

PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF A HIGH
SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

by

Courtney Quast

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Dr. Amy Schlieve
Investigation Advisor

The Graduate College
University of Wisconsin-Stout
May, 2003

The Graduate College
 University of Wisconsin-Stout
 Menomonie, Wisconsin 54751

ABSTRACT

<u>Quast</u>	<u>Courtney</u>	<u>M.</u>
(Writer) (Last Name)	(First)	(Initial)

Parents' Perceptions of the Role and Function of a High School Guidance Counselor
 (Title)

<u>Guidance and Counseling</u>	<u>Dr. Amy Schlieve</u>	<u>May, 2003</u>
(Graduate Major)	(Research Advisor)	(Date)

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Parents play an integral role in their child's education and are perhaps the most important link between the home and school. Therefore, if a counselor understands parents' perceptions of the role and function of the high school counselor, the counselor can use that to his or her advantage. This understanding will enable the high school counselor to effectively interact, consult, and help the parents become more aware and involved in their child's academic and personal development. As a result, the high school counselor's individual performance in the guidance program will increase, thus increasing the overall performance of delivering the guidance services (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994; Schmidt, 1999).

The purpose of this study was to investigate parents' perceptions of the role and function of a high school guidance counselor. The study attempted to examine the

perceptions parents' have of the role and function of a high school counselor and whether their child's high school counselor is performing these perceived roles and functions.

The results of the study revealed that the majority of the parents surveyed were able to indicate the appropriate roles and functions taken on by a high school counselor. It was also found that the majority of parents surveyed perceived their child's high school counselor as performing these appropriate and necessary duties and responsibilities.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Beginning with the Industrial Revolution in the 1900s, Schmidt (1999) discussed that society's main focus was preparing individuals to become economically successful. In order to adjust, the educational system started to implement guidance programs that not only created momentum for the guidance movement, but also started to define the role and function of a school counselor (Schmidt, 1999). During this period, Wren (cited in Gysbers & Henderson, 1994) detailed four major functions of the professional school counselor: counsel with students; consult with teachers, administrators, and parents; conduct studies that identify the needs of the student body and translate the results to administrators and committee members; and consult with resource people within the school and within the community.

Beginning in the 1940s and continuing until the present, these four functions have continued to be an important part of a professional school counselor's role within the schools. However, many more models, such as Myrick (1993), and contributors to the guidance movement have further refined the role and function of the school counselor (Schmidt, 1999). Overall, these functions provide a general guideline for school counselors, allowing them to perform more specific roles within each function.

Gysbers and Henderson (1994) identified the importance of high school counselors having a clear definition of their responsibilities in order to better establish themselves and define their role within schools. According to Schmidt (1999), when high school counselors know their specific duties within the school, they can work more efficiently and effectively with students, teachers, parents, and administrators in

addressing the needs of the students. Overall, when high school counselors define and state their role and function, they will be able to effectively create and maintain a comprehensive guidance program that meets the needs of the school population (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994).

Consequently, when high school counselors do not define their own role, consumers then define them. Freeman and Coll (1997) stated that giving students, teachers, parents, and administrators the opportunity to shape or define the counselor's role could leave the counselor feeling powerless and unfulfilled in performing their actual duties and responsibilities within the school. This could also leave the high school counselor performing tasks that they are not specifically trained to do (Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, & Marshall, 2001).

It is not only important for high school counselors to identify their own role and function, but it is equally important for high school counselors to identify the perceptions parents have of a high school counselor's role and function. Parents play an integral role in their child's education and are perhaps the most important link between the home and school. Ritchie and Partin (1994) expressed that involving parents and being accessible to them will help encourage a sense of acceptance of the school counselor's responsibilities as well as provide possible benefits including reduction of "parent-child problems, increasing parents self-confidence, increasing the school counselor's knowledge of students' families, reducing students' problems both in and out of school, and forging a stronger home-school alliance" (p. 166). Therefore, if a counselor understands parents' perceptions of the role and function of the high school counselor, the counselor can use that to his or her advantage. This understanding will enable the

high school counselor to effectively interact, consult, and help the parents become more aware and involved in their child's academic and personal development. As a result, the high school counselor's individual performance in the guidance program will increase, thus increasing the overall performance of delivering the guidance services (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994; Schmidt, 1999).

According to Oyaziwo and Imonikhe (2002), administrators and parents have different perceptions and expectations of the role and function of a high school counselor. For instance, principals often assign administrative duties to the high school counselor such as disciplining students and keeping track of absences (Fitch et al., 2001; Schmidt, 1999; Sears & Coy, 1991). Parents often believe the high school counselor performs the stereotypical duties of scheduling, record keeping, and assisting students with career choices (Fitch et al., 2001; Sears & Coy, 1991). Many of these duties, however, have little to do with the actual responsibilities of a high school counselor (Schmidt, 1999). As a result, administrators, parents, and teachers have a different perception of the high school counselor's true role and function within the school (Oyaziwo & Imonikhe, 2002).

According to Partin (1993), the perceptions held by administrators and parents create duties that consume a considerable amount of the school counselor's time and reduces his or her actual role and function within the school. Consequently, many high school counselors are finding a contradiction between their expected duties and their intended role and function (Freeman & Coll, 1997). Instead, they find themselves fulfilling the agendas of the teachers, parents, and administrators rather than effectively serving students' needs.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the role and function of a high school counselor as perceived by parents whose children attend a public high school in central Wisconsin. A survey was given to parents and/or guardians while attending parent-teacher conferences at their child's high school during the Fall of 2002.

Research Questions

This study addressed two questions:

- 1) What do parents perceive as the role and function of a high school counselor?
- 2) Do parents believe their child's high school counselor performs these perceived roles and functions?

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this research, some definitions needed to be further clarified. They are defined here.

Function: The normal or characteristic action that is performed by the high school counselor.

Guidance Program: A developmental, comprehensive, and responsive program aimed at assisting students in their achievement of personal/social, career, and academic capabilities (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994).

Role: An assumed normal or characteristic position that is taken on by the high school counselor.

Assumptions

In preparing the content of this paper, the researcher relied on the following assumptions:

- 1) The researcher assumed that the parents would fill out the survey in an honest and complete way.
- 2) The researcher assumed that the parents would complete the survey in a timely manner.

Limitations

For purposes of this research, a survey was given to parents within a public high school located in central Wisconsin. As a result, this research emphasized that the findings of the survey should not be generalized or made applicable to all parents of high school students. The researcher also understands that the parents' perceptions of the role and function of a high school counselor may differ from time to time and may differ from school district to school district. Finally, the researcher recognized that the parents may fill out the survey in order to please the researcher.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

This chapter will examine the following: influences that aided the evolution of the role and function of a school counselor followed by a description of a high school counselor's role and function. The administrators' perception of the high school counselor and parents' perception and involvement of the high school counselor will also be discussed. This chapter will conclude by addressing the consequences faced by a high school counselor lacking a role definition and suggestions regarding how to define a high school counselor's duties and responsibilities within the school.

Influences in the Evolution of the School Counselor

According to Schmidt (1999), schools in the early 1900s relied on teachers as being the responsible figures in addressing the personal, social, and career assistance that was needed by students. The role and function of a professional school counselor had yet to be developed and implemented within the educational system.

1920s to 1960s

It wasn't until the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the 1920s that the push for guidance counselors emerged in order to address students' needs within schools (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994). During this industrial period, many individuals contributed to the development of the school counseling profession. The work of Frank Parsons, Anna Reed, and Jesse Davis are just a few who gave drive, clarity, and direction to the emergence of the role and function of a school counselor (Schmidt, 1999; Wittmer, 1993). Also during this time, the role and function of the school counselor, specifically the high school counselor, evolved with the main focus of the profession aimed at

providing vocational guidance. Gysbers and Henderson (1994) discussed how business and military testing influenced the need for vocational guidance and as a result, schools started to focus students' attention on vocation and work placements. Hence, the role and function of the high school counselor started evolving.

Also during these decades, schools and school staff, examining the sociological, economical, and psychological change of society, pushed for further change by creating guidance programs (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994; Schmidt, 1999). According to Gysbers and Henderson (1994) and Wittmer (1993), this drive for change was a result of school staff readily observing how their students were affected by the changes in the society, thus experiencing educational and psychological problems. A big influence during these decades was Carl Rogers, the creator of client-centered therapy, which generated the idea of providing individual counseling within the schools (Wittmer, 1993). As a result, the guidance movement at this time tried to create guidance programs that taught children, adolescents, and adults not only different career options and paths, but also programs that taught them about personal relationships and aided in developing their morals and values (Schmidt, 1999).

1960s

As greater awareness of the profession became evident during the 1960s, there was less emphasis placed on vocational and developmental guidance and more emphasis placed on the role and function of school counselors (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994). Gysbers and Henderson (1994) found that the need for role and function definition of the school counselor was necessary due to competitive feelings and miscommunications of other school staff who also sought to appoint their role, function, and selves within the

schools. This competitive response suggested that this new profession lacked clear and specific definitions as to the school counselor's duties and responsibilities.

1970s to 1980s

Following the 1960s, professional literature began clarifying the school counselor's role and function. In his book, *Counseling in Schools: The Essential Services and Comprehensive Programs*, Schmidt (1999) described programmatic and process functions, which assist school counselors in developing comprehensive programs of services. These services include, "defining goals and objectives, assessing student's needs, aligning services within the school's curriculum, coordinating student services, and evaluating results" (p. 17). Direct services provided to students, teachers, and parents included consultation with parents and teachers, group and individual counseling, assessment of students' academic and personal functioning, and assistance to parents (Schmidt, 1999). Overall, many individuals, various guidance models, and existing literature provided input and suggestions regarding the school counselors' role and function.

1990s to Present

According to Gysbers and Henderson (1994), little has been written after the 1980s concerning the duties of school counselors, especially elementary school counselors, despite growth within the profession. This is largely attributed to the constant modification of society's educational, sociological, personal, and economical values. Schools have continued to observe students who have personal needs including social and mental support, researching and exploring different career options, family dynamic struggles, and integration as a contributing member of society (Schmidt, 1999).

Overall, society's changes impact the needs of students, which demand a continuous assessment and refinement of the school counselor's performance within the schools. As a result, Borders (2002) stated that the school counselor's role and function has continued to evolve and "the profession has sought to respond to and keep up with shifting educational philosophies, social movements, economic swings, and federal legislation that have driven the needs for and expectations of school counselors" (p. 181).

A High School Counselor's Role and Function

According to Schmidt (1999), the duties and expectations of the high school counselor continue to evolve, responding to societal changes. In this researcher's opinion, society now seems to be facing even more troubling and complex issues that greatly impact the needs of students. Issues such as family dynamics, violence within the schools, and terrorist attacks have played an integral part in the physical and mental well being of students. Despite this continuous change in students' needs, the high school counselor's main role and function within the school is consulting, coordinating, and counseling (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 1990; Schmidt, 1999), fulfilling specific duties that are tailored among these three roles. Rye and Sparks (1999) stated the specific functions performed by high school counselors include, but are limited to:

Developing accurate self-concept; communication skills; conflict resolution and decision making skills; positive peer relations, family relationships, and other adult relationships; career awareness, exploration, and decision making; course selection and career planning; and personal issues, such as dating, human

sexuality, substance abuse, depression, school phobias, loss of a significant person, pregnancy, suicide, and adjusting to parental divorce. (p. 55)

Administrators' Perception of the High School Counselor's Role and Function

As a result of administrators' perceptions of the high school counselor's role and function and the administrators' needs of the high school counselor, administrators seem to play a very distinct part in how the high school counselor's duties and responsibilities are defined within the school (Fitch, Newby, Ballester, & Marshall, 2001). According to Oyaziwo and Imonikhe (2002), a consequence to the high school counselor's role being viewed differently by administrators, school staff, and other consumers is that administrators are left defining the high school counselor's role and function. In the study conducted by Fitch et al., (2001) it was found that high school counselors are performing many duties that do not appear in published statements of their obligations. Many of these duties, such as scheduling, functioning as a disciplinarian, and performing clerical tasks such as record-keeping, are formed as a result of administration needs and perceptions of the high school counselor's role (Fitch et al., 2001).

Napierkowski and Parsons' (1995) article "Diffusion of Innovation: Implementing Changes in School Counselor Roles and Functions," also found that the high school counselor's role is defined as "quasi-administrator" (p. 365), which includes assisting the principal in administrative tasks, such as keeping records of students and recording tardies, absences, and detentions. As a result, high school counselors continue to find an inconsistency with perceptions held by school staff and feel that the perceived responsibilities and duties of the high school counselor continues to conflict with actual

role and function performed and the overall needs of the students (Freeman & Coll, 1997; Sears and Coy, 1991).

Parents' Perception and Involvement of the High School Counselor's Role and Function

A parent's perception of the high school counselor's role and function within their child's school is highly important and influential. According to research assumptions, parents' perceptions can affect what they expect from a school counselor, thus impacting the services that high school counselors provide to their students. However, there has been limited research done regarding parents' perceptions of the high school counselor.

Schmidt (1999) found that the role and function commonly generalized to high school counselors are to "assist students by providing information about course selections, career opportunities, test results, colleges, and scholarships" (p. 65).

Hutchinson and Bottorff (1986) stated these as the most needed services and found that providing career and vocational guidance is an important role and function taken on by the high school counselor, yet not the only ones a high school counselor should perform.

According to Partin (1993), most parents assume that the high school counselor spend most of his or her time "scheduling, testing, and shuffling papers" (p. 274).

Parents also tend to perceive the high school counselor as that of an assistant principal (Partin, 1993). This role has the high school counselor executing such duties as disciplinarian, record-keeper of absences and tardy, and other clerical tasks (Fitch et al., 2001; Sears & Coy, 1991). According to ASCA (1990; 2002), such administrative duties are unrelated to the standards that are set forth for the high school counselor.

Parents' perceptions also affect parental involvement and awareness of the high school counselor's role and function within the school. Parents are powerful assets to the guidance program, especially when the counselor provides them with the tools to help extend the guidance lessons at home (Perry, 1993). According to Schmidt (1999), it is extremely important for high school counselors to "form a cooperative working relationship with parents and guardians in designing educational programs for students, selecting helping processes and strategies, and making plans for future educational and career directions" (p.179). Therefore, having parents involved and knowledgeable of the schooling process directly benefits themselves and indirectly benefits their child in his or her academic, social, and personal lives.

Yet, Perry (1993) found that some parents are not actively involved and thus do not want to be involved in their child's guidance program. According to Hickson and Baltimore (1998), many parents experience stressful factors such as divorce, working full-time, family concerns, and economic pressures. As a result, the amount of time and energy that they are willing to expend involved and aware of their child's education is limited or non-existent.

One contributor to the lack of parental awareness and involvement that high school counselors' face is the parent being unaware of the services provided by the guidance program. Perry (1993) found that this could be a result of not having a developmental guidance program implemented while they attended high school. Also according to Perry (1993), some parents simply do not want to be involved in any aspect of their child's education. Ultimately, many parents perceive the guidance program and

the school counselor as having little significance in their child's education and do not feel the need to become involved or aware of the services that are provided.

Another contributor to a parent's lack of awareness and involvement is the students' developmental level at this age (Schmidt, 1999). Most high school students are capable of taking on more responsibility regarding their school choices. High school students can make decisions regarding their class schedules, post-secondary opportunities, and different career interests. As a result, most parents leave the decision-making up to their child and the high school counselor. This creates limited awareness, communication, and direct involvement between the parents and high school counselor.

Consequences to the High School Counselor's Lack of Role and Function Definition

Professional literature, models, and contributors to the guidance movement have all attempted to provide a clear definition regarding the duties and expectations of the high school counselor. Yet, Partin's (1993) article, "School Counselor's Time: Where Does It Go?" suggested that high school counselors still do not have a clear understanding as to their specific role and function within the school. As a result, high school counselors have discovered their time and energy being occupied performing duties that are perceived as essential by administrators, school staff, and parents, but not as essential by the high school counselor (Fitch et al., 2001; Partin, 1993). Consequently, Freeman and Coll (1997) explained how this role confusion causes unsatisfied feelings among high school counselors who express frustration about the discrepancies and perceptions that exist regarding the high school counselor's role and function.

Available literature suggests that a major concern for school counselors is individual role confusion. According to Freeman and Coll (1997), the review of literature

and research involving the duties of the high school counselor strongly suggested “this population struggles with role conflict and role ambiguity” (p. 33). O’ Dell and Rak (1996) asserted that the major problem concerning high school counselor’s lack of role and function definition involved the counselor’s own role confusion. Much of this role confusion can be a result of the school counseling profession never clearly defining the counselor’s specific responsibilities within the schools (O’Dell & Rak, 1996; Schmidt, 1999). Therefore, high school counselors have been left defining their own role and function.

The freedom of defining one’s own role and function can be seen as a positive aspect. However, without a specific model to implement concerning the services that should be provided within the school, high school counselors have not been able to state their specific duties (Oyaziwo & Imonikhe, 2002). As a result, differing views among school counselors still exist regarding their responsibilities and how to best utilize their skills and abilities (Burnham & Jackson, 2000). Over time, Freeman and Coll (1997) explained that this lack of specific definition has caused many high school counselors to remain confused as to their actual role within the schools, thus causing them to feel discontent with their performance on the job.

Not only do others’ perceptions force high school counselors to perform duties that are not specifically stated as their role and function within the schools and the ASCA (1990; 2002) guidelines, these perceptions also create time-management problems. In data collected by Partin (1993), he found the majority of high school counselors’ time being occupied by completing paperwork, scheduling, and other clerical tasks rather than performing guidance functions. As a result, high school counselors had less time to

perform other important functions, such as individual and small group counseling and consulting with teachers and parents (Fitch et al., 2001).

Another study conducted by Hutchinson and Bottorff (1986) involving high school students from 21 different states, found that 50 percent of the students received academic counseling and only 20 percent of the students received personal counseling. The results of this study suggested that much of a high school counselor's time was spent completing administrative and other non-related duties, inhibiting their ability to provide essential guidance services to the students.

Redefining the High School Counselor's Role and Function

Borders (2002) stated that it is important for the school counseling profession to recognize how professionals discuss the role and function so that "the profession does not lose sight of the full role, unique skills, and varied contributions that school counselor's bring to their schools" (p. 183). Therefore, many suggestions have been made in order for the high school counselor to better define his or her role and function and to understand administrator and parents' perceptions of their duties and responsibilities.

From the results of their study done on secondary school teachers' and students' perceptions of the role of a high school counselor, Oyaziwo and Imonikhe (2002) listed recommendations to aid high school counselors in refining their role and function within the secondary school. They suggested that high school counselors come to better understand themselves and their responsibilities within the school, therefore enabling themselves to educate students and school staff about the services they offer (Oyaziwo & Imonikhe, 2002). Oyaziwo and Imonikhe (2002) also recommended that high school

counselors be aware of the differing perceptions and viewpoints that are held by students, school staff, and parents so that they are able to serve their students' needs.

In order to measure and observe the high school counselors' own role confusion, Freeman and Coll (1997) designed a 14-item role questionnaire that measures the high school counselor's role ambiguity, role incongruity, and role conflict. They designed this instrument with the belief that when an individual's expected behaviors are "inconsistent, confusing, and conflicted, that person will experience stress, become dissatisfied, and perform less effectively than if the expectations imposed are relatively clear and consistent and do not conflict" (p. 33). As a result of their instrument, high school counselors can then measure their individual role conflict and overcome any likely role struggles they may possess.

Partin (1993) asserted that high school counselors should be affirmative and confident in communicating their role and function to consumers. When high school counselors state their responsibilities, parents, administrators, and school staff will become more aware of the high school counselor's particular role and function within the school and will not use the counselor's time performing clerical tasks (Partin, 1993).

Partin (1993) also suggested that high school counselors keep a daily log to monitor the use of their time and minimize time on less essential activities, such as record keeping and other administrative duties. Therefore, high school counselors can produce written documentation to themselves and to administrators regarding the services they are actually providing to their students (Partin, 1993).

Burnham and Jackson (2000) suggested using a clearly stated model, such as those proposed by Gysbers and Henderson (1994), and Myrick (1993), in order to clarify

and state the specific functions that the high school counselor should be performing. For example, Myrick (1993) provided a model that sets clear guidelines for what services the school counselor should provide in the guidance program and the amount of time the school counselor should spend performing each function. By following a clear and specific model, high school counselors can become more assertive when stating their role and function. They can also control how their time is spent carrying out these functions more easily. Overall, each of these models can provide high school counselors with suggestions for time management, and providing a clear definition of their role and function within the schools.

To aid parents in becoming more aware and involved in the guidance program, Perry (1993) recommended that high school counselors inform parents of new children about the counseling program and the services that are offered. Perry (1993) also found it beneficial to use a needs assessment to understand parent's concerns regarding their child receiving guidance services. This assessment would allow the high school counselor to make decisions regarding the offering of parental support groups, participation in parent volunteer activities, meeting the parents specific needs (Schmidt, 1999). As a result of the needs assessment, high school counselors will be capable of performing the duties which they are trained to do, while simultaneously helping parents become informed and involved.

Summary

Over the decades, a school counselor's role and function has evolved due to the contributions of many individuals, various guidance models, and literature. As a result, the high school counselor's duties and responsibilities shifted from providing vocational guidance to providing developmental guidance (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994; Schmidt, 1999). The shift from vocational to developmental guidance has also been a result of a changing society, which ultimately impacts the needs of students.

However, the high school counselor has lacked a clear and definite role and function definition. Consequently, the lack of role and function definition has permitted administrators and parents to define the high school counselor's duties and responsibilities within the school (Fitch et al., 2001; O' Dell & Rak, 1996; Oyaziwo & Imonikhe, 2002). The administrator and parent perception has resulted in the high school counselor's own role confusion and creates time management issues.

Parents can play an integral part in their child's guidance program. It is important for the high school counselor to have a mutual working relationship with parents in order to help the student benefit academically and socially (Schmidt, 1999). However, many parents are not aware or involved in their child's guidance program, which results in a limited or non-existent relationship with the high school counselor (Perry, 1993).

In order for the high school counselor to refine his or her role and function within the school, many suggestions have been made. One suggestion is to follow a specific model that will help high school counselors set clear guidelines as to their responsibilities and duties within the school and how much time they will spend performing each role and function. In order for the high school counselor to overcome their own role

confusion, it is suggested that high school counselors come to better understand themselves and their responsibilities within the school (Oyaziwo & Imonikhe, 2002). Thus, they will be able to educate the school staff, students and parents the services that are offered.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

This chapter will begin with the subject selection and description, followed by a thorough explanation of the instrumentation used. An overview of the data collection and analysis will be provided. The chapter will conclude with the methodological limitations.

Subject Selection and Description

The population of this study included parents and guardians attending parent-teacher conferences at a public high school located in central Wisconsin. The school district is primarily comprised of Caucasian residents with middle-class socioeconomic status. Both male and female parents were asked to participate in the study.

Instrumentation

The instrument was submitted and approved by the IRB board. A copy of the approval letter can be found in Appendix A.

The instrument used for this study includes a cover letter, which introduces the researcher, explains the intent of the study, and clarifies issues such as confidentiality and the right to withdraw from participating in the study. A copy of the cover letter is located in Appendix B.

The survey portion of the study was designed to be easy and comprehensible. The items were developed using two instruments (DeBauche, 1999; Schutt, Brittingham, Perrone, Bitzing, & Thompson, 1997) and guidelines set forth by ASCA (2002). Both of the instruments and the ASCA (2002) guidelines provided items that would measure parents' perceptions of the role and function of a high school counselor. The researcher tailored the items in order to design an original survey for this study.

The survey consists of two sections. The first section contains twenty-two questions asking the parents to circle YES/ NO, or ? as to their opinion regarding the role and function of the high school counselor. The second section contains twenty-two questions asking the parents to circle YES/ NO, or ? as to their opinion regarding what role and function their child's high school counselor is performing. The survey consists of 44 questions and requires approximately ten minutes to complete. Because the instrument is designed and tailored for this study, there are no measures of validity or reliability provided. The final copy of the survey is located in Appendix C.

Data Collection

The principal, superintendent, and the high school counselor were contacted in order to gain their consent and approval to carry out this study. The surveys were distributed as parents attended parent-teacher conferences during the Fall semester of 2002. The researcher selected male and female parents as they approached the building and asked them to fill out the survey. The researcher asked the parents to read the cover letter before completing the survey. The survey was retrieved immediately, or as the subjects were leaving the building. One hundred and twelve surveys were distributed to parents who attended the parent-teacher conference. One hundred and two were retrieved.

Data Analysis

All appropriate descriptive statistics were run on the data. Since all of the data collected was nominal, the mode, percentages, and frequencies were appropriate.

Limitations

Due to the researcher tailoring items belonging to two other surveys, a limitation to this study was the instrument used has no reliability or validity measures. Also, the researcher realized that this instrument has been used on parents whose children attend a high school in central Wisconsin. Therefore, the results of this survey should not be generalized to parents whose children attend other high schools in other districts.

Another limitation of this instrument was that it only measured opinions of the parents attending parent-teacher conferences and missed those who were not able to attend.

Finally, the researcher realized that the parents could have filled out the survey in order to please the researcher.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

This chapter will include the results of the study concerning parents' perceptions of the role and function of a high school counselor and whether their child's high school counselor is performing these functions. The research questions under investigation will be stated along with a brief discussion of the results. The chapter will conclude with tables comparing a high school counselor's perceived role and function and the role and function provided.

Research Questions

Research Question #1: What do parents perceive as the role and function of a high school counselor?

Survey Item #1: Provide individual counseling.

One hundred and two of 102 respondents, 98% (n = 100) reported Yes, 1.0% (n = 1) reported No, and 1.0% (n = 1) reported No Opinion that providing individual counseling is a high school counselor's role and function.

Survey Item #2: Provide group counseling (Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Awareness, self-esteem, divorce groups, etc.).

For this item, 101 of 102 parents responded. Of those respondents, 79.2% (n = 80) reported Yes, 15.8% (n = 16), reported No, and 5.0% (n = 5) reported No Opinion that providing group counseling is a high school counselor's role and function.

Survey Item #3: Aide in the transition of students into high school.

One hundred and two out of 102 parents surveyed, 95.1% (n = 97), indicated Yes, 2.9% (n = 3) reported No, and 2.0% (n = 2) reported No Opinion that aiding in the transition of students into high school is a high school counselor's role and function.

Survey Item #4: Work with teachers in order to help students with academic challenges.

For this item, 101 out of 102 parents responded. Of those respondents, 85.1% (n = 86) indicated that working with teachers in order to help students with academic challenges is a high school counselor's role and function while 8.9% (n = 9) reported No, and 5.9% (n = 6) stated No Opinion.

Survey Item #5: Work with teachers in order to help students with personal issues.

One hundred and two out of 102 parents surveyed, 83.3% (n = 85) reported Yes, 10.8% (n = 11) reported No, and 5.9% (n = 6) reported No Opinion that working with teachers in order to help students with personal issues is a high school counselor's role and function.

Survey Item #6: Counsel individual students who are academically challenged.

One hundred and two out of 102 parents surveyed, 66.7% (n = 68) stated Yes, 20.6% (n = 21) reported No, 12.7% (n = 13) indicated No Opinion that counseling individual students who are academically challenged is a high school counselor's role and function.

Survey Item #7: Counsel individual students who are struggling with personal issues.

One hundred and two out of 102 parents surveyed, 87.3% (n = 89) reported Yes, 10.8% (n = 11) reported No, and 2.0% (n = 2) reported No Opinion that counseling individual students who are struggling with personal issues is a high school counselor's role and function.

Survey Item #8: Collaborate with student's parents or guardians.

One hundred and two out of 102 parents surveyed, 94.1% (n = 96) indicated that collaborating with students' parents or guardians is a high school counselor's role and function, 3.9% (n = 4) reported No, and 2.0% (n = 2) stated No Opinion.

Survey Item #9: Collaborate with other school staff to develop an appropriate guidance program.

One hundred and one out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 87.1% (n = 88) reported Yes, 4.0% (n = 4) reported No, and 8.9% (n = 9) that collaborating with other school staff to develop an appropriate guidance program is a high school counselor's role and function.

Survey Item #10: Educate students about the world of work.

One hundred and one out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 73.3% (n = 74) reported Yes, 16.8% (n = 17) reported No, and 9.9% (n = 10) reported No opinion that educating students about the world of work is a high school counselor's role and function.

Survey Item #11: Give assessments and tests (career inventories, ACT, SAT, etc.).

One hundred and two out of 102 parents surveyed, 65.7% (n = 67) indicated that giving assessments and tests is a high school counselor's role and function, while 21.6% (n = 22) reported No, and 12.7% (n = 13) stated No Opinion.

Survey Item #12: Promote students' personal growth and development.

One hundred out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 72.0% (n = 72) indicated Yes, 16.0% (n = 16) reported No, and 12.0% (n = 12) stated No Opinion that promoting students' personal growth and development is a high school counselor's role and function.

Survey Item #13: Teach decision-making skills.

One hundred and one out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the 101 respondents, 52.5% (n = 53) stated that teaching decision-making skills is a high school counselor's role and function while 33.7% (n = 34) reported No, and 13.9% (n = 14) indicated No Opinion.

Survey Item #14: Help students explore career interests.

One hundred and two out of 102 parents surveyed, 98.0% (n = 100) reported Yes, 1.0% (n = 1) reported No, and 1.0% (n = 1) reported No Opinion that helping students explore career interests is a high school counselor's role and function.

Survey Item #15: Provide information on financial aid, grants, loans, or scholarships.

One hundred and one out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 98.0% (n = 100) reported Yes and 1.0% (n = 1) reported No that providing information on financial aid, grants, loans, or scholarships is a high school counselor's role and function.

Survey Item #16: Provide information on post-secondary education opportunities.

One hundred and two out of 102 parents surveyed, 93.1% (n = 95) indicated that providing information on post-secondary education opportunities is a high school counselor's role and function while 3.9% (n = 4) reported No, and 2.9% (n = 3) stated No Opinion.

Survey Item #17: Provide crisis intervention.

One hundred and one out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 70.3% (n = 71) reported Yes, 19.8% (n = 20) reported No, and 9.9% (n = 10) reported No Opinion that providing crisis intervention is a high school counselor's role and function.

Survey Item #18: Provide Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Awareness (A.T.O.D.A.).

One hundred out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 62.0% (n = 62) reported Yes, 24.0% (n = 24) indicated No, and 14.0% (n = 14) stated No Opinion that providing Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Awareness is a high school counselor's role and function.

Survey Item #19: Provide programs for parents.

One hundred out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 42.0% (n = 42) indicated that providing programs for parents is a high school counselor's role and function while 38.0% (n = 38) reported No, and 20.0% (n = 20) stated No Opinion.

Survey Item #20: Monitor academic progress, credit total, graduation requirements, and communicate this information to students, parents, and teachers.

One hundred and two out of 102 parents surveyed, 87.3% (n = 89) reported Yes, 10.8% (n = 11) reported No, and 2.0% (n = 2) reported No Opinion that monitoring academic progress, credit total, graduation requirements, and communicating this information to students, parents, and teachers is a high school counselor's role and function.

Survey Item #21: Help with administrative duties (bus duty, office duties, etc.).

One hundred and two out of 102 parents surveyed, 9.8% (n = 10) stated that helping with administrative duties is a high school counselor's role and function while 72.5% (n = 74) reported No, and 17.6% (n = 18) stated No Opinion.

Survey Item #22: Work closely with resources within the community.

One hundred out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 71.0% (n = 71) reported Yes, 11.0% (n = 11) reported No, and 18.0% (n = 18) reported No Opinion that working closely with resources within the community is a high school counselor's role and function.

Summary

According to the results of the survey items, the data suggests that the majority of the parents were able to indicate the appropriate role and functions performed by a high school counselor. However, for survey item number 19, the data indicates that parents were unable to respond as to whether providing programs for parents is a high school counselor's role and function.

Research Question #2: Do parents believe their child's high school counselor performs these perceived roles and functions?

Survey Item #1: Provide individual counseling.

One hundred out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 79.0% (n = 79) stated Yes, 10.0% (n = 10) stated No, and 11.0% (n = 11) stated No Opinion that their child's high school counselor provides individual counseling.

Survey Item #2: Provide group counseling (Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Awareness, self-esteem, divorce groups, etc.).

Ninety-eight out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 43.9% (n = 43) indicated Yes, 31.6% (n = 31) reported No, and 24.5% (n = 24) stated No Opinion that their child's high school counselor provides group counseling.

Survey Item #3: Aide in the transition of students into high school.

Ninety-nine out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 65.7% (n = 65) indicated that their child's high school counselor provides aide in the transition of students into high school while 15.2% (n = 15) reported No, and 19.2% (n = 19) stated No Opinion.

Survey Item #4: Work with teachers in order to help students with academic challenges.

One hundred out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 52.0% (n = 52) reported Yes, 16.0% (n = 16) indicated No, and 32.0% (n = 32) stated No Opinion that their child's high school counselor works with teachers in order to help students with academic challenges.

Survey Item #5: Work with teachers in order to help students with personal issues.

One hundred out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 55.0% (n = 55) indicated that their child's high school counselor works with teachers in order to help students with personal issues while 13.0% (n = 13) reported No, and 32.0% (n = 32) stated No Opinion.

Survey Item #6: Counsel individual students who are academically challenged.

One hundred out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 48.0% (n = 48) reported Yes, 13.0% (n = 13) indicated No, and 39.0% (n = 39) stated No Opinion that their child's high school counselor counsels individual students who are academically challenged.

Survey Item #7: Counsel individual students who are struggling with personal issues.

One hundred out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 56.0% (n = 56) indicated that their child's high school counselor counsels individual students who are struggling with personal issues while 14.0% (n = 14) reported No, and 30.0% (n = 30) stated No Opinion.

Survey Item #8: Collaborate with student's parents or guardians.

One hundred out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 58.0% (n = 58) reported that their child's high school counselor collaborates with students' parents or guardians while 14.0% (n = 14) reported No, and 28.0% (n = 28) reported No Opinion.

Survey Item #9: Collaborate with other school staff to develop an appropriate guidance program.

Ninety-nine parents out of 102 responded to this item. Of the respondents, 50.5% (n = 50) reported Yes, 9.1% (n = 9) stated No, and 40.4% (n = 40) indicated No Opinion that their child's high school counselor collaborates with other school staff to develop an appropriate guidance program.

Survey Item #10: Educate students about the world of work.

Ninety-eight out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 55.1% (n = 54) indicated that their child's high school counselor educates students about the world of work while 17.3% (n = 17) reported No, and 27.6% (n = 27) stated No Opinion.

Survey Item #11: Give assessments and tests (career inventories, ACT, SAT, etc.).

One hundred out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 61.0% (n = 61) reported Yes, 15.0% (n = 15) reported No, and 24.0% (n = 24) reported No Opinion that their child's high school counselor gives assessments and tests.

Survey Item #12: Promote students' personal growth and development.

Ninety-nine out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 56.6% (n = 56) indicated that their child's high school counselor promotes students' personal growth and development while 15.2% (n = 15) reported No, and 28.3% (n = 28) stated No Opinion.

Survey Item #13: Teach decision-making skills.

Ninety-eight out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 32.7% (n = 32) indicated Yes, 22.4% (n = 22) reported No, and 44.9% (n = 44) stated No opinion that their child's high school counselor teaches decision-making skills.

Survey Item #14: Help students explore career interests.

Ninety-nine out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 73.7% (n = 73) indicated that their child's high school counselor helps students explore career interests while 8.1% (n = 8) reported No, and 18.2% (n = 18) stated No Opinion.

Survey Item #15: Provide information on financial aid, grants, loans, or scholarships.

Ninety-nine out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 80.8% (n = 80) indicated Yes, 4.0% (n = 4) stated No, and 15.2% (n = 15) reported No Opinion that their child's high school counselor provides information on financial aid, grants, loans, or scholarships.

Survey Item #16: Provide information on post-secondary education opportunities.

Ninety-eight out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 73.5% (n = 72) indicated that their child's high school counselor provides information on post-secondary education opportunities while 5.1% (n = 5) stated No, and 21.4% (n = 21) reported No Opinion.

Survey Item #17: Provide crisis intervention.

One hundred out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 45.0% (n = 45) reported that their child's high school counselor provides crisis intervention while 12.0% (n = 12) stated No, and 43.0% (n = 43) indicated No Opinion.

Survey Item #18: Provide Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Awareness (A.T.O.D.A.).

Ninety-nine out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 44.4% (n = 44) reported Yes, 18.2% (n = 18) stated No, and 37.4% (n = 37) indicated No Opinion that their child's high school counselor provides Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Awareness.

Survey Item #19: Provide programs for parents.

One hundred out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 22.0% (n = 22) indicated that their child's high school counselor provides programs for parents while 34.0% (n = 34) reported No, and 44.0% (n = 44) stated No Opinion.

Survey Item #20: Monitor academic progress, credit total, graduation requirements, and communicate this information to students, parents, and teachers.

One hundred out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 61.0% (n = 61) reported Yes, 9.0% (n = 9) stated No, and 30.0% (n = 30) indicated No Opinion that their child's high school counselor monitors academic progress, credit total, graduation requirements, and communicates this information to students, parents, and teachers.

Survey Item #21: Help with administrative duties (bus duty, office duties, etc.).

Ninety-nine out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 16.2% (n = 16) reported that their child's high school counselor helps with administrative duties while 31.3% (n = 31) stated No, and 52.5% (n = 52) indicated reported No Opinion.

Survey Item #22: Work closely with resources within the community.

Ninety-eight out of 102 parents responded to this item. Of the respondents, 26.5% (n = 26) reported Yes, 21.4% (n = 21) stated No, and 52.0% (n = 51) indicated No Opinion as to whether their child's high school counselor works closely with resources within the community.

Summary

According to the results of the survey items, the data suggests that over 70% of the responding parents found their child's high school counselor performing the appropriate services within the high school. However, the data did not indicate a strong majority, which would suggest that the parents do not perceive their child's high school counselor as performing the necessary duties and responsibilities within the school.

Also, for some of the survey items, the data indicates that parents were unable to respond as to whether their child's high school counselor was providing the appropriate services. This would imply that the parents are relatively unaware as to whether their child's high school counselor is performing these roles and functions.

Table 1: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether providing individual counseling is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is providing individual counseling.

<u>Survey Item #1: Provide Individual Counseling</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	100	98.0%	79	79.0%
No	1	1.0%	10	10.0%
No Opinion	1	1.0%	11	11.0%
Total	102	100.0%	100	100.0%

According to Table 1, the majority of the parents indicated that providing individual counseling is a high school counselor's role and function and their child's high school counselor is providing individual counseling.

Table 2: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether providing group counseling is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is providing group counseling.

<u>Survey Item #2: Provide Group Counseling</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	80	79.2%	43	43.9%
No	16	15.8%	31	31.6%
No Opinion	5	5.0%	24	25.4%
Total	101	100.0%	98	100.0%

According to Table 2, the majority of the parents indicated that providing group counseling is a high school counselor's role and function and that their child's high school counselor is providing group counseling.

Table 3: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether aiding in transition of students into high school is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is aiding in the transition of students into high school.

<u>Survey Item #3: Aide in the Transition of Students into High School</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	97	95.1%	65	65.7%
No	3	2.9%	15	15.2%
No Opinion	2	2.0%	19	19.2%
Total	102	100.0%	99	100.0%

According to Table 3, the majority of the parents indicated that aiding in the transition of students into high school is a high school counselor's role and function and that their child's high school counselor is aiding in the transition of students into high school.

Table 4: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether working with teachers in order to help students with academic challenges is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is working with teachers in order to help students with academic challenges.

<u>Survey Item #4: Work with Teachers in Order to Help Students with Academic Challenges</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	86	85.1%	52	52.0%
No	9	8.9%	16	16.0%
No Opinion	6	5.9%	32	32.0%
Total	101	100.0%	100	100.0%

According to Table 4, the majority of the parents indicated that working with teachers in order to help students with academic challenges is a high school counselor's role and function and that their child's high school counselor is working with teachers in order to help students with academic challenges.

Table 5: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether working with teachers in order to help students with personal issues is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is working with teachers in order to help students with personal issues.

<u>Survey Item #5: Work with Teachers in Order to Help Students with Personal Issues</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	85	83.3%	55	55.0%
No	11	10.8%	13	13.0%
No Opinion	6	5.9%	32	32.0%
Total	102	100.0%	100	100.0%

According to Table 5, the majority of the parents indicated that working with teachers in order to help students with personal issues is a high school counselor's role and function and that their child's high school counselor is working with teachers in order to help students with personal issues.

Table 6: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether counseling individual students who are academically challenged is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is counseling students who are academically challenged.

<u>Survey Item #6: Counsel Individual Students who are Academically Challenged</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	68	66.7%	48	48.0%
No	21	20.6%	13	13.0%
No Opinion	13	12.7%	39	39.0%
Total	102	100.0%	100	100.0%

According to Table 6, the majority of the parents indicated that counseling individual students who are academically challenged is a high school counselor's role and function. However, 48.0% of the parents surveyed indicated that their child's high school counselor is counseling individual students who are academically challenged.

Table 7: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether counseling individual students who are struggling with personal issues is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is counseling individual students who are struggling with personal issues.

<u>Survey Item #7: Counsel Individual Students who are Struggling with Personal Issues</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	89	87.3%	56	56.0%
No	11	10.8%	14	14.0%
No Opinion	2	2.0%	30	30.0%
Total	102	100.0%	100	100.0%

According to Table 7, the majority of the parents indicated that counseling individual students who are struggling with personal issues is a high school counselor's role and function and that their child's high school counselor is counseling individual students who are struggling with personal issues.

Table 8: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether collaborating with student's parents or guardians is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is collaborating with student's parents or guardians.

<u>Survey Item #8: Collaborate with Student's Parents or Guardians</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	96	94.1%	58	58.0%
No	4	3.9%	14	14.0%
No Opinion	2	2.0%	28	28.0%
Total	102	100.0%	100	100.0%

According to Table 8, the majority of the parents indicated that collaborating with student's parents and guardians is a high school counselor's role and function and that their child's high school counselor is collaborating with student's parents and guardians.

Table 9: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether collaborating with other school staff to develop an appropriate guidance program is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is collaborating with other school staff to develop an appropriate guidance program.

<u>Survey Item #9: Collaborate with other School Staff to Develop an Appropriate Guidance Program</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	88	87.1%	50	50.5%
No	4	4.0%	9	9.1%
No Opinion	9	8.9%	40	40.4%
Total	101	100.0%	99	100.0%

According to Table 9, the majority of the parents indicated that collaborating with other school staff to develop an appropriate guidance program is a high school counselor's role and function. However, 50.5% of the parents surveyed indicated that their child's high school counselor is collaborating with other school staff to develop a guidance program.

Table 10: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether educating students about the world of work is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is educating students about the world of work.

<u>Survey Item #10: Educate Students about the World of Work</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	74	73.3%	54	55.1%
No	17	16.8%	17	17.3%
No Opinion	10	9.9%	27	27.6%
Total	101	100.0%	98	100.0%

According to Table 10, the majority of the parents indicated that educating students about the world is a high school counselor's role and function and that their child's high school counselor is educating students about the world of work.

Table 11: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether giving assessments and tests is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is giving assessments and tests.

<u>Survey Item #11: Give Assessments and Tests (career inventories)</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	67	65.7%	61	61.0%
No	22	21.6%	15	15.0%
No Opinion	13	12.7%	24	24.0%
Total	102	100.0%	100	100.0%

According to Table 11, the majority of the parents indicated that giving assessments and tests is a high school counselor's role and function and that their child's high school counselor is giving assessments and tests.

Table 12: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether promoting students' personal growth and development is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is promoting students' personal growth and development.

<u>Survey Item #12: Promote Students' Personal Growth and Development</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	72	72.0%	56	56.6%
No	16	16.0%	15	15.2%
No Opinion	12	12.0%	28	28.3%
Total	100	100.0%	99	100.0%

According to Table 12, the majority of the parents indicated that promoting students' personal growth and development is a high school counselor's role and function and that their child's high school counselor is promoting students' personal growth and development.

Table 13: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether teaching decision-making skills is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is teaching decision-making skills.

<u>Survey Item #13: Teach Decision-Making Skills</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	53	52.5%	32	32.7%
No	34	33.7%	22	22.4%
No Opinion	14	13.9%	44	44.9%
Total	101	100.0%	98	100.0%

According to Table 13, 52.5% of the parents surveyed indicated that teaching decision-making skills is a high school counselor's role and function. However, only 32.7% stated that their child's high school counselor is teaching decision-making skills.

Table 14: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether helping students explore career interests is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is helping students explore career interests.

<u>Survey Item #14: Helping Students Explore Career Interests</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	100	98.0%	73	73.7%
No	1	1.0%	8	8.1%
No Opinion	1	1.0%	18	18.2%
Total	102	100.0%	99	100.0%

According to Table 14, the majority of the parents indicated that helping students explore career interests is a high school counselor's role and function and that their child's high school counselor is helping students explore career interests.

Table 15: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether providing information on financial aid, grants, loans, or scholarships is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is providing information on financial aid, grants, loans, or scholarships.

<u>Survey Item #15: Provide Information on Financial Aid, Grants, Loans, or Scholarships</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	100	99.0%	80	80.8%
No	1	1.0%	4	4.0%
No Opinion			15	15.2%
Total	101	100.0%	99	100.0%

According to Table 15, the majority of the parents indicated that providing information on financial aid, grants, loans, or scholarships is a high school counselor's role and function and that their child's high school counselor is providing information on financial aid, grants, loans, or scholarships.

Table 16: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether providing information on post-secondary education opportunities is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is providing information on post-secondary education opportunities.

<u>Survey Item #16: Provide Information on Post-Secondary Education Opportunities</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	95	93.1%	72	73.5%
No	4	3.9%	5	5.1%
No Opinion	3	2.9%	21	21.4%
Total	102	100.0%	98	100.0%

According to Table 16, the majority of the parents indicated that providing information on post-secondary education opportunities is a high school counselor's role and function and that their child's high school counselor is providing information on post-secondary education opportunities.

Table 17: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether providing crisis intervention is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is providing crisis intervention.

<u>Survey Item #17: Provide Crisis Intervention</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	71	70.3%	45	45.0%
No	20	19.8%	12	12.0%
No Opinion	10	9.9%	43	43.0%
Total	101	100.0%	100	100.0%

According to Table 17, the majority of the parents indicated that providing crisis intervention is a high school counselor's role and function. However, 45.0% of the parents surveyed indicated that their child's high school counselor is providing crisis intervention.

Table 18: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether providing Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Awareness (A.T.O.D.A) is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is providing Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Awareness (A.T.O.D.A).

<u>Survey Item #18: Provide Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Awareness</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	62	62.0%	44	44.4%
No	24	24.0%	18	18.2%
No Opinion	14	14.0%	37	37.4%
Total	100	100.0%	99	100.0%

According to Table 18, the majority of the parents indicated that providing Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Awareness (A.T.O.D.A) is a high school counselor's role and function. However, 44.4% of the parents surveyed stated that their child's high school counselor is providing Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Awareness.

Table 19: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether providing programs for parents is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is providing programs for parents.

<u>Survey Item #19: Provide Programs for Parents</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	42	42.0%	22	22.0%
No	38	38.0%	34	34.0%
No Opinion	20	20.0%	44	44.0%
Total	100	100.0%	100	100.0%

According to Table 19, 42.0% of the parents surveyed indicated that providing programs for parents is a high school counselor's role and function. Only 22.0% of the parents surveyed stated that their child's high school counselor is providing programs for parents.

Table 20: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether monitoring academic progress, credit total, graduation requirements, and communicating this information to students, parents, and teachers is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is monitoring academic progress, credit total, graduation requirements, and communicating this information to students, parents, and teachers.

<u>Survey Item #20: Monitor Academic Progress, Credit Total, Graduation Requirements, and Communicate this Information to Students, Parents, and Teachers</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	89	87.3%	61	61.0%
No	11	10.8%	9	9.0%
No Opinion	2	2.0%	30	30.0%
Total	102	100.0%	100	100.0%

According to Table 20, the majority of the parents indicated that monitoring academic progress, credit total, graduation requirements, and communicating this information to students, parents, and teachers is a high school counselor's role and function. The majority of parents also stated that their child's high school counselor is monitoring academic progress, credit total, graduation requirements, and communicating this information to students, parents, and teachers.

Table 21: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether helping with administrative duties is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is helping with administrative duties.

<u>Survey Item #21: Help with Administrative Duties (bus duty, office duties, ect.)</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	10	9.8%	16	16.2%
No	74	72.5%	31	31.3%
No Opinion	18	17.6%	52	52.5%
Total	102	100.0%	99	100.0%

According to Table 21, 9.8% of the parents surveyed indicated that helping with administrative duties is a high school counselor's role and function and only 16.2% of the parents surveyed stated that their child's high school counselor is helping with administrative duties.

Table 22: Comparison of Role and Function and Role and Function Provided

This table compares the frequency and percents between parents' opinions of whether working closely with resources within the community is a high school counselor's role and function and if their child's high school counselor is working closely with resources within the community.

<u>Survey Item #22: Work Closely with Resources within the Community</u>	<u>High School Counselor's Role and Function</u>		<u>Role and Function Provided</u>	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	71	71.0%	26	26.5%
No	11	11.0%	21	21.4%
No Opinion	18	18.0%	51	52.0%
Total	100	100.0%	98	100.0%

According to Table 22, the majority of the parents indicated that working closely with resources within the community is a high school counselor's role and function. However, only 26.5% of the parents surveyed stated that their child's high school counselor is working closely with resources within the community.

Summary

According to the data provided in the tables, the majority of parents who identified the appropriate roles and functions of a high school counselor also found their child's high school counselor performing these same roles and functions. However, the comparisons made in tables 6, 9, 13, 17, 18, 19, and 22 indicated that the majority of parents who identified the high school counselor's appropriate roles and functions did not believe that their child's high school counselor was performing these roles and functions.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

This chapter will include a brief discussion and conclusion of the study's findings. This chapter will end with recommendations for further study.

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine parents' perceptions of the role and function of a high school counselor within a central Wisconsin high school. This study also examined whether parents perceived their child's high school counselor as performing these necessary roles and functions within the school. It is important for a high school counselor to be aware of and understand the perception parents' have of their duties and responsibilities within the school. This awareness and understanding will enable the high school counselor to effectively interact, consult, and help the parents become more aware and involved in their child's academic and personal development. As a result, the needs of each individual student will be better met. Also, the high school counselor's individual performance in the guidance program will increase, thus increasing the overall performance of delivering the guidance services (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994; Schmidt, 1999).

The review of literature portrayed the high school counselor as performing stereotypical duties, such as scheduling and post-secondary information, which are important and essential functions of the high school counselor, but should not be the only duties performed. Thus, parents tend to perceive the high school counselor as solely performing these functions. Many parents continue to be unaware of the high school

counselor's many roles and functions within the school that aid in their child's academic and social growth.

Based on the results of this study, the majority of parents perceived a high school counselor as performing the appropriate and essential roles and functions within the school. Also, this study found that the majority of parents perceived their child's high school counselor as performing these necessary duties and responsibilities. However, only 1/3 of the parents surveyed were able to indicate whether their child's high school counselor was performing the necessary duties and responsibilities within the school. This was evident in seven of the survey items, which the majority of parents did not perceive their child's high school counselor as performing these duties and responsibilities within the school. This would suggest that either the high school counselor within this specific district is not performing these seven necessary duties within the school, or the parents are simply unaware of the counselor's performance regarding the delivery of these services.

Recommendations for Further Study

Consequently, there is still a need for the high school counselor to further educate parents about the counselor's responsibilities in order to improve the delivery of guidance services within the school. In addition, there is limited research concerning parents' perception of the high school counselor. Therefore, further research needs to be done in order to gain insight and awareness of parents' perceptions. This insight can aid the counselor in educating parents regarding the services provided to their child. It can also aid the high school counselor when consulting and interacting with the parents in order to help their child's academic, personal, and social growth.

A recommendation for further study would be to replicate this study using more survey items that are not a high school counselor's role and function. This would allow for a more throughout assessment of the parents' perceptions. Another recommendation would be to conduct a study comparing parents' perceptions from two different high schools within two different districts. This would allow the researcher to examine the perceptions parents have from different districts, and to investigate the different roles and functions high school counselors perform from district to district.

A recommendation for this specific school district is for the high school counselor to use the study's data in order to be aware of the perceptions parents have regarding his or her role and function within the school. Thus, the counselor can educate the parents about the services that are provided to them and their child. Also, the high school counselor can analyze the data and use it to evaluate his or her performance in delivering these essential functions within the high school.

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Appendix A

Date: October 21, 2002

To: Courtney Quast

cc: Dr. Amy Schlieve
School Psychology

From: Sue Foxwell, Research Administrator and Human
Protections Administrator, UW-Stout Institutional
Review Board for the Protection of Human
Subjects in Research

Subject: Protection of Human Subjects--Expedited Review

Your project, "Parents Perceptions of the Role and Function of the High School Counselor," has been approved by the IRB through the expedited review process. The measures you have taken to protect human subjects are adequate to protect everyone involved, including subjects and researchers.

Research not completed within one year of the IRB approval date must be submitted again outlining changes, expansions, etc. to the research. Annual review and approval by the IRB is required.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB and good luck with your project.

SF:ml

Appexdix B

Dear Parents:

My name is Courtney Quast, and I am a graduate student in the Guidance and Counseling Masters program at UW-Stout. I am conducting a study for my written thesis, which is "Parent's Perceptions of the Role and Function of a High School Guidance Counselor."

I would appreciate your time and effort in filling out this survey and placing it in the manila envelope.

In filling out and returning this survey, you give your consent in providing the information necessary for this study. Though the information will be helpful in the research of this topic, your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from this study at any time and can participate in some, none, or all of the survey. The risks in participation of this type are minimal compared to the benefits of your response and your response will be treated in a confidential manner.

Questions or concerns about the research study can be addressed to any or all of the following individuals:

Courtney Quast, 221 10th Avenue, Menomonie WI. 54751
(715) 232-1747

Amy Schlieve, my research advisor (715) 232-1332

Sue Foxwell, Human Protections Administrator,
UW-Stout Institutional Review Board
for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research,
11 Harvey Hall,
Menomonie, WI, 54751
(715) 232-1126.

Thank you again for your consideration and participation in this study.

Sincerely,

Courtney Quast

Appendix C

School Counseling Survey

The purpose of this survey is to acquire information as to **what you view as the role and function of a high school counselor**. It will also ask your opinion concerning what your child's high school guidance program provides. The results of this survey will help your child's school counselor in future planning of services and programs and in modifying and strengthening guidance services. Your input and suggestions will be kept strictly confidential. Thank you for your time!

Please **CIRCLE** the response that best reflects your opinion using the following choices:

Y=YES, N=NO, ?=NO OPINION.

In your opinion, a high school counselor's role and function is to:

1. Y N ? Provide individual counseling.
2. Y N ? Provide group counseling (Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Awareness, self-esteem, divorce groups, etc.).
3. Y N ? Aid in the transition of students into high school.
4. Y N ? Work with teachers in order to help students with academic challenges.
5. Y N ? Work with teachers in order to help students with personal issues.
6. Y N ? Counsel individual students who are academically challenged.
7. Y N ? Counsel individual students who are struggling with personal issues.
8. Y N ? Collaborate with student's parents or guardians.
9. Y N ? Collaborate with other school staff to develop an appropriate guidance program.
10. Y N ? Educate students about the world of work.
11. Y N ? Give assessments and tests (career inventories, ACT, SAT, etc.).
12. Y N ? Promote student's personal growth and development.
13. Y N ? Teach decision-making skills.
14. Y N ? Help students explore career interests.
15. Y N ? Provide information on financial aid, grants, loans, or scholarships.
16. Y N ? Provide information on post-secondary education opportunities.
17. Y N ? Provide crisis intervention.

18. Y N ? Provide Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Awareness (A.T.O.D.A.).
19. Y N ? Provide programs for parents.
20. Y N ? Monitor academic progress, credit total, graduation requirements, and communicate this information to students, parents, and teachers.
21. Y N ? Help with administrative duties (bus duty, office duties, etc.).
22. Y N ? Work closely with resources within the community.

Please **CIRCLE** the response that best reflects your opinion using the following choices:
Y=YES, N=NO, ?=NO OPINION.

In your opinion, your child's high school guidance program does:

1. Y N ? Provide individual counseling.
2. Y N ? Provide group counseling (Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Awareness, self-esteem, divorce groups, etc.).
3. Y N ? Aid in the transition of students into high school.
4. Y N ? Work with teachers in order to help students with academic challenges.
5. Y N ? Work with teachers in order to help students with personal issues.
6. Y N ? Counsel individual students who are academically challenged.
7. Y N ? Counsel individual students who are struggling with personal issues.
8. Y N ? Collaborate with student's parents or guardians.
9. Y N ? Collaborate with other school staff to develop an appropriate guidance program.
10. Y N ? Educate students about the world of work.
11. Y N ? Give assessments and tests (career inventories, ACT, SAT, etc.).
12. Y N ? Promote student's personal growth and development.
13. Y N ? Teach decision-making skills.
14. Y N ? Help students explore career interests.
15. Y N ? Provide information on financial aid, grants, loans, or scholarships.
16. Y N ? Provide information on post-secondary education opportunities.
17. Y N ? Provide crisis intervention.
18. Y N ? Provide Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Awareness (A.T.O.D.A.).
19. Y N ? Provide programs for parents.

- 20. **Y N ?** Monitor academic progress, credit total, graduation requirements, and communicate this information to students, parents, and teachers.
- 21. **Y N ?** Help with administrative duties (bus duty, office duties, etc.).
- 22. **Y N ?** Work closely with resources within the community.

Please feel free to use the back page to write any additional comments that would contribute to your child's high school counseling program. Thank you again for your time and assistance in this survey.