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Assessing the Counseling Needs of High School Students: The Role of Needs Assessments in Comprehensive School Counseling Programs (CSCPs) and the ASCA National Model

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Assessing the Counseling Needs of High School Students:
The Role of Needs Assessments in Comprehensive School Counseling Programs (CSCPs)
and the ASCA National Model

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	4
Literature Review.....	5
Effectiveness of Counseling Interventions.....	7
The Need for CSCPs.....	11
Evidence Base for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs (CSCPs).....	12
The ASCA National Model.....	14
Stakeholder Perceptions of School Counseling.....	21
Student Feedback Based Research.....	26
Method.....	31
Participants and Setting.....	32
Instrument.....	32
Procedures.....	33
Results.....	34
Discussion.....	39
Limitations.....	41
Implications.....	42
References.....	43
Appendix.....	50

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify student counseling needs at the high school level. Furthermore, the role of these needs and the role of needs assessments were explored in the context of the current movement towards Comprehensive School Counseling Programs (CSCPs) and the ASCA National Model. In other words, this study aimed to examine how counselors should use data and student feedback in the implementation and maintenance of their counseling programs. Students were asked to identify their counseling needs in three categories of the career, academic, and personal/social domains. Students reported the most need in the career domain with secondary emphasis on the academic domain, while reporting little need in the personal/social domain. Differences were found among gender and grade level needs as well. Possible interpretations and the implication of these results are discussed.

Assessing the Counseling Needs of High School Students

The inception of school counseling did not occur until the beginning of the 20th century. In its initial stages, school counseling represented a service provided to students primarily for vocational guidance purposes such as preparing students for work after school and discussing potential careers. Frank Parsons, known as the Father of Vocational Guidance, instigated the integration of career guidance at the grade school level with the idea of designating specific counselor positions within the school to offer vocational guidance (Schmidt, 2003). Therefore, school counseling was borne out of offering career services to students. As the 20th century moved forward, academic guidance became more interwoven into the vocational counselor's responsibilities (Gysbers, 2001). Guidance leaders like John Brewer and G.E. Meyers began emphasizing the educational role that vocational counselors could assume within schools. By the mid 1930's into the 1940's, guidance counselors began providing personal counseling to students as well. Therefore, in addition to providing academic and vocational guidance, counselors began offering mental health services to students. Nevertheless, in the late 1950's, the government passed the National Defense Education Act, which called on school counselors to identify students who were scientifically and mathematically talented in order to compete with the Soviet Union during the Cold War (Gysbers, 2001). Funding for counseling within schools greatly increased as a result of this legislation and once again, the role of the school counselor shifted towards vocational and career guidance, creating role confusion. By 1970, with the help of the National Defense Education Act, school counselors had become a legitimate, and even necessary, occupation with schools, integrating the delivery of career and vocational services, educational and academic services, and mental health services into their job description. The emphasis within the field through the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's, turned towards developing a

structure and organization in which to define the school counselor's role as well as efficiently deliver their services to students.

Presently, the profession of school counseling is undergoing a transformation towards the development and implementation of comprehensive school counseling programs (CSCPs). The conceptualization of CSCPs dates as far back as 1971 when the University of Missouri was granted money by the Department of Education to "assist all states in the development and implementation of career guidance, counseling, and placement programs in their schools" (Lapan, Gysbers, and & Petroski, 1999). Since then, school counselors across the country have formulated and implemented various activities and taken on an assortment of roles within schools that has led to discussion about what exactly a school counselor represents within the school system. In the late 1990's, efforts made by professionals in the school counseling community targeted and emphasized the development and implementation of a universal set of counseling standards and comprehensive program framework (Campbell & Dahir, 1997; Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Johnson & Johnson, 1997; Martin & House, 1998; Myrick, 2003). The results of these efforts can be traced to the creation of the ASCA National Model in 2001. The ASCA National Model is grounded in the concept of creating a singular vision of CSCPs that can be implemented throughout the country (ASCA, 2005). The National Model incorporates and condenses past CSCP theoretical and evidence-based research into one framework with the goal of creating "a mechanism with which school counselors and school counseling teams will design, coordinate, implement, manage, and evaluate their programs for students' success" (ASCA, 2005, p. 9). The Model is not intended to be replicated exactly, but rather it is meant "to institutionalize the framework for and process of developing a school counseling program" (p. 10). Therefore, ultimately, the ASCA National Model is a student-centered counseling framework and it

emphasizes the importance of gathering building-specific feedback from students to drive its implementation and maintenance.

Effectiveness of School Counseling Interventions

Since the ASCA National Model (2005) focuses primarily on the development of a CSCP, it is important to justify the existence and effectiveness of CSCPs as well as school counseling, in general. First, research must be examined that has measured the effectiveness of various counseling activities. School counseling has focused mainly on three areas with students since the 1950's: career, academic, and personal/social domains. These domains have evolved over time, and presently they serve as the foundation for the ASCA National Model's (2005) description and definition of a school counselor's duties and responsibilities. School counselors participate and perform various activities within their role that are intended to provide support to students in all three of these domains. These activities include, but are not limited to, providing students with career and college information, providing individual and group counseling, and delivering classroom curriculum

Career and College Interventions.

Branham (2010) examined the effect of counselor "signaling" on students, which is the process of providing information to students about college. The researcher found that that the students who were not receiving as much "signaling" had less rigorous college preparatory course loads, knew less about scholarships and tuition, and maintained less knowledge about what was necessary to achieve continued success beyond high school. This study, in particular, points out that counselors were providing more information to higher achieving students as opposed to low-income, lower achieving students, which is a concern in itself. Regardless, the

college information being provided by the counselors was shown to benefit those students that were receiving it. Legum and Hoare (2004) examined the effect of a career intervention on middle school at-risk students. The intervention was a nine week program focused on exploring careers and relating the student's occupational choices to high school course planning. The researchers found that twice as many students in the experimental group increased their career awareness in comparison to the control group. Furthermore, Legum and Hoare found that teachers recognized increases in self-esteem, motivation, classroom participation, and willingness to attempt more work in those students who participated in the intervention. Lastly, a study examined the effect of race, gender, grade level, academic performance, and quality of counseling on high school student future outlooks (Dellana & Snyder, 2004). They found that self-reported grades and quality of counseling were the only two variables that associated with positive future outlook. Therefore, students who reported greater satisfaction with their counselors also reported having a more concrete educational plan beyond high school. Overall, all three of these studies suggested that school counselors had a positive impact on student career and college planning.

Individual and Group Interventions.

Individual and group counseling have also been found to be effective when provided by school counselors in the school setting. For example, Flitton (2005) examined the impact of individual counseling on students with complex needs. The students in the study all had learning disabilities and/or diagnoses including Down's syndrome and Autism. Flitton documents a single student that he worked with individually, who was diagnosed with global development delay and spatial awareness difficulties. He engaged in 20 weeks of humanistic counseling with his student. They role-played, explored the student's emotional expression, and examined her

communication and relationships. Flitton found that, by the end of the 20 weeks, the student had grown significantly in terms of her communication, self-awareness, and self-confidence. Furthermore, the student reported a positive change as well, especially in her ability to communicate. Therefore, even though this study provides only one case study of a student involved in individual counseling within a school, the results suggest that individual counseling can be a meaningful and beneficial experience for students within schools.

In addition to individual counseling, school counselors are also responsible for engaging in group counseling with students. A meta-analysis (Gerrity and DeLucia-Waack, 2007) examined the effectiveness of group counseling in schools. Overall, the researchers found that there was support for group work in schools, specifically groups with a cognitive-behavioral approach and groups at the elementary level. Gerrity and DeLucia-Waack examined groups focused on eating disorders, bullying and anger management, child sexual abuse prevention, pregnancy prevention, and social competency. They found that groups focused on a specific issue and groups that consisted of a larger amount of meetings were most effective. The researchers found that eating disorder groups and anger management/bullying groups seemed to be the most efficacious groups. They also found that prevention seemed to be the best approach to group work. In summation, Gerrity and Delucia-Waack's study provides support for group work in the school setting that can help inform school counselors of the best group practices researched so far in the field.

Guidance Curriculum Interventions.

In addition to engaging individual and group counseling and providing career and college support, school counselors are also responsible for delivering curriculum and classroom

instruction to students. The impact of the inclusion of conflict resolution curriculum into a social studies class was investigated (Stevahn, Johnson, Johnson, & Schultz, 2002). Although the conflict resolution curriculum was not delivered by counselors, it is still important to consider this study since it will provide insight on how personal/social lessons are received by students. The researchers used a control class and an experimental class to compare results. First, the researchers found on a post-test that 96% of the students retained all the information about conflict resolution delivered to them. Secondly, the students who received the conflict resolution information were applying that knowledge in school and personal conflict situations. The researchers found that 74% of the students who received the lessons were using integrative negotiation to problem-solve. 80% of the students who did not receive the material were still trying to force their way in conflict situations. Brigman, Webb, and Campbell (2007) analyzed the effect of the delivery of Student Success Skills curriculum on students. The curriculum consisted of lessons on goal-setting, developing encouraging relationships, progress-monitoring strategies, life skills, and text anxiety and stress management strategies. The lessons were delivered in small groups and in classrooms. The research revealed that 60% of the students, who participated, improved behavior as well as math and reading test scores. These findings were consistent with previous studies evaluating the same Student Success Skills program (Brigman & Campbell, 2003; Campbell & Brigman, 2005; Webb, Brigman, and Campbell, 2005). A meta-analysis, carried out by Wilson, Lipsey and Serzon (2003), examined the impact of school-based interventions on aggressive behavior. These interventions included classroom instruction, social competence group work, therapeutic counseling, peer mediation, and academic services, most of which school counselors were involved in implementing. The research found that experimental

groups showed significant reduction in behavior when compared to control groups. Also, higher risk youth showed greater reduction in aggressive behavior as a result of interventions.

Whiston and Sexton's (1998) review of the literature on school counseling outcome research concluded that counselors have a positive impact in many areas. The review investigated various studies pertaining to guidance curriculum, individual planning, career exploration, system support, and responsive services at the academic and personal/social levels. Their research suggests that school counselors, and the interventions and activities they implemented within the school system, had a beneficial impact on the student body.

The Need for CSCPs

Since research suggests that school counseling interventions have been beneficial to students regardless of structure or program, it is important to examine why the push for CSCPs within school counseling has occurred. First, up until the 1970's, school counseling represented "a set of services delivered by an individual in the position of school counselor" (Gysbers, 2001, p. 96). Therefore, some counselors were academically-oriented, others were career-oriented, and still others were mental health-oriented. This type of inconsistency in the orientation of counselors caused confusion among counselors, administrators, teachers, and parent/guardians (ASCA, 2005). Therefore, it became important within the profession, to "consider an organizational structure" that could focus equally on all three domains and eliminate the confusion of the counselor's role within the school (Gysbers, 2001, p. 96). CSCPs represented an organized, structured approach to delivering counseling services that would efficiently and effectively benefit students, while also defining the counselor's roles and responsibilities within the school. By the 1990's, an even greater push occurred to develop a national framework for

CSCPs in order to unify the profession's goals, responsibilities, and standards. This push resulted in the creation of the ASCA National Standards. Dahir, Campbell, Johnson, Scholes, and Valiga (1997) conducted a pilot study in 1995 surveying ASCA members, who were school counseling professionals at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, on their views of the development of national standards for school counseling. They found that over 80% of the respondents were in favor of creating standards. They also found that counselors believed duties such as collaborating, consulting, advising students academically and career-wise, and providing personal/social support were all important to emphasize in the development of national standards. This research, along with 50 years of past research on school counseling, led to Campbell and Dahir's (1997) development of the National Standards for School Counseling Programs. Those standards were then integrated into the development of the ASCA National Model in 2001, and, thus, serve as a basis for implementing and maintaining school counseling programs with the intention of effectively servicing all students within the school. Thus, the National Model represents the ultimate goal for school counselors, first initiated in the 1970's, to develop a CSCP that would unify the profession and define its role within schools while maximizing the benefits of counseling interventions for students.

Evidence Base for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs

The ASCA National Model was designed to represent a viable structure for founding a singular vision of CSCPs. Since school counseling interventions, many of which are included in the National Model, have been found to benefit students, it is important, next, to examine whether CSCPs have been found to be effective when implemented within schools. A study, conducted by Sink and Stroh (2003), compared elementary schools with comprehensive school counseling programs (CSCP) to those without one. They found that students at the school with

the CSCP were achieving better scores on norm and criterion-referenced academic achievement tests. Thus, those schools with CSCPs appeared to be benefiting the students academically. A similar study, by Sink, Akos, Turnbull, & Mvududu (2008), examined the link between CSCP and academic achievement at the middle school level. They found that students at the 6th and 7th grade level who had a CSCP in place were performing better on standardized testing than their peers who did not. The majority of the schools involved in the study were suburban and therefore, there are other factors to consider when comparing suburban schools to rural and city schools such as staffing, resources, and environment. Nevertheless, this study still sheds light on the benefits of a CSCP within schools on academic achievement.

Lapan, Gysbers & Sun (1997) also investigated the impact of CSCPs on students. They found that students reported earning higher grades as well as feeling better prepared for their future in schools with CSCPs. Students also reported having more college and career information in schools with CSCPs. Lastly, students with a more fully implemented CSCP rated their school climate more positively than those without and reported greater feelings of belonging and safety at school. This study also compared schools in the suburban, rural, and urban setting. Therefore, it's important to consider that other factors may have played a role in the differences as well.

Lapan, Gysbers & Petroski (2001) found that schools with CSCPs contributed to students having higher grades, better relationships with teachers, and a more prominent belief that their education was important and relevant to their future. Suburban, urban, and rural schools were all compared in this study as a well and subsequently, other factors may have played a role in the results.

Therefore, on the basis of these studies, it seems that CSCPs have been found to have a positive impact on students at the academic, personal/social, and career levels.

The ASCA National Model

The aforementioned research found that students benefit from CSCPs. The ASCA National Model (2005) is a CSCP that is designed to establish a singular vision of how CSCPs across the nation can function to ensure that all students benefit from the counseling program. The ASCA National Model is a data-driven, standards based program “comprehensive in scope, preventative in design, and developmental in nature” (ASCA, 2005, p. 13). In other words, the counseling program integrates a wide range of activities in order to service all students, while implementing and delivering these activities based on appropriate age and grade level, with the ultimate goal of prevention. Furthermore, these activities are designed to address the ASCA National Standards in schools, as well as address and produce data that provides evidence to support and evaluate school counseling interventions. The four main elements of the Model consist of the Foundation, Management System, Delivery System, and Accountability.

The Foundation.

The Foundation addresses the “what” of the program and outlines what it is that students “will know and be able to do” (ASCA, 2005, p.27). The Foundation comprises a school counseling program’s beliefs and principles and its mission statement. These two aspects are designed to create a unified vision among the counselors as to what they want the students to achieve as a result of their services. Also included in the Foundation element of the program are the ASCA National Standards, for which the rest of the National Model is based on. The National Standards consist of three student domains, which have all been central responsibilities of school counselors since the 1950’s, in which school counseling programs are designed to address: career, academic and personal/social development. For each domain, there are three overarching standards that counseling programs should address. For each standard there are subsequent competencies and indicators that specify what exactly students should be achieving

as a result of the program. Overall, there are 16 competencies and 122 competency indicators. The purpose of these competencies and their indicators is to explicitly define what is being addressed by counseling programs by determining what percentage of students are meeting the criteria. This data, in turn, allows the counseling program to evaluate its efficiency and effectiveness.

The Delivery System.

Another element of the ASCA National Model is the Delivery System, which addresses the “how of the implementation process” and focuses on the “activities, interactions, and areas in which counselors work to deliver the program” (ASCA, 2005, p. 39). According to the model, there are four areas in which school counselors deliver their services: school guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services, and system support. School guidance curriculum consists of classroom instruction, interdisciplinary instruction, group activities, and parent workshops. Individual student planning consists of the advisement and/ or assessment of students on an individual or group basis. Responsive services consist of individual and group counseling, consultation, referrals, peer facilitation, and crisis response/counseling. Finally, system support consists of professional development, collaboration and consultation with colleagues, and program management. According to the Model, all activities that are included in a comprehensive counseling program should fall into one of these categories (ASCA, 2005).

The Management System.

The Management System addresses program management regarding “when, why, who will implement, and on what authority” (ASCA, 2005, p. 45). First, the management agreement

focuses on the “who will implement” and “on what authority” aspects of the program. The management agreement is a document that addresses the organization and assignment of interventions and activities to counselors. This agreement should include all counselors and the administrators responsible for counseling support services, as well as building principals and administrators. Management agreements should address questions pertaining to how every student will be reached by the interventions, what areas each counselor will specialize in, what amount of time will be spent in each respective duty of the counselors as well as compensation for extra work and budgetary availability for needed resources. Furthermore, management agreements should address the role of professional development for counselors and how much is needed to maintain a CSCP as well as the role of other school staff, such as secretaries and assistants, who work alongside the counselors and what they’re responsible for in the program. Lastly, the management agreement should include an outline for meeting as a department, with administrators, and with other school staff (ASCA, 2005). Therefore, the management agreement represents a tangible record of program organization that ensures awareness and accord by all school personnel involved in the CSCP over who is addressing what within the program while also assuring collaboration and consent by administrators. The ASCA model also suggests the creation of an Advisory Council consisting of relevant stakeholders within the school such as students, parents or guardians, teachers, counselors, administrators, school board members and community members. The purpose of this council would be to review intentions and results associated with the CSCP, and to make recommendations based on their evaluation. An Advisory Council can function as an important resource for collaboration by giving a voice to all parties directly and indirectly impacted by the program.

The next sub-component of the Management System is the use of data, which addresses the “why” of the program (ASCA, 2005). In other words, data informs the program’s decision-making process and serves as justification for change and the implementation of new ideas and interventions. There are various kinds of data that ASCA outlines in the model. The first is student progress data. These data that help inform counselors of areas that may need interventions and potentially helps them evaluate interventions as well. Student progress data include student-achievement data, achievement-related data, and standards and competency-related data. Student-achievement data consist of grades, test scores, graduation rates, pass/failure rate, and dropout and retention rates. Achievement-related data include course-enrollment patterns, discipline referrals, attendance rates, extracurricular involvement, drug and alcohol violations, and parent/guardian involvement. Unlike student-achievement data, these data have been proven to correlate with achievement, but do not directly reflect academic achievement on their own terms (2005). Finally, standards and competency related data, which are data that reflect the achievement, or lack thereof, of ASCA’s standards and competencies, could consist of percentages of students exhibiting study skills, maintaining a four-year plan, or identifying interests related to their career choices. Basically, any standard or competency that a counseling department delineates to address, at their level, can be included in these data. The next form of data are disaggregated data, which are pulled from existing data by separating the data into variables like gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, grade-level, vocational track, and special education in order to investigate if there are certain groups that need more help or are being affected by intervention more than others. This way, equity efforts can be measured and interventions can be strategically targeted.

Other forms of data are program evaluation data which is intended to measure the impact that a counseling program is having on the school and students. One example of program evaluation data are process data which addresses the way the program is conducted by providing evidence that events and activities occurred. Therefore, an example of process data would be documenting that the counselors delivered a bullying prevention lesson to 100 freshmen students. Another example of process data are perception data, which is data that measures how the students are impacted by counseling activities by measuring their knowledge gained, competencies achieved, and attitudes and beliefs adopted. These data are often achieved through pre- and post-tests, surveys, evaluation forms, and skill demonstration. In addition, needs assessments represent another form of perception data. The data produced by needs assessments provides counselors with important student, parent, teacher, and administrator feedback that evaluates and informs the program's direction and interventions. The last form of process data are results data. These are data that illuminate how the program is impacting the students' achievement. Examples of results data are improvement in attendance and graduation rates or a decrease in drug and alcohol referrals. According to the National Model (2005), the analysis and management of all these data is vital to an effective evidence-based counseling program and therefore, must be integrated efficiently into the management system.

The last sub-component of the management system is the development of planning documentation. One of these planning documents is the action plan. The action plan details how school counselors intend to achieve their desired outcomes and results through the various activities they deliver (ASCA, 2005). According to the National Model, action plans should be an organized table identifying the activity, the grade level being delivered to, the ASCA Standards being addressed, and the way in which the activity will be evaluated. Also included in

the action plan is a description of the curriculum and materials needed for the activity, the projected start and end date of the activity, the projected number of students being impacted, as well as the class or subject that will be the activity will be delivered in, if applicable. The next step in the development of planning a counseling program, according to the Model, is designating the distribution of time spent on the program's various counseling activities. This allocation of time can help prioritize the activities for the counselors as well as shed light on how much time is being spent on counseling activities as opposed to non counseling activities such as creating schedules, record keeping, and other administrative, clerical duties. The next step in the process of planning how that use of time is distributed and how the activities within the Action Plan are organized is the development of a program calendar. The National Model suggests the implementation of a master schedule which highlights all the major events and activities that counselors participate in on a yearly, monthly, and weekly basis. The National Model promotes the use and development of calendars for organizational purposes as well as to increase communication inside and outside of school about counseling activities, to emphasize the focus on student participation and support, and to encourage planning ahead in students and parents (2005).

The Accountability System.

The next element in the ASCA National Model is the Accountability System. This system addresses the question: "how are students different as a result of the school counseling program?" (p. 59). Much of this accountability is data-driven and focuses mainly on the link to student academic success, according to the Model. The Model promotes the use of results reports which document the data produced from evaluative procedures during and after counseling activities. An example of a results report would be a similar layout to an Action Plan, but with

data included to show how the activity impacted the students. Therefore, counselors would include grade level affected, materials and curriculum, type of activity, and the start and end dates of activity, in this document. Furthermore, the process data or how many students were impacted, the perception data, which is usually results of a post-test or student evaluation, and results data, which could be improvement in GPA or attendance, would also be included to show how the activity impacted the students. In addition, the National Model includes a category for implications within this document, which allows for interpretation of the data and the discussion of future action based on that data. The National Model also recommends the evaluation of counselors based on ASCA standards by administrators. This way, counselors can receive feedback from an outside source about their individual performance and consider areas for improvement. Lastly, the Model emphasizes the importance of carrying out a program audit every year. A program audit involves completing a checklist of ASCA criteria that counseling programs should be addressing. Counselors fill out the checklist by determining whether each item is not being addressed, in the process of being addressed, or fully implemented and addressed. The audit sheds light on strengths of the program as well as areas for improvement and can help inform future action and decision-making.

In addition to the ASCA National Model's four elements, there also four themes by which school counselors are expected to promote and demonstrate leadership, advocacy, collaboration, and systemic change (2005). All four of these themes are intertwined and focus on the achievement of equity among students within the school. The first theme is Leadership. The National Model calls on school counselors to serve as leaders within their schools in order to produce change that will ultimately benefit students. The Model suggests that the promotion of equity for every student and the ensuing collaboration with other school professionals to achieve

that equity represents the key to acting as a leader within the school. The next theme is Advocacy. Advocacy is the proactive approach of ensuring equal opportunities and support for students within the school. According to the National Model, this is a chief duty of the school counselor who, while collaborating and serving as a leader, maintains focus on achieving the greatest benefit for the students. The third theme is Systemic Change. According to the National Model, school counselors are in a unique position within schools, since they assess the achievement of academic success on a daily basis. The Model promotes that school counselors use this assessment and the data they acquire through their program to create change within the school system to ensure academic equity for all students. The key to systemic change is assessing for student barriers and initiating change that eliminates those barriers whether it be changing school policies and procedures or adapting program goals and activities to fit student needs. The last theme is Collaboration. According to National Model, since school counselors interact with virtually every important stakeholder within the school, it is their role to encourage and utilize collaboration among the various stakeholders. School counselors can act as facilitators in creating and fostering working relationships among students, teachers, parents, administrators, and support staff. These relationships, according to the Model, will promote the achievement of equity for students and help to initiate change to achieve that equity.

Stakeholder Perceptions of School Counseling

The ASCA National Model emphasizes the importance of collaboration and evaluation and the inclusion of relevant stakeholders in those processes. According to the Model, teachers, students, parents, and administrators must all be engaged in the development and maintenance of a school counseling program in order to ensure its comprehensiveness and benefit to all involved. Therefore, since a school counseling program involves many stakeholders in the

achievement of collaboration and evaluation, it is important to investigate teacher, administrator, parent, and student views on the roles of school counselors.

Administrator Perceptions.

First, it is important to consider the views and perceptions of administrators on the role of school counselors. Amatea and Clark (2005) conducted a qualitative study in order to assess 26 administrator's conceptions on school counselors. The researchers found that the administrators formed four different conceptions about the role of school counselors. The first role conception formulated by administrators was the innovative school leader. School counselors with this role conception, as explained by administrators, collaborate with other school personnel to meet student needs and initiate change based on those needs through the use of data and advocacy. All four ASCA themes including leadership, advocacy, systemic change and collaboration are represented within this conception. Another school counselor role conception identified by administrators was that of a collaborative case consultant. These administrators believed school counselors to be responsible for providing psychological, social, academic support to students and, more specifically, to work directly with teachers and parents in consulting about the concerns and needs of the students. This conception seems to be more focused on collaboration and advocacy. The next conception identified by administrators was Responsive Direct Service Provider. The responsibility of the school counselor with this role conception is primarily to provide direct services to students through counseling and guidance curriculum as well as to provide crisis response support. This conception is much less focused on collaboration than the previous two and emphasizes the advocating and mental health expertise role of school counselors. The last conception put forth by administrators was the administrative team player. This school counselor, as explained by administrators, was expected to fulfill administrative

goals and needs. These administrators did not seem to recognize the expertise school counselors possessed within the mental health field as they identified mainly non-counseling tasks like scheduling, testing organization, referral requests, and other clerical duties as primary responsibilities of the counselors. Therefore, outside of the final role conception of administrative team player, most administrators seemed to identify the school counselor's role in similar ways that the ASCA National Model portends the role to be.

Other recent studies (Chata, 2007; Dodson, 2009; Luewerke, Walker, & Qi, 2009; Montiero-Leitner, Asner-Self, Milde, Leitner, & Skelton, 2006; Zalaquett, 2005) have reinforced that school administrators are, for the most part, recognizing the role of school counselors consistent with the ASCA National Model's vision, especially when exposed to that Model. Chata's (2007) study investigated the views of future principals, enrolled in graduate school for school administration, of the school counselor. The study found that future principals were able to differentiate between appropriate counseling activities and inappropriate non-counseling activities as set forth by the ASCA National Model. Luewerke, Walker, & Qi (2009) examined the impact of exposing different types of information to administrators about school counseling. The researchers found that exposing the administrators to the ASCA National Model proved to change their beliefs on the allocation of time of counselors. The administrators, when exposed to the National Model, suggested that more time be allocated to school counselors for the delivery of guidance curriculum, system support, and responsive services. These studies suggest that the ASCA National Model can have a significant impact on stakeholder perceptions. Another study, however, examined the difference between administrator's perceptions of the role of counselors in Recognized ASCA National Model (RAMP) implemented counseling programs and non-RAMP programs (Dodson, 2009). The researchers found that both sets of administrators

recognized the impact of school counselors in the academic, personal/social, and career domains of students. The one difference found between the administrators was that RAMP program counselors were delivering more guidance curriculum than non-RAMP programs. Therefore, exposure to the ASCA National Model is not necessarily essential in changing school administrator role conceptions because, overall, it seems that the administrators are identifying the roles of school counselor's uniform with the Model's conception.

Teacher Perceptions.

Next, it is important to examine teacher's perceptions of school counselor's roles. School counselors interact and collaborate with teachers consistently throughout the school year and it is important to recognize and assess their perceptions of school counselors. Clark and Amatea (2004) examined teacher perceptions and expectations of school counselors. The researchers found that the most common theme among the participants about counselors was the importance of collaborating and working as team for the benefit of the students. Other themes that were identified by the teachers were the importance of large and small-group counseling interventions as well as counselor visibility. A very small amount identified clerical, administrative work as important to the school counselor's role. Beesly (2004) investigated the perceptions of teachers K-12 of the school counselor's role in their schools. Overall, the researcher found that teachers were satisfied with the services provided by the school counselors. The teachers reported that the strengths of the school counseling services lied in classroom guidance, individual counseling, consultation, and coordination special education services. The teachers recognized the importance of career counseling and academic planning/preparation in the school counselor's role, but believed those areas needed to be improved. Another study conducted by Reiner, Colbert, & Perusse (2009) investigated the perceptions of teachers on the appropriate and

inappropriate activities of school counselors set forth by ASCA. The researchers found that the teachers agreed that school counselors should participate in 13 out of the 16 appropriate responsibilities including counseling students, delivering guidance curriculum, consultation, assisting students with academic and career planning, and collaborating with other school personnel. The researchers also found that the teachers agreed that school counselors should engage in only 5 out of the 12 inappropriate responsibilities which included performing disciplinary action, substituting for teachers, and supervising study halls. Overall, like administrators, teachers seem to be able to identify appropriate school counseling roles within the school consistent with the ASCA National Model's vision and recognize the impact school counselors have on the student body.

Parent Perceptions.

Next, parent perceptions of the role of school counselors must be explored. Parents represent an important link to students and play a major role in collaboration for school counselors. Unfortunately, there has been little research assessing the perceptions of parents on the role of school counselors up to this point despite their significant influence on the school system. Make this next sentence active, rather than passive, tense. Kirochfer, Telijohann, Price, Dake and Ritchie (2007) examined elementary school parent's perceptions of school health personnel, provides some insight into parent views of school counselors. The parents participating in the study identified their three most important services they believed school counselors were responsible for. The first service identified by parents was early detection of children's academic and personal/social problems. The second service was providing early intervention for those academic and personal/social problems. Lastly, the parents identified teamwork and collaboration with other school personnel, in order to ensure academic and

personal/social success, as an important service of school counselors. Although there is little research to draw from, this study does show that parents recognize the school counselor's role as consistent with the ASCA National Model's vision. Parent perceptions of school counselors represents a very important direction for future research in the field of school counseling especially considering the National Model's emphasis on collaboration and accountability with relevant stakeholders.

Student Feedback-Based Research

Considering the views and perceptions of relevant stakeholders like parents, administrators and teachers, is an important facet of the ASCA National Model, but, ultimately, the National Model is designed to maximize school counselor support of students. Therefore, the perceptions and needs of students, pertaining to school counselors and counseling services, are essential to examine in order to develop and maintain a counseling program. First, the perceptions of students concerning their school counselors must be examined. Moore, Henfield and Owens (2008) examined the perceptions of African-American special education students of their school counselors. The researchers discovered three dynamics within the views of the students toward their counselors: their perceived role of the school counselor, their actual experience with the school counselor, and their comfort level with the school counselor. First, the students believed that school counselor's primary role was to provide support for students dealing with personal/social issues at home, with friends and peers, and at school. The students, however, reported that their actual experiences with their counselors consisted of mainly academic planning and scheduling. This contradiction between student perceptions and their actual experience could be attributed to the final dynamic found by the researchers, which was student comfort level with their school counselors. The majority of the students reported

discomfort communicating and interacting with their school counselors. This discomfort was related to different factors such as counselor availability, negative past experiences with school counselors, home-school boundaries, and perceived counselor bias. Therefore, although this study focuses on a specific group of students, it sheds light on the importance of garnering student feedback and using that feedback to inform counseling decision-making in order to ensure equity and comfort within the school for all students.

(Vela-Gulde, Cavazos Jr., Fielding, Johnson, Cavazos, Campos, and Rodriguez, 2009) examined Latino student perceptions of their school counselors. The researchers found five common themes among the students when they discussed their school counselors. Students reported receiving inadequate advisement on college and academic planning, lack of availability of their counselors, lack of individual attention, differential treatment, and low expectations. Overall, the students seemed to agree that their counselors “were never there” and did not provide them with the support they desired. Any amount of outside factors could contribute to these students’ experiencing their counselors a certain way, but, in the end, this study highlights, again, the importance of garnering feedback from all students in order to ensure that every group within the school is represented within the framework of the counseling program.

(Owens, Simmons, Bryant & Henfield, 2011) examined African American males’ perceptions of counseling services. Overall, the participants reported positive feelings towards their counselors. The students reported their counselors as being engaging, helpful, and supportive. Nevertheless, students reported wanting more information regarding academic and post-secondary preparation and more direct attention when dealing with academic and personal/social concerns. Unlike the two previous studies discussed, these students had positive perceptions of their counselors, yet still offered ways for their counselors to improve their

services. Therefore, regardless of students' overall perception of counseling interactions as negative or positive experiences, it seems essential to hear from students about what they need from their school counselors, especially since the ASCA National Model (2005) is fundamentally student-focused and the maintenance and implementation of a counseling program is intended to be predicated mainly on student feedback.

Finally, with that said, it is critical to explore existing research investigating student counseling needs. This research will not only help to shed light on what it is students need from their counselors at school, but it will also justify the ASCA National Model's assertion that student feedback, in the form of needs assessments, is essential in creating and sustaining a CSCP. Unfortunately there is little research to draw upon when investigating student needs. Nevertheless, a study by Hiebert, Kemeny and Kurchak (1998) examined the needs of junior high school students. The students reported their greatest counseling needs as wanting more career/course counseling and more information about careers, in general, as well as receiving more information and counseling pertaining to concerns dealing with stress, discrimination, bullying, violence, and friendships. This particular study pertains to junior high level students in a city setting and the results of the study may not generally reflect both or either of those populations. The study illuminates, however, the importance of recognizing that every student population is different. Thus, the inclusion of needs assessment within a counseling program become imperative in assuring that students are receiving the services they specifically report needing, not needs generalized by other studies or even those set forth by the ASCA National Model.

Kesici (2007), focused primarily on what Turkish middle school students need from their school counselors. The researcher found that students reported wanting a various array of

services from their school counselors. The researcher found that all three domains of the ASCA National Model, career, personal/social, and academic were represented in the student feedback. Academic needs identified by students included study skill support, exam anxiety support, and help with motivation. Career needs that were identified by students included wanting more information about careers and more guidance with career decision-making. Lastly personal/social needs identified by students included wanting counseling for domestic problems dealing with family and peer relations and puberty problems. Nyutu & Gysbers (2008) conducted a counseling needs assessment on Kenyan high school students. They found that five components were identified by Kenyan students as needs at the high school level. These included human relationships, social values, career development, self-development and learning skills. The human relationships component was the greatest need for students and that included questions regarding students wanting support from their counselors regarding friendship, family, and gender issues. Three out of the five components, including Human Relationships, dealt specifically with personal/social issues as Social Values represented questions regarding help with drug and alcohol concerns as well as sexual awareness and Self-Development involved questions regarding self-motivation and fulfillment. The researchers also found that students' second greatest need was Career Development such as receiving information and guidance regarding careers and colleges. Lastly, they found that the students showed the least amount of need in dealing with academic issues. Both of these studies were conducted outside of the United States and at different levels, but they represent, not only that the ASCA National Model and CSCPs are justified in their outline of the duties and responsibilities of a school counselor, but also, they represent students being provided a voice in framing and informing the services and activities provided by the school counselor. The research on student perceptions and needs of the

school counselor is limited, but it provides a glimpse into the power of involving students in the implementation and maintenance of a CSCP. Ultimately, the ASCA National Model's emphasis on the inclusion of a needs assessment when initiating a CSCP is justifiable when considering this research since, as has been found, so much can be derived from student feedback.

Overall, school counseling has evolved, over time, as a profession designed to deliver services to all students in order to support them in the academic, career, and personal/social contexts of their lives. These services, although at first a collection of interventions, were shaped into a structure known as comprehensive school counseling programs. These programs identified the school counselor's roles and responsibilities within the school and sought to ensure equity to all students. Eventually, this CSCP framework was developed into the ASCA National Model, which strives to create a singular vision of school counseling programs across the nation. This Model is designed to maximize the benefits of counseling services for students while including relevant stakeholders like students, teachers, administrators, and parents in the development and maintenance of the program. This feedback and data can ultimately empower the relevant stakeholders by showing them the significance of their role within the counseling program, especially students, for whom the program is ultimately, centered on serving. Therefore, the role of student needs assessment within the framework of the ASCA National Model and CSCPs in general, becomes an essential piece in empowering students and driving counseling program decision-making.

Ultimately, the question that must be answered when implementing and sustaining a counseling program is: What do students need from their counselors? Do those needs differ based on demographic factors such as gender and grade level? Furthermore, what role do those needs play in the implementation and maintenance of a CSCP as envisioned by the ASCA

National Model? In order to answer these questions, this study will examine the needs of high school students through the distribution of a needs assessment based on the ASCA National Standards. Students will be asked what areas they need more help with from their counselors in the career, academic, and personal/social domains. Students will also be asked to identify their gender and grade level to determine if need does indeed differ based on those demographics. Ultimately, this study hopes to shed light on the role of needs assessments in better serving students within schools and how the results of these needs assessments can lay the groundwork for implementing and maintaining a CSCP. It is hypothesized that students will respond to the needs assessment by highlighting certain counseling services they need more help with, thus showing clear areas of need for the counselors to address. It is also hypothesized that students will show different needs based on gender and grade level.

Method

This section will outline the participants and setting of the study, the instrument used in the study, and procedures of completing the study. The research conducted in this study was quantitative in nature with a survey research design. One of the primary characteristics and goals of the ASCA National Model and CSCPs, in general, is for counselors to use quantitative data to inform their decision-making. Therefore, this design was utilized because needs assessments are a form of survey and produce concrete quantitative data that can be analyzed to determine the needs of sample of a population. Variables of gender and grade level were used to determine need among those demographics. The purpose of this research is to produce descriptive data of student needs. Therefore, descriptive analysis such as means and frequencies were used to identify overall totals and means for each question as well as to disaggregate the data based on

gender and grade level. Grade level and gender data will be compared using frequency percentages.

Participants and Setting

This study was conducted at a large suburban high school in western New York. The school consists of around 1600 students from grades 9 through 12. The student population is predominantly white (91%) and 13% of students are eligible for free or reduced lunch (The New York State School Report Card, 2010). This study, however, was aimed at assessing the needs of students in 9th, 10th, and 11th grade. Therefore, four random study halls for each grade, where parental consent forms would be handed out, were selected in order to target 300 students for participation in the study. Out of those 300 students, 151 participated. Therefore, the response rate was 50% for the sample selected. Furthermore, the 151 students who participated represented approximately 10% of the overall student population. 58% of the sample was female, while 42% were male. 32% of the respondents were in 9th grade, 26% were in 10th grade, and 42% were in 11th grade.

Instrument

Students were asked to complete a 38 item needs assessment survey consisting of questions based on the ASCA National Model's three domains of school counseling: academic, personal/social and career (Appendix C). Questions were asked to students on topics ranging from counselors providing help with study skills to counselors providing support with coping with divorce and family issues to counselors aiding students in relating interests to career choice. The needs assessment was developed and shared on the ASCA Scene website by St. Charles Parish Public Schools based on the ASCA national standards (ASCA Scene is a group website

where professional school counselors share materials with each other). A four point likert scale was used to determine the level of need the students had for each topic on the survey. The likert scale responses ranged from “great need” to “average need” to “little need” to “no need at all.” Students were asked to indicate their grade level and gender on the survey as well.

Procedures

Since all the students participating in this study were under the age of 18, parental consent forms were necessary. The parental consent forms were distributed to the students during their study halls over a two-week span. The project was also explained to them during this time. Students were told to take home the form and get it signed by a parent/guardian then return it to the researcher’s office. When they returned the signed parental consent form and placed it in an envelope, they were administered the survey by the researcher. Attached to the survey was a student consent form which explained to the student the project and their participation in it. It was explained on this form that by filling out the survey, students were agreeing to participate in the study. Once they completed the survey in a designated area away from the researcher, they were told to place it in a different envelope than the parental consent forms. The placing of both the parental consent form and survey in an envelope by the students helped ensure anonymity. The students were also told not to put their names on the surveys.

After completing the survey, students then informed the secretary of their name in order to enter them into a lottery with the opportunity to win a \$20 gift certificate to the movie theater, a \$15 to Applebee’s, and a \$10 gift card to Wal-Mart. The lottery was conducted on a day when the researcher was not present at the school. The school provided funding for the photocopies of the survey and parental consent forms. The 45 dollars in gift certificates for the lottery were

funded by the researcher. The parental consent forms were locked in a file cabinet and shredded upon completion of the project by the secretary. The completed surveys were analyzed and will be shredded upon completion of the project. The data was analyzed to determine the highest to lowest counseling needs among the students. Frequency and mean analysis of the data was used to determine the results.

Results

The results of the survey were analyzed using frequency analysis and mean analysis. The purpose of these methods of analysis were to determine the respondent's least and most identified topics that they responded they needed more help with from their counselors.. Further breakdowns of frequencies, based on grade level and gender, were also analyzed to determine areas of need at each grade level and among males and females. First, the results of the survey were analyzed using a one-sample t-test in order to determine the mean for each question on the survey. The means are based on the likert scale used within the survey (1-no need, 2-little need, 3-average need, 4-great need). The means ranged from 1.37 to 3.03. The five questions with the highest means, from highest to lowest were: *obtaining information on colleges and technical schools* (3.03), *knowing education requirements for a particular occupation* (2.94), *relating my interests and abilities to my future career* (2.80), *obtaining information about financial aid* (2.55), and *understanding standardized test scores* (2.48). The five questions with the lowest means, from lowest to highest were: *dealing with suicidal issues* (1.37), *locating information/help in dealing with alcohol and drug abuse* (1.41), *discussing divorce/separation issues* (1.43), *talking about physical and other types of abuse* (1.44), and *talking about gender identity/sexual orientation* (1.47). Other notable questions were those questions with means above 2, meaning respondents tended to report the item as between little and average need.

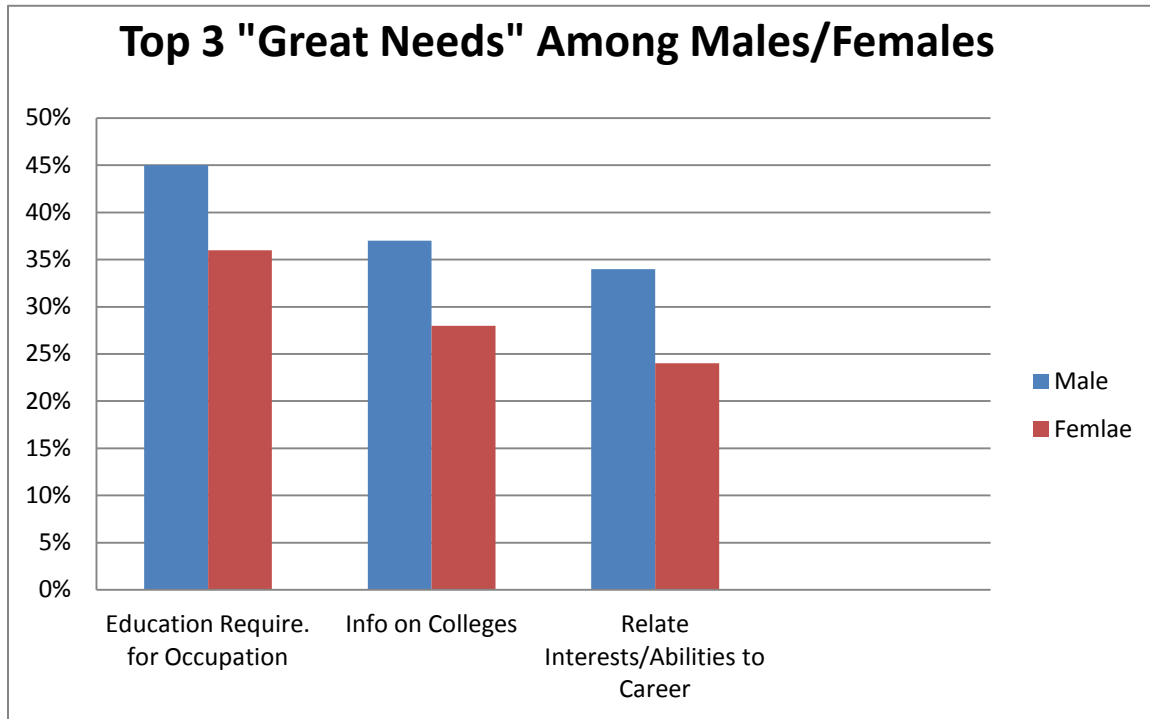
These topics are listed in the table below with their corresponding means. Overall totals for each topic can be found in Appendix A.

Topic	Mean
<i>Tracking my personal progress toward graduation requirements</i>	2.47
<i>Knowing graduation requirements</i>	2.44
<i>Having easy access to counselors</i>	2.44
<i>Understanding and using the college and career resource Naviance Family Connection</i>	2.43
<i>Identifying my interests and abilities</i>	2.38
<i>Improving my academic weaknesses</i>	2.33
<i>Improving test-taking skills</i>	2.24
<i>Learning how to manage my time</i>	2.18
<i>Becoming familiar with counseling services</i>	2.09
<i>Learning study skills</i>	2.08
<i>Learning about community resources</i>	2.08
<i>Understanding the balance between school, work and leisure</i>	2.02
<i>Understanding and accepting my personal strengths and weaknesses</i>	2.02

Gender and Grade Level

Next, a frequency breakdown of the responses to the 38 survey items was performed by gender and grade level to determine specific needs within those variables. These frequencies were converted to percentages to allow for comparison. First, the data for males and females were disaggregated. Females reported their top three areas of “great need” as *knowing education requirements for a particular occupation* (36%), *of obtaining information on colleges and technical schools* (28%) and *relating my interests and abilities to my future career* (24%). Males

reported their top three areas of “great need” as *obtaining information on colleges and technical schools* (45%), *relating my interests and abilities to my future career* (37%), and *knowing education requirements for a particular occupation* (34%).



Both males and females reported that the topics of *obtaining information on colleges and technical schools* (M-79%, F-73%), *knowing education requirements for a particular occupation* (M-73%, F-68%) and *relating my interests and abilities to my future career* (M-66%, F-63%) were their highest areas of need based on combining the frequencies of average and great need. Males reported their next two highest areas of average and great need combined, as *understanding standardized test scores* (61%) and *obtaining information about financial aid* (60%). Females reported their next two highest areas of average and great need combined, as *obtaining information about financial aid* (56%) and *having easy access to counselors* (49%). The most significant difference between percentage of males and females was homework completion helps future which males reported as an average or great need 20% more than

females. Other notable differences between males and females included: *becoming more responsible and understanding the consequences of my actions* (males reported 14% more), *exercising self-control and behaving appropriately* (males reported 13% more), *understanding, respecting, and appreciating the differences among others* (males reported 12% more) *develop good decision-making skills* (males reported 12% more) and *dealing with alcohol/drug abuse* (males reported 11% more).

Next, the data for 9th, 10th and 11th grade were disaggregated. The frequencies of average and great need were combined again to determine a percentage of the highest areas of need for each grade level. 9th graders reported their five highest areas of need as *relating my interests and abilities to my future career* (71%), *obtaining information on colleges and technical schools* (71%), *knowing education requirements for a particular occupation* (71%), *tracking my personal progress toward graduation requirements* (59%), and *understanding standardized test scores* (55%). 10th graders reported their five highest areas of need as *knowing education requirements for a particular occupation* (82%), *obtaining information on colleges and technical schools* (77%), *relating my interests and abilities to my future career* (69%), *understanding standardized test scores* (62%), and *obtaining information about financial aid* (56%). 11th graders reported their highest areas of need as *obtaining information on colleges and technical schools* (78%), *obtaining information about financial aid* (68%), *knowing education requirements for a particular occupation* (62%), *having easy access to counselors* (56%), and *relating my interests and abilities to my future career* (56%). The differences within these top five areas among the grade levels is that 9th graders reported greater need for tracking their progress toward graduation requirements, while 10th and 11th graders greater need for information about financial aid. 9th and 10th graders also reported greater need of understanding

standardized test scores than 11th graders. Also, although it was reported as a top five need among the three grade levels, 10th graders reported a much higher need (82%) than 9th (71%) and 11th graders (62%) for knowing education requirements for occupations.

Other notable differences among grade levels on certain items on the survey were also evident. 9th graders reported a need for becoming familiar with counseling services (47%) that was much higher than 10th (21%) and 11th graders (35%). They also reported higher need than 10th and 11th graders (over 8% more) on topics of bullying and peer pressure. 10th graders reported higher need (over 9% more) than 9th and 11th graders on topics of learning study skills and test-taking skills. 11th graders reported higher need (over 9% more) than 9th and 10th graders on the topic of learning about community resources. Further breakdown of the average/great need combined percentages for both gender and grade level can be seen in Appendices B and C.

In summation, both hypotheses were supported. Students did take advantage of the needs assessment by pointing to specific topics they needed more help with. The data also shows that need did differ among gender and grade level. Overall, it seems that students reported the most need in the career and academic domains, while presenting little or no need in the personal/social domain. The results show that, of the top five highest needs, the top 4 were all related to the career domain with the fifth highest mean being academic-related. Of the 13 other questions with means above two, four were career-related, six were academic related and one was personal/social related. The other two dealt with having access to counselors. Furthermore, all five questions with lowest means were related to the personal/social domain. Of the 17 personal/social related questions, only one had a mean above 2 (2.08).

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to conduct research on the counseling needs of a sample of high school students, which represents a void in the counseling literature thus far. Ultimately, the goal of this research was to connect the use of needs assessments and the data they can produce with the future direction of school counseling characterized by the movement towards CSCPs and the ASCA National Model. By the students responding the way they did, both the purpose and goal of this study were accomplished. In the most literal interpretation of the results, the students reported that they want more help with academic and career topics than personal/social topics from their counselors. These are not necessarily results that can be generalized among the greater national population of high school students because every school, and its student population, is so unique. The goal of CSCPs and the ASCA National Model, however, is to take data from needs assessments and other sources and integrate that data into a counseling program to better serve the needs of the student body (ASCA, 2005). Therefore, for this particular school, the students are reporting that they need more help with career and academic related topics. They want more information about colleges, more help relating their interests and abilities to careers, more knowledge regarding graduation requirements and educational occupation requirements. The counselors can use this data to implement and/or redesign services and interventions to better address these topics now. They could create a classroom guidance lesson addressing career exploration, integrate a discussion on graduation requirements into individual planning meetings, or design a group seminar for students struggling with college and/or career choice. None of this would be possible without having the data to inform the counselors' delivery of services.

Nevertheless, it also important to address why there may have been such a discrepancy between domains. First, students may be satisfied with the personal/social services offered by

their counselors and therefore, did not report great need in those areas. Second, the counseling department in which the study was conducted may have been career and academically focused, creating a perception among students that personal/social support was not a priority among the counselors. Third, although, not necessarily supported by research, high school students have traditionally been more concerned with academic and career needs than personal/social needs than other levels like elementary and middle school, and therefore, students responded unequally among the domains. All three interpretations speak to the importance of using needs assessments to not only evaluate student need, but to evaluate the services being offered by the counselors. It is important to interpret the data from many angles in order to improve not only the needs assessment itself, but also to improve the way counselors are informing students of their services.

Gender/Grade Level Needs

The secondary purpose of this study was to shed light on the importance of considering demographics when assessing the needs of students within a CSCP. The results show that males and females generally agreed on their highest needs, but upon closer examination of the results, males reported higher need on certain topics such as help with drug/alcohol abuse, homework, self-control and decision-making, with three of the four being personal/social topics. Therefore, even though students, as a whole, did not show much personal/social need, males showed more need in that area than females. Therefore, disaggregating the data can highlight need that would not be visible otherwise. Furthermore, when examining the results by grade level, notable differences were evident as well. For instance, 9th graders reported more need for help in areas of bullying and peer pressure. 10th graders wanted more help with test-taking and study skills, while 11th graders wanted to know more about community resources. When looking at these differences through a developmental lens, it makes sense that the students reported in such a

way. For example, 10th and 11th graders may exhibit more maturity than 9th graders in dealing with peer pressure and bullying and therefore, may not need as much help. These results provide some insight into the developmental considerations of implementing a CSCP since grade level and gender needs have shown to differ in some respects. Therefore, it is important to note that needs assessments on their own provide an effective glimpse into overall student need, but demographic breakdowns can highlight student needs more specifically.

Limitations

This study only consisted of 151 high school students in grades 9 through 11 in a school consisting of 1600 students. It would be difficult to generalize these findings to the general school's population let alone the general population. Time did not allow for a greater sampling. Furthermore, the school in which this study was conducted did not have a CSCP in place based on the ASCA National Model. The survey that was distributed was adapted to fit the school, but was ultimately based on the ASCA National Model and therefore, reflected the counseling services in which the ASCA National Model promotes. Since the counselors at this school do not have a CSCP in place, the results may have reflected that absence instead of truly measuring what students need. It might have been more beneficial to measure the needs of students at a school where a CSCP was in place to avoid inconsistencies in student perceptions of the role of the school counselor. The survey itself could have been more effective as well. Some of the academic and career questions were more general while many of the personal/social questions dealt with specific topics. This may have contributed to some of the inconsistency in responses among the domains. Furthermore, the survey might have been more effective had it been shorter. Students' interest may have decreased upon discovering the length of the survey.

Implications

Schools with CSCPs have been demonstrated to be effective in contributing to the success of students, especially when compared to schools without CSCPs (Sink and Stroh 2003; Sink, Akos, Turnbull, & Mvududu 2008; Lapan, Gysbers & Sun 1997; Lapan, Gysbers & Petroski 2001). The ASCA National Model has provided counselors with a unified vision for implementing and maintaining CSCPs. Needs assessments and the use of data are considered integral components in the National Model's vision (ASCA, 2005). Therefore, when considering the data that has been presented in this study, it is important to recognize how such data can lay the foundation for a CSCP by allowing a counselor department to gear their services toward student feedback at the outset. The counselors can design interventions specifically addressing each need reported by the students and adapt their program every year based on how the students respond to those services and how they respond to an annual needs assessment. Also, since this study has shown differences in need among demographic groups, it is important to disaggregate data to specifically address gender, grade level, and other demographic factors. Overall, it is essential, in the profession of counseling, to integrate feedback from the client into our services and interventions and needs assessments allow for that feedback. The continuing evolution of the ASCA National Model and CSCPs, in general, depends on the continuing research being conducted by schools throughout the nation. School counselors must continue to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of CSCP frameworks with the ultimate goal of better serving students.

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Appendix A-Overall Means for Each Topic on Survey

Topic	Mean
<i>Information on colleges and technical schools</i>	3
<i>Education requirements for a particular occupation</i>	2.9
<i>Relating my interests/abilities to my future career</i>	2.8
<i>Information about financial aid</i>	2.6
<i>Understanding standardized test scores</i>	2.5
<i>Tracking my personal progress toward graduation requirements</i>	2.5
<i>Knowing graduation requirements</i>	2.4
<i>Having easy access to counselors</i>	2.4
<i>Understanding/using the college/career resource Naviance Family Connection</i>	2.4
<i>Identifying my interests and abilities</i>	2.4
<i>Improving my academic weaknesses</i>	2.3
<i>Improving test-taking skills</i>	2.2
<i>Learning how to manage my time</i>	2.2
<i>Becoming familiar with counseling services</i>	2.1
<i>Learning study skills</i>	2.1
<i>Learning about community resources</i>	2.1
<i>Understanding the balance between school, work and leisure</i>	2
<i>Understanding and accepting my personal strengths and weaknesses</i>	2
<i>How Homework Completion Helps My Future</i>	1.9
<i>Dating and Relationships</i>	1.8
<i>Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation</i>	1.5
<i>Understand Consequences of My Actions</i>	1.7
<i>Alcohol and Drug Abuse</i>	1.4
<i>Home/Family</i>	1.6
<i>Interpersonal Relationships</i>	1.7
<i>How Feelings Affect Schoolwork</i>	1.8
<i>Peer Pressure</i>	1.6
<i>Self-Confidence/Self-Esteem</i>	1.9
<i>Self-Control</i>	1.8
<i>Death/Dying</i>	1.7
<i>Physical Abuse</i>	1.4
<i>Bullying</i>	1.5
<i>Understanding Differences Among Others</i>	1.6
<i>Divorce/Separation</i>	1.4
<i>Suicide</i>	1.7
<i>Dealing with Anger</i>	1.7
<i>Decision-Making Skills</i>	1.8

Appendix B- Gender Frequency Percentages Average/Great Need Combined

Topics	Male Average-Great Need %	Female Average- Great Need %
Familiar with counseling services	37	34
Balance between school, work and leisure	34	31
Colleges and technical schools	79	73
Financial aid	60	56
Standardized test scores	61	47
Study skills	40	32
Goal-setting using strength/weaknesses	42	43
Improving my academic weaknesses	42	44
Time management	42	35
Completing homework	35	15
Knowing graduation requirements	56	47
Progress toward graduation requirements	58	44
Test-taking skills	45	48
Having easy access to counselors	53	49
Identifying interests and abilities	52	41
Relating interests/abilities to future career	66	63
Online college/career resource Naviance	51	45
Education requirements for occupations	73	68
Dating and relationships	19	24
Gender identity / sexual orientation	18	13

Understanding consequences of my actions	29	15
Alcohol and drug abuse	21	9
Home/family situations	21	18
Interpersonal Relationships	18	20
Feelings affect my schoolwork	26	26
Peer Pressure	23	16
Developing self-confidence / self esteem	34	34
Exercising self-control	33	20
Personal strengths/ weaknesses	31	32
Death/dying issues	23	18
Physical and other types of abuse	13	13
Talking about my problems in a small group	18	11
Differences among others	26	14
Community resources	40	34
Divorce/separation issues	18	13
Suicidal issues	11	14
Anger	29	20
Decision-making skills	32	20

Appendix C-Grade Level Frequency Percentages Average/Great Need Combined

Question	9th Average- Great Need %	10th Average- Great Need %	11th Average- Great Need %
Familiar with counseling services	47	21	35
Balance between school, work and leisure	35	33	30
Colleges and technical schools	71	77	78
Financial aid	43	56	68
Standardized test scores	55	62	46
Study skills	37	46	30
Goal-setting using strength/weaknesses	45	41	41
Improving my academic weaknesses	45	51	37
Time management	39	38	38
Completing homework	27	33	19
Knowing graduation requirements	51	46	54
Progress toward graduation requirements	59	44	46
Test-taking skills	45	54	41
Having easy access to counselors	51	44	56

Identifying interests and abilities	49	46	43
Relating interests/abilities to future career	71	69	56
Online college/career resource Naviance	47	46	44
Education requirements for occupations	71	82	62
Dating and relationships	22	26	21
Gender identity / sexual orientation	16	18	13
Understanding consequences of my actions	20	28	17
Alcohol and drug abuse	16	13	13
Home/family situations	24	13	21
Interpersonal Relationships	20	13	24
Feelings affect my schoolwork	22	31	27
Peer Pressure	24	15	16
Developing self-confidence / self esteem	39	36	27
Exercising self-control	27	26	25
Personal strengths/ weaknesses	27	36	33
Death/dying issues	24	10	24
Physical and other types of abuse	12	13	14

Talking about my problems in a small group	20	10	11
Differences among others	18	15	22
Community resources	37	28	43
Divorce/separation issues	15	15	13
Suicidal issues	16	8	13
Anger	31	15	25
Decision-making skills	27	23	22

Appendix C-Needs Assessment Survey

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

High School Students Assessment (Grades 9 – 12)

In an effort to improve our Counseling Program, we need your assistance. By completing this assessment, you will help us understand what is important to you. Please read each item below and circle what most applies to you in terms of your needs from your school counselor. Please place the survey in the envelope when you are finished. **Please do not write your name on the survey.**

	I NEED MORE HELP FROM MY COUNSELOR WITH:	GREAT NEED	AVERAGE NEED	LITTLE NEED	NO NEED AT THIS TIME
1	Becoming familiar with counseling services at this school and how to use them	4	3	2	1
2	Understanding the balance between school, work and leisure	4	3	2	1
3	Obtaining information on colleges and technical schools	4	3	2	1
4	Obtaining information about financial aid	4	3	2	1
5	Understanding standardized test scores	4	3	2	1
6	Learning study skills	4	3	2	1
7	Setting academic goals based on my strength and weaknesses	4	3	2	1
8	Improving my academic weaknesses	4	3	2	1
9	Learning how to manage my time	4	3	2	1
10	Learning how completing my schoolwork will help me in the future	4	3	2	1
11	Knowing graduation requirements	4	3	2	1

12	Tracking my personal progress toward graduation requirements	4	3	2	1
13	Improving test-taking skills	4	3	2	1
14	Having easy access to counselors	4	3	2	1
15	Identifying my interests and abilities	4	3	2	1
16	Relating my interests and abilities to my future career	4	3	2	1
17	Understanding and using the college and career resources on Naviance Family Connection	4	3	2	1
18	Knowing the education requirements for a particular occupation	4	3	2	1
19	Dealing with dating and relationships	4	3	2	1
20	Talking about gender identity / sexual orientation	4	3	2	1
21	Becoming more responsible and understanding of the consequences of my actions	4	3	2	1
22	Locating information and / or help in dealing with alcohol and drug abuse	4	3	2	1
23	Dealing with my home / family situations	4	3	2	1
24	Knowing how to get along better with my friends, family, teachers, and others	4	3	2	1
25	Understanding how my feelings affect my schoolwork	4	3	2	1
26	Dealing with pressure from my peers	4	3	2	1
27	Developing self-confidence / self esteem	4	3	2	1
28	Exercising self-control and behaving appropriately	4	3	2	1
29	Understanding and accepting my personal strengths and weaknesses	4	3	2	1
30	Dealing with death and dying issues	4	3	2	1

31	Talking about physical and other types of abuse	4	3	2	1
32	Talking about my problems in a small group	4	3	2	1
33	Understanding, respecting, and appreciating the differences among others	4	3	2	1
34	Knowing about community resources and how they can help me	4	3	2	1
35	Discussing divorce or separation issues	4	3	2	1
36	Dealing with suicidal issues	4	3	2	1
37	Learning to deal with anger	4	3	2	1
38	Develop good decision-making skills	4	3	2	1

Demographic Questions:

1	Please circle your gender.	Male	Female		
2	Please circle your grade level.	9th	10 th	11 th	