. It is possible that this knowledge would have given them insight into how to answer the questions in ways that would
make them appear more self-efficacious. School counselors mean scores were 182.12, SD 18.78. For comparison, the COSE mean scores obtained for 29 school counselors in Crutchfield and Border's (1997) study were found to be lower than the 107 respondent means in this research (Dyadic model, Pretest M=152.62, S= 24.49; Peer-group model, Pretest M=171.64 SD=25.21; Control group, Pretest M=176.26 SD=13.47 Posttest M=176.09 SD=16.83). Further study of the connection between counselor self-efficacy and cognitive development levels is called for.

Interestingly, the stepwise regression found that DIT2 scores correlated negatively (B = -2.98) with Question 15: State Support, which asked how supported the counselor felt by the state school board and state legislature. This is not a surprising result. It could be a response to Rest, et al.'s (1999) report that the DIT's P score is strongly and consistently associated with measures of political attitude and choice over the years. People with higher P scores are using more Postconventional Reasoning. People at the Maintaining Norms level tend to follow more conservative politics. Those who use more of the Postconventional Reasoning tend to follow more Liberal politics as they are less likely to see things from the Maintaining Norms view. These results need to be viewed cautiously, as History may have a limiting effect. Perhaps these significant results are a response to the political climate that has existed for the past few years in Virginia.

The Virginia State Legislature passed legislation in 1989 mandating that elementary schools hire school counselors at a ratio of 1 counselor per 500 students. There was then a change of administration and opposition from special interest
groups arose: the Governor of Virginia directed the State School Board to rescind the mandate and the Board complied with the request. The Legislature then voted to reinstate the mandate. Instead of vetoing the reinstatement which would return the bill to be voted on again by the legislators, a new Governor of Virginia changed the bill to give local school boards the option of hiring school counselors or reading specialists. (Legislation had been passed concurrently with the rescinding of the elementary counselor mandate to mandate Standards of Learning testing. This focus on test results may incline a school system to hire more reading specialist and fewer school counselors when given the choice) Legislation is currently being reintroduced to reinstate the mandate, but the elementary counselors of Virginia are very uncertain of the future of their jobs. This is the environment of 81% of the counselors, those from Virginia, in this sample. It would appear that this political environment might have stimulated school counselors, especially those at higher levels of cognitive development, to indicate their displeasure on the matter, as higher scores on the DIT2 correlate with lower scores on Question 15: State Support, how supported they felt by their state legislature and school board. It is important that a confounding result be considered in light of this evidence. Therefore further studies need to be conducted.

**Qualitative Results and Question 15: State Support**

Qualitative statements accompanying the scores fell into two categories. The first appeared to be anger overall at the rescinding of the mandate and the second looked at the situation from a dichotomous position. One apparently angry and concerned counselor said, "I feel that in removing the mandate, that state board made it's agenda clear, despite the wishes of the majority of the voting public." The
Governor had set up extensive public hearings around the state for several years to hear the feelings of the public. He acknowledged to the State School Board that the majority of the population supported elementary counselors, but he still wanted the mandate rescinded because he felt elementary school counselors were inappropriately intrusive in family's lives. The State School Board complied.

Another counselor said, "State mandate for elementary counselors has been removed. There are safety officers in elementary schools conducting values education." There is concern for the integrity of the counseling program when untrained safety officers are teaching values education. Counselors are also concerned for students who may be adversely affected by the changes. This could be seen as indication of higher moral development in school counselors, where concern for the profession and the students is as great as their concern over the possible loss of their own jobs. Gerler (1992) reports that after participating in supervision, which included role-taking, meaning making activities and guided reflection, school teachers began to move from concern for their own issues to greater concern for their student's growth.

A final cryptic comment by a school counselor stated, "Can you say SOL?" This was an apparent reference to the fact that the stress and pressure from Standard of Learning (SOL) testing might influence the choice between school counselors and reading specialist in some school systems.

The second category of responses indicated a dichotomous finding. Since the legislature voted for the mandate in the first place, then voted again to reinstate it, a number of counselors indicated support for them. The school board on the other hand
was given low scores for support. "The legislature has tried to support elementary counselors. However, the Board of Education and governor have undermined our existence." Counselors at higher levels of cognitive development and conceptual level may be better able to look at the big picture and make more distinctions in dichotomous situations.

Further Findings

Quantitative Findings

A final statement on the survey was related to job satisfaction. School counselors responded on a Likert scale of 1-6, with one being strongly disagree and six being strongly agree. "If I could do it over again, I would still choose to be a school counselor." When the stepwise regression was run, higher responses to this statement were significantly correlated to higher scores on the PCM (10% of the variance). These results would seem to support research conducted by Bruch, Juster & Heisler (1982) who report that people with high conceptual levels are able to evaluate social situations from multiple perspectives. When evaluating the current school counselor’s situation, higher conceptual levels may help the individual counselor make more appropriate attributions and self-statements about what is happening politically and programmatically. Reiman, et al. (1995) report that counselors at higher levels exhibit more autonomy and interdependence, superior communication and information processing, and have a greater tolerance for ambiguity in problem solving. These research findings suggest that school counselors, who score higher on the PCM, may be able to enjoy their work, even find it fulfilling,
although it engenders stress. It appears this may be the case with the respondents of this study.

Qualitative Responses

Some of the qualitative data collected simultaneously with the question have been grouped into five general categories of responses. The first three included how much they loved their jobs but focused on different aspects. The first was enjoyment in working with children, the second discussed their own fulfillment, and the third said it was just fun.

The first and most frequent comment was that they simply loved working with children. "There is great satisfaction in helping others become more self-actualized and more aware of their own power and control." "I enjoy working with young children. I believe that I do make a difference."

The second group expressed their belief that they are doing what comes naturally to them. They are personally rewarded by the work they have chosen. "It fills me up," says one counselor. They revel in what they have to offer. "I love what I do! I believe it’s my ‘calling’ in life. My way of making a contribution to society."

"I love my job – it is the ideal job for me! I love working with kids. I feel I can be a positive influence at the school and make a difference. I can also hopefully prevent more serious problems. I enjoy parent education as well. I just wish my salary were higher…"

The third group simply agreed that they loved the job: it was fun. "It’s a new and different day everyday. It’s challenging and fun." "I love the job. I just hope I get to continue it!" "It’s a great job!"

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Another group had some concerns but still ranked counseling high. "Even though my job is becoming increasingly more difficult as a result of a ton of clerical duties passed on from administrators and the superintendent, I still take pride in having a positive effect on young people." "I would like to be able to do more counseling and fewer clerical tasks. It is a tremendous frustration to have so little time to do what I was trained to do."

Those who scored low on this statement had several perspectives as well. One simply said "Powerless". A second said, "...not enough actual counseling, too many other duties." The third indicated a desire to do "private practice" work instead.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation is the inability to establish cause and effect. Correlational research gives information that indicates the relationship of one variable to another but does not establish cause and effect (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996).

A second limitation is that the nature of sampling in this study was purposive which limits the generalizability of the data (Creswell, 1994). The school counselors included in the research came from three school systems that were not matched for size or location (urban or rural). One system was urban, the second suburban, and the third, rural. Distribution and collection were not the same at each site. At one site, the researcher personally distributed packets to the guidance directors of middle and high schools, who in turn distributed them to the counselors in their schools. The elementary counselors in that system received the packets individually from the researcher at a counselors meeting. School counselors from all three levels participated.
The second system, which was suburban, only permitted access to elementary counselors. High school and middle school counselors were considered too busy at that time to participate. However, all the elementary counselors completed the research.

The third system was a smaller rural system that the researcher interacted with through phone contact and mail. Counselors from each level did participate from this system. This inconsistent access to school counselors created a population that was inordinately heavy with elementary counselors. This may well have influenced the results of the study. Also the lack of diversity in gender and race limits the generalizability of the study, although it may also reflect the nature of the population of school counselors. For these reasons, the results can not be generalizable to all school counselors.

Implications

The goal of this research was to profile school counselors in an attempt to identify their current status and examine relationships that exist between variables of experience, credentials, education, and support in order to identify any that may be correlated to developmental growth or self-efficacy. The reason for this was to inform school administrators and counselor educators how to address the needs of school counselors for professional growth and development. Results of this research have shown that the school counselors in this study at higher levels of conceptual level appear to have a zest for and enjoyment of their jobs. School counselors at higher moral development levels indicated a strong desire for continual growth and development of their skills through training and supervision. Few school counselors
in this study are currently receiving supervision. Counselors at higher moral
development levels also appear to be more politically aware and vocal about the lack
of support they feel from their state school board and legislature.

What are the implications for school administrators and counselor educators
from these findings? First, school counselors at higher moral development levels are
very interested in more training and supervision. This is not being provided; for them
or for those who don’t express a need. It would seem that school administrators
should find ways to provide the training and experience requested by school
counselors. Administrators should also be concerned for those who do not see the
need for training and supervision and find ways to provide opportunities for reflection
and meaning making for them.

Counselor educators must use the time they have with students who are
training to be school counselors to promote their cognitive developmental growth. It
is evident from this research that the counselors are unlikely to get much supervision
or developmental growth stimulation when they are employed. Thus counselor
educators must provide an adequate learning environment which includes:
opportunities for significant role taking experiences in a real world context; ample
support provided in a group setting which gives students the opportunity to learn new
skills and to integrate their experiential learning; and, guided reflection offered by
instructors and peers (Sprinthall, 1978; Morgan, 1998).

Higher moral development levels may produce lifelong learners who explore
ways to continue their growth. Higher conceptual levels may shape school
counselors who find satisfaction and enjoyment in their profession. Both bolster and enrich the profession of school counseling.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

Survey: Counselor Profile
Counselor Profile

Number __ __ __

1. Age: ______

2. Gender: Male Female

3. Race: African American ___ Asian/Indian ___ Multi-racial ___ Caucasian ___ Hispanic ___

4. Number of years as a School Counselor ______

5. Number of years as a School Teacher ______

6. Counseling Placement: Elementary _____ Middle _____ Secondary _____

7. How many credits were required for your Master’s degree in Counseling? ______

8. Did your Master’s degree in Counseling require an internship? Yes No

9. How many credit hours have you completed beyond your Master’s degree? ____________

10. Do you hold any additional certifications:
    - National Certified Counselor (NCC) Yes No
    - National Certified School Counselor (NCSC) Yes No
    - Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) Yes No
    - Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) Yes No
    - National Certified Career Counselor (NCCC) Yes No

11. Are you currently engaged in clinical supervision? (Clinical supervision consists of regularly conducted supervision sessions with an experienced counselor, either individually or in a group. In these sessions you critique your counseling skills, techniques, and methods.) Yes No

12. If yes, how often: Weekly _____ Monthly _____
The following questions will be answered on a Likert Scale with: 1 = Strongly Disagree  2 = Moderately Disagree  3 = Slightly Disagree  4 = Slightly Agree  5 = Moderately Agree  6 = Strongly Agree

13. The administrators and teachers in my school are supportive of school counselors in general.

1 2 3 4 5 6

How do they demonstrate this?

14. My school division is supportive of school counselors.

1 2 3 4 5 6

How do they demonstrate this?

15. My state school board and legislature support school counselors.

1 2 3 4 5 6

How do they demonstrate this?

16. Professional organizations (i.e. ACA) in my state are supportive of school counselors.

1 2 3 4 5 6

How do they demonstrate this?

17. I am likely to seek out training and/or supervision to increase my counseling skills outside of school time.

1 2 3 4 5 6

18. If I could do it over again, I would still choose to be a school counselor.

1 2 3 4 5 6

Why/Why not?
APPENDIX B

Informed Consent Form
INFORMED CONSENT INFORMATION

1.) The purpose of this study is to correlate the effect of certain variables (demographic, education, experience, level of supervision, and perceived support) on measures of cognitive moral development, conceptual development, and self-efficacy. I understand that Susan E. Halverson, a doctoral candidate at the College of William and Mary, is conducting this study. Participation in the study will take 50 = 60 minutes. Participation involves the completion of three assessment measures, the Defining Issues Test (DIT), the Paragraph Completion Method (PCM), and the Counseling Self-Estimate Inventory (COSE), and a demographic survey.

2.) You may refuse to complete the assessments without any penalty. Should you choose to participate, you will be asked to complete all of the assessment instruments and demographic information only once, at this sitting. Should you choose to participate, you also may withdraw at any time.

3.) The study results will only report group data. Any other information or data reported in the study results will have NO identifying information. You may request that results of the study be made available to you.

4.) Because all the information is being collected on site, there is no need for any identification of subjects. Each participant packet will have a number for research purposes only. You will in no way be connected to the packet you complete, so there is no danger of confidentiality breach.

**PLEASE COMPLETE AND SIGN**

I, __________________________ have read the above information and fully understand my rights and the terms and conditions of my participation or non-participation in this study.
APPENDIX C

Paragraph Completion Method Test
PARAGRAPH COMPLETION METHOD

On the following six pages you will be asked to give your ideas about several topics. Try to write at least three sentences on each topic.

There are no right or wrong answers so give your own ideas and opinions about each topic. Indicate the way you really feel about each topic, not the way others feel or the way you think you should feel.

In general, spend about 3 minutes for each stem.

1. What I think about rules . . .
2. When I am criticized . . .
3. What I think about parents . . .
4. When someone does not agree with me . . .
5. When I am not sure . . .
6. When I am told what to do . . .
Instructions

This questionnaire is concerned with how you define the issues in a social problem. Several stories about social problems will be described. After each story, there will be a list of questions. The questions that follow each story represent different issues that might be raised by the problem. In other words, the questions represent different ways of judging what is most important in making a decision about the social problem in the story. You will be asked to rate and rank the questions in terms of how important each one seems to you. That is, you will be asked to pick which questions raise the most important issues of the story.

This questionnaire is in two parts: one part contains the INSTRUCTIONS (this part) and the stories presenting the social problems; the other part contains the questions (issues) and the ANSWER SHEET on which to write your responses.

Here is an example of the task:

Presidential Election

Imagine that you are about to vote for a candidate for the Presidency of the United States. Imagine that before you vote, you are given several questions, and asked which issue is the most important to you in making up your mind about which candidate to vote for. In this example, 5 items are given. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=Great, 2=Much, 3=Some, 4=Little, 5=No) please rate the importance of the item (issue) by putting a rating number in the bracketed box before each item.

Assume that you thought that item #1 (below) was of great importance, item #2 had some importance, item #3 had no importance, item #4 had much importance, and item #5 had much importance. Then you would fill in the boxes as indicated.

[Rate importance: 1=Great, 2=Much, 3=Some, 4=Little, 5=No]

Item #
1. [1] Financially are you personally better off now than you were four years ago?
2. [3] Does one candidate have a superior personal moral character?
3. [5] Which candidate stands the tallest?
5. [2] Which candidate has the best ideas for our country's internal problems, like crime and health care?
Further, the questionnaire will ask you to rank the questions in terms of importance in the space below, the numbers at the top, 1 through 5, represent the item number. From top to bottom, you are asked to fill in the item number that represents the item in first importance (of those given you to chose from), then second most important, third most important, and fourth most important. Please indicate your top four choices. You might fill out this part, as follows:

[Write in the number of the item in the bracketed boxes.]
Which of these 5 issues is the 1st most important? [ _1] [Item #1 is most.]
Which of these 5 issues is the 2nd most important? [ _5]
Which of these 5 issues is the 3rd most important? [ _4]
Which of these 5 issues is the 4th most important? [ _2]

Note that some of the items may seem irrelevant to you (as in item #3) or not make sense to you—in that case, rate the item as “No” importance and do not rank the item. Note that in the stories that follow, there will be 12 items for each story, not five. Please make sure to consider all 12 items (questions) that are printed after each story.

In addition you will be asked to state your preference for what action to take in the story. After the story, you will be asked to indicate the action you favor on a seven-point scale (1=strongly favor some action, 7=strongly oppose that action).

In short, read the story from this booklet, then fill out your answers on the answer sheet. Please use a pencil so that if you change your mind about a response, you can erase the pencil mark cleanly and enter your new response.

Famine – (Story #1)

The small village in northern India has experienced shortages of food before, but this year's famine is worse than ever. Some families are even trying to feed themselves by making soup from tree bark. Mustaq Singh's family is near starvation. He has heard that a rich man in his village has supplies of food stored away and is hoarding food while its price goes higher so that he can sell the food later at a huge profit. Mustaq is desperate and thinks about stealing some food from the rich man's warehouse. The small amount of food that he needs for his family probably wouldn't even be missed.

What should Mustaq Singh do? Do you favor the action of taking the food? (Mark one)
**Take food** 1 Strongly Favor 2 Favor 3 Slightly Favor 4 Neutral 5 Slightly Disfavor 6 Disfavor 7 Strongly Disfavor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate the following 12 issues in terms of importance (1-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  1. Is Mustaq Singh Courageous enough to risk getting caught for stealing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  2. Isn't it only natural for a loving father to care so much for his family that he would steal?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  3. Shouldn't the community's laws be upheld?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  4. Does Mustaq Singh know a good recipe for preparing soup from tree bark?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  5. Does the rich man have any legal right to store food when other people are starving?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  6. Is the motive of Mustaq Singh to steal for himself or to steal for his family?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  7. What values are going to be the basis for social cooperation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  8. Is the epitome of eating reconcilable with the culpability of stealing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  9. Does the rich man deserve to be robbed for being so greedy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  10. Isn't private property an institution to enable the rich to exploit the poor?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  11. Would stealing bring about more total good for everybody concerned or wouldn't it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  12. Are laws getting in the way of the most basic claim of any member of a society?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rank which issue is the most important (item number).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most important item 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Third most important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second most important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth most important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Now please return to the Instructions booklet for the next story.**

---

**Reporter – (Story #2)**

Molly Dayton has been a news reporter for the Gazette newspaper for over a decade. Almost by accident, she learned that one of the candidates for Lieutenant Governor for her state, Grover Thompson, has been arrested for shoplifting 20 years earlier. Reporter Dayton found out that early in his life, Candidate Thompson had undergone a confused period and done things he later regretted, actions which would be very out-of-character now. His shoplifting had been a minor offense and charges had been dropped by the department store. Thompson has not only straightened himself out since then, but build a distinguished record in helping many people and in leading constructive community projects. Now, Reporter Dayton regards Thompson as the best candidate in the field and likely to go on to important leadership positions in the state. Reporter Dayton wonders whether or not she should write the story about Thompson's earlier troubles because in the upcoming close and heated election, she fears that such a new story would wreck Thompson's chance to win.

[Now turn to the Answer Sheet, go to the 12 issues for this story; rate and rank them in terms of how important each issue seems to you.]

**Reporter – (Story #2)**

Do you favor the action of reporting the story? (Mark one.)

| Report the story 1 Strongly Favor 2 Favor 3 Slightly Favor 4 Neutral 5 Slightly Disfavor 6 Disfavor 7 Strongly Disfavor |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate the following 12 issues in terms of importance (1-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  1. Doesn't the public have a right to know all the facts about all the candidates for office?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  2. Would publishing the story help Reporter Dayton's reputation for investigative reporting?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  3. If Dayton doesn't publish the story wouldn't another reporter get the story anyway and get the credit for investigative reporting?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5  4. Since voting is such a joke anyway, does it make any difference what reporter Dayton does?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Hasn't Thompson shown in the past 20 years that he is a better person than his earlier days as a shop-lifer?
2. What would best serve society?
3. If the story is true, how can it be wrong to report it?
4. How could reporter Dayton be so cruel and heartless as to report the damaging story about candidate Thompson?
5. Does the right of "habeas corpus" apply in this case?
6. Would the election process be more fair with or without reporting the story?
7. Should reporter Dayton treat all candidates for office in the same way by reporting everything she hears about them, good and bad?
8. Isn't it a reporter's duty to report all the news regardless of the circumstances?

Rank which issue is the most important (item number).

Now please return to the Instructions booklet for the next story.

School Board —(Story #3)

Mr. Grant has been elected to the School Board District 190 and was chosen to be Chairman. The district is bitterly divided over the closing of one of the high schools. One of the high schools has to be closed for financial reasons, but there is no agreement over which school to close. During his election to the School Board, Mr. Grant had proposed a series of "Open Meetings" in which members of the community could voice their opinions. He hoped that dialogue would make the community realize the necessity of closing one high school. Also he hoped that through open discussion, the difficulty of the decision would be appreciated, and that the community would ultimately support the school board decision. The first Open Meeting was a disaster. Passionate speeches dominated the microphones and threatened violence. The meeting barely closed without fist-fights. Later in the week, school board members received threatening phone calls. Mr. Grant wonders if he ought to call off the next Open Meeting.

[Now turn to the Answer Sheet, go to the 12 issues for this story, rate and rank them in terms of how important each issue seems to you.]

School Board —(Story #3)

Do you favor calling off the next Open Meeting?
Call off meeting 1 Strongly Favor 2 Favor 3 Slightly Favor 4 Neutral 5 Slightly Disfavor 6 Disfavor 7 Strongly Disfavor

Great/Much/Some/Little/No Rate the following 12 issues in terms of importance (1-5)

1. Is Mr. Grant required by law to have Open Meetings on major school board decisions?
2. Would Mr. Grant be breaking his election campaign promises to the community by discontinuing the Open Meetings?
3. Would the community be even angrier with Mr. Grant if he stopped the Open Meetings?
4. Would the change in plans prevent scientific assessment?
5. If the school board is threatened, does the chairman have the legal authority to protect the Board by making decisions in closed meetings?
6. Would the community regard Mr. Grant as a coward if he stopped the open meetings?
7. Does Mr. Grant have another procedure in mind for ensuring that divergent views are heard?
1 2 3 4 5 8. Does Mr. Grant have the authority to expel troublemakers from the meetings or prevent them from making long speeches?

1 2 3 4 5 9. Are some people deliberately undermining the school board process by playing some sort of power game?

1 2 3 4 5 10. What effect would stopping the discussion have on the community’s ability to handle controversial issues in the future?

1 2 3 4 5 11. Is the trouble coming from only a few hotheads, and is the community in general really fair-minded and democratic?

1 2 3 4 5 12. What is the likelihood that a good decision could be made without open discussion from the community?

*Rank which issue is the most important (item number).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Issue Description</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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Now please return to the Instructions booklet for the next story.

Cancer – (Story #4)

Mrs. Bennett is 62 years old, and in the last phases of colon cancer. She is in terrible pain and asks the doctor to give her more pain-killer medicine. The doctor has given her the maximum safe dose already and is reluctant to increase the dosage because it would probably hasten her death. In a clear and rational mental state, Mrs. Bennett says that she realizes this; but she wants to end her suffering even if it means ending her life. Should the doctor give her an increased dosage?

[Now turn to the Answer Sheet, go to the 12 issues for this story, rate and rank them in terms of how important each issue seems to you.]

Cancer – (Story #4)

*Do you favor the action of giving more medicine?*

Give more medicine 1 Strongly Favor 2 Favor 3 Slightly Favor 4 Neutral 5 Slightly Disfavor 6 Disfavor 7 Strongly Disfavor

*Great/Much/Some/Little/No Rate the following 12 issues in terms of importance (1-5)*

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*Rank which issues is the most important (item number).*

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Demonstration – (Story #5)
Political and economic instability in a South American country prompted the President of the United States to send troops to "police" the area. Students at many campuses in the U.S.A. have protested that the United States is using its military might for economic advantage. There is widespread suspicion that big oil multinational companies are pressuring the President to safeguard a cheap oil supply even if it means loss of life. Students at one campus took to the streets in demonstrations, tying up traffic and stopping regular business in the town. The president of the university demanded that the students stop their illegal demonstrations. Student then took over the college’s administration building, completely paralyzing the college. Are the students right to demonstrate in these ways?

[Now turn to the Answer Sheet, go to the 12 issues for this story; rate and rank them in terms of how important each issues seems to you.]

Demonstration – (Story #5)
Do you favor the action of demonstrating in this way?
  Students demonstrate  1 Strongly Favor 2 Favor 3 Slightly Favor 4 Neutral 5 Slightly Disfavor 6 Disfavor 7 Strongly Disfavor

Rate the following 12 issues in terms of importance (1-5)
1 2 3 4 5
1. Do the students have any right to take over property that doesn’t belong to them?
2. Do the students realize that they might be arrested and fined, and even expelled from school?
3. Are the students serious about their cause or are they doing it just for fun?
4. If the university president is soft on students this time, will it lead to more disorder?
5. Will the public blame all students for the actions of a few student demonstrators?
6. Are the authorities to blame by giving in to the greed of the multinational oil companies?
7. Why should a few people like Presidents and business leaders have more power than ordinary people?
8. Does this student demonstration bring about more or less good in the long run to all people?
9. Can the students justify their civil disobedience?
10. Shouldn’t the authorities be respected by students?
11. Is taking over a building consistent with principles of justice?
12. Isn’t it everyone’s duty to obey the law, whether one likes it or not?

Rank which issue is the most important (item number).
Most important item 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 Third most important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
Second most important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 Fourth most important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
REFERENCES


Vita

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Birthplace: Echo, Minnesota

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  Bachelor of Science Degree

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- 1998 Licensed Marriage and Family Counselor (LMAFC)
- 1998 National Certified Counselor (NCC)
- 1998 National Certified School Counselor (NCSC)

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- 1986-1997 Elementary Guidance Counselor
- 1992-1998 Adjunct teacher at Regent University
- 1982-1986 First Grade Teacher