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Degree of Implementation of the American School Counselor Association National Model and School Counselor Burnout

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**DEGREE OF IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION NATIONAL MODEL
AND SCHOOL COUNSELOR BURNOUT**

by

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B.A. May 2002, Longwood University

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ABSTRACT

Degree of Implementation of the American School Counselor Association Model and School Counselor Burnout

**Katrina Steele
Old Dominion University, 2014
Director: Dr. Theodore P. Remley, Jr.**

School counselors have undergone a job description evolution over the past 100 years. Changes have been made in the education that is required to be a school counselor. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) has developed a national model to define the role and job activities of school counselors. Most school counselors, counseling programs within individual schools, and school districts have incorporated parts of the ASCA National Model of school counseling to varying degrees. This study focused on the degree to which counselors perceived the ASCA National Model was adopted in their schools and whether the degree of adoption was associated with school counselor job burnout. Instruments that were used in this study include the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-ES) for educators and a form of the School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS). This study found a significant relationship between burnout and implementation of the ASCA National Model. The more implemented the ASCA National Model is in schools the less burnout school counselors feel.

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This dissertation is dedicated to my long suffering husband, Brian. You now get all of my attention. You supported my dream and have been my strong pillar.

I could not finish these acknowledgements without mentioning G-d. Blessed be His name in all the earth.

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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Background

Over the past 100 years, professional school counselors have undergone an evolution not only in name but in job description. The United States Department of Labor and Statistics (2012) reported there were 260,000 educational, vocational, and school counselors in the United States of America. Most states require that school counselors possess a master's degree and a license or certification from the state of employment (ASCA, 2004b). According to the United States Department of Labor and Statistics (2012), it is projected that the need for school counselors will rise 33% in the next five years. School counselors face significant stress in their positions (Rayle, 2006). This stress leads to burnout, leading to taking more days off, lower job satisfaction, and ultimately a search for a new job (Maslach, Schhaufeli, & Leiter, 2001).

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model (2005) provides guidelines for what school counselors should be doing in the school. School counselors are to avoid non-counselor duties. School administrators often thrust non-counselor duties upon school counselors. According to Rayle (2006), a school counselor's day has often been overtaken by tasks that include scheduling students for classes, registering students in schools, administering standardized tests, and paperwork. The ASCA National Model set a counselor-student ratio limit of 250 students per counselor. The reality is that student to counselor ratios are often not aligned with the ASCA National Model (Portsmouth Public Schools, 2009). In addition, The ASCA National Model sets a clear standard that school counselors should be in classrooms, seeing individual students, and running small groups. Some schools have added a testing coordinator to coordinate statewide testing, which takes this non-counselor duty away from school counselors.

Significance of the Study

Role of the School Counselor

Dahir (2004) found that school counselors played an integral role in student development and support. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards of school counseling dictated school counselors must be educated in mental health and education (CACREP, 2011). These standards also dictated school counselors must understand the core areas of the ASCA National Model and how to implement a school counseling program as well as recognize the multiple factors that might influence a student's health and well-being (CACREP, 2009). Under school counseling standard number five, CACREP clearly states that school counseling students must understand the current ASCA National Model and its integral relationship to the entire educational program (2009).

ASCA has defined the role of a school counselor for the profession (ASCA, 2008). ASCA dictates professional school counselors should be freed from performing clerical duties and should spend 80% of their time with direct student services. These direct student services include classroom guidance and small groups (ASCA, 2008). School counseling has shifted from individual counseling with a few to students to systemically working with all students (Walsh, Barrett, & Depaul, 2007).

Evolution of School Counseling

Frank Parsons, the *father of guidance*, established the Vocational Bureau of the Civics Service in Boston (Lambie, 2004). The bureau helped individuals choose a career, prepare for it, and find a job. Before Parsons, there were several pioneers that started the school counseling movement. Lambie (2004) reported that George Merrill developed the first systemic vocational guidance program in 1895. In 1898, Jesse B. Davis was the first counselor to work in a school

(1898, at Detroit's Central High School). In 1908, Davis helped organize a vocational and moral guidance program for the Grand Rapids, Michigan school system. Also in that year, Eli Weaver, a high school principal in Brooklyn, New York, wrote the book *Choosing a Career* (Herr & Erford, 2003). These individuals laid the foundation for the modern school counseling movement.

In 1913, the National Vocational Guidance Association (NVGA) was established (Neukrug, 2007). NVGA legitimized guidance counseling as a profession and helped to add more guidance counselors to the labor force in the United States. NVGA eventually joined other counseling associations and established the American Counseling Association (ACA). In *Principles of Guidance*, Jones (1930) advocated for placement of counselors into the schools (Lambie, 2004). Seven years later, E. B. Cowley suggested that counselors were needed in schools to add a personal touch to education that would help fight the "deadening mechanical limitations of mass education". ASCA was created in 1952 and became a division of the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA, now the American Counseling Association) the next year. APGA unified the National Vocational Guidance Association (NVGA), American College Personnel Association, the National Association of Guidance Supervisors and Counselor Trainers, and the Student Personnel Association for Teacher Education. Following this unification, definitions in the counseling field were standardized. The word *guidance* was used to encompass the entire spectrum of counselor duties. School counselors were originally called *guidance counselors* and did much of the work in personnel services. Their job descriptions included administrative scheduling and records duties.. It was only through passage of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) – in response to the threat posed by the launch of Sputnik – that counselors were mandated in all schools that received

federal funds. This, in turn, made school counselors much more than record-keeping guidance professionals. In 1959, Frank Conant wrote *The American High School Today*, in which he argued for the ratio of one school counselor for every 250 high school students.

ASCA National Model

2005 marked the release of the second edition of *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs* (ASCA, 2005). The ASCA National Model clarifies what a school counselor's activities should include in their day-to-day interactions with student, parents, teachers, and administrators. Clearly defining the role of the school counselor is necessary because, in many schools, counselors have been bogged down with paperwork and have not been counseling students (Kolodinsky, Draves, Schroder, Lindsey, & Zlatev, 2009). ASCA's recommendations for appropriate activities for school counselors typically do not include those which are clerical in nature and, therefore, do not have to be performed by the counselor professional.

Unfortunately, current literature indicates that professional school counselors are not necessarily performing activities that ASCA articulates as appropriate for their roles. Scarborough (2005), in a quantitative study of 600 elementary, middle, and high school counselors in two southern states, noted two key findings related to school counselor activities by school level: high school counselors spent significantly more time on clerical, non-counseling related duties than did middle and elementary school counselors; and middle school counselors spent more time on administrative duties than did high school and elementary school counselors.

Schools that have adopted the ASCA National Model are called Recognized ASCA Model Programs (RAMP). To be classified as RAMP, schools collect extensive data and need the consistent support of school and district administrators because putting the program into

practice can take three to five years (ASCA, 2012). The biggest factors identified as barriers to implementation of a RAMP program were lack of time to focus on ASCA National Model initiatives, difficulty balancing other roles and responsibilities, and lack of support from school and district administrators (Ward, 2009). Given the current trends and issues faced by professional school counselor and the push toward attaining RAMP status -job satisfaction, and burnout may be important issues to consider. School counselors who perceived that they mattered more to others at work have reported greater levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of job related stress (Rayle, 2006).

School Counselor Training

Graduate counseling programs should be expected to prepare students for the responsibilities of contemporary school counselors. A study conducted by Jaeger and Tesh (1989) found that such programs needed to better prepare students for the broad spectrum of duties they will be expected to perform. CACREP standard number 5 mandates that graduate students should be familiar with the current ASCA National Model (2009), which defined school counseling and the roles of the counselor within the school. A recent study of school counselors in Arizona found that most of the frustration experienced by school counselors came from requirements to perform duties not associated with their primary roles (Kolodinsky, Draves, Schroder, Lindsey, & Zlatev, 2009). Their frustrations reflect a reality that is considered problematic for school counselors across the nation. Most school divisions do not adhere to the ASCA National Model. Patrick (2007) found that school counselors were torn between wanting to shift toward the ASCA National Model and needing to perform tasks not associated with that model. Since school systems cannot be forced to adopt the ASCA National Model, counselors are expected to continue to perform all the non-counselor duties currently required of them.

However, college-level and graduate school-level curricula focus on the role of the counselor and providing the skills necessary to counsel students (Brown & Srebalus, 2003). One study suggested that increased burnout experienced by school counselors is due to school administrators using the ASCA National Model add more tasks to counselor workloads while disregarding ASCA recommendations to shift non-counselor duties to others (Kolodinsky, Draves, Schroder, Lindsey, & Zlatev, 2009). The result is dramatic increase in workload (with concurrent stress), which results in accelerated burnout and more departures from the profession.

Professional Identity

Historical changes within the past century and recent legislation have influenced how professional school counselors identify themselves. Professional identity is defined as the process in which professionals form their definition of self over the years of their work experience. Skovholt and Ronnestad (1995) found that in the beginning stages of counselor identity, counselors relied on rules and models to counsel. Eventually, counselors integrated the different counseling models, tools, and techniques that created their own counseling style with more flexibility. Brott and Myers (1999) found in a qualitative study that counselors who were working in a school passed on the definition, roles, and structure of the job, as normative within that school, to new counselors.

In a study by Barnett (2010), Oklahoma school counselors indicated that they could not agree on their role. Some saw themselves as counselors in an educational setting while others defined their role as an educator trained in counseling. A third set of respondents refused to focus on either role and insisted on performing both duties; not surprisingly, they found this double focus to be difficult. These same counselors were not familiar with the ASCA National Model (Barnett, 2010).

Burnout and School Counseling

This study examined the correlation between adoption of the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) National Model (2005) and burnout among school counselors. It adds to the body of knowledge concerning school counselors and occupational attrition.

This study is important because school counselors have been encouraged to follow the ASCA National Model in their schools, yet some school districts have not relieved them of the responsibilities that the same ASCA National Model has defined as non-counseling in nature. As a result, overworked counselors experience increased frustration and stress, which fuels more intense and accelerated burnout. Burnout is defined as a problem of once-enthusiastic professionals feeling drained, cynical, and ineffective (Maslach, 1998). Burnout can affect the quality of counseling students receive. This study has the potential to (1) help facilitate the intended implementation of the ASCA National Model in public schools, (2) document current burnout statistics for school counselors, and (3) increase awareness of the magnitude of the problems of counselor burnout. This study explored whether there is a correlation in burnout rates between school counselors operating in a properly implemented ASCA National Model and school counselors who have added ASCA responsibilities in addition to non-counseling duties.

Research has stated burnout is dangerous to both the physical and mental health of people who experience it (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). If school counselors feel pushed into implementing the ASCA National Model in their school, but the school system does not take away some of their responsibilities that are described by ASCA as non-counseling duties, they probably experienced increased stress which has been shown to lead to burnout. School counseling is a caring profession; when a counselor stops caring, the effectiveness of that counselor can be adversely affected.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction may be related to school counselors' performance of what they deem as appropriate duties as outlined by the ASCA National Model (Baggerly, 2006). Further, higher levels of commitment were related to greater adherence to appropriate tasks and supervision (Baggerly & Osborn, 2006). In a study using an instrument called the School Counselor Job Assignment Survey, Smith (2009) found that 89% of North Carolina school counselors reported job stress as a result of performing non-counseling duties and 81% reported job dissatisfaction.

Prolonged job dissatisfaction has been linked to mental health issues such as burnout (Shields, 2006). Burnout is a prolonged response to the emotional and interpersonal stressors experienced on a job. Research has shown there are three major symptoms of burnout: emotional exhaustion (emotionally overextended and depleted emotional resources); depersonalization (negative detached response to others on the job), and reduced personal accomplishment (decline in feelings of competence and productivity (Maslach & Goldberg, 1998).

Other supporting research found school counselors from Texas who were leaving their jobs gave three main reasons for quitting: personal reasons (pregnancy, moving), professional reasons (stress), and other (McCarthy et al., 2010). Those school counselors who were leaving the profession reported feelings of higher stress, higher caseloads, and less perceived support.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. To what extent do school counselors in Virginia report having implemented the ASCA National Model in their schools?
2. To what extent do school counselors in Virginia report job burnout?

3. Is there a relationship between the degree to which school counselors report that the ASCA National Model has been implemented in their school and their level of job burnout?
4. To what extent is a counselor's personal background (gender; age; school setting; level; years as a school counselor; caseload size; part- or full-time employment status; and professional organization membership) related to either their implementation of the ASCA National Model in their schools or to their job burnout?

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are provided to ensure uniformity of these terms as they were used in this particular study. These definitions were developed to reflect the manner in which the terms are used specifically in this study, keeping in mind the way in which the terms are used in professional literature.

Professional school counselor (PSC)

A certified counselor, employed by a public school system, who works with students in elementary, middle or secondary schools (ASCA, 2005).

ASCA National Model

The American School Counseling Association model for describing job details of school counselors.

School Counseling Director

The administrator in a school district who is responsible for counseling activities in that district.

Level

The school level in which the school counselor works: elementary school, middle school, and high school. At times a school counselor may work part-time in one level and part-

time in another.

Ethnicity

A socially defined category of people who identify with each other through common ancestry, heritage, language, homeland, history, culture, or physical appearance.

Caseload

The number of students for whom a school counselor is responsible, whether by name, division or grade level. ASCA recommends 250 students per school counselor.

Part-time counselor

A school counselor who works less than 40 hours a week and does not receive all the compensation and benefits of a full-time counselor. A part-time counselor might only work 2-3 days a week.

Full-time counselor

A school counselor who works 40 or more hours weekly and receives all the compensation and benefits provided by the school district.

Job burnout

A condition characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization of students, and reduced personal satisfaction (Maslach, 1982).

Likert-type scale

A rating scale created by Rensis Likert with which respondents rate their degree of agreement or disagreement with a statement.

SurveyGizmo

Online survey software that allows researchers to create and send their research surveys to participants. After the data is collected, it is uploaded into SPSS or EXCEL to be

analyzed by the researcher.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter expands on the rationale for the study presented in Chapter 1 by highlighting relevant scholarship associated with key variables. First, an introduction to the school counseling profession is presented which outlines relevant statistics pertaining to school counselors. Then, the historical context of the school counseling profession is articulated to provide foundational material to describe current trends and issues related to school counseling. Salient current components are discussed including school legislation, school-based mental health intervention, professional identity, and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model. Finally, a key area of school counseling research, job satisfaction and counselor burnout, is presented as it relates to the current professional context of school counseling.

Introduction

School counselors assist students at all levels from elementary to post-secondary education. They work with students on developing social, emotional, and academic goals. School counselors are required to have a master's degree, and in most states, are also required to be licensed or certified by the state department of education. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards for school counseling preparation programs dictates that school counselors must be trained in mental health and education (CACREP, 2011). The school counselor must understand the core areas of the ASCA National Model, how to implement a school counseling program, and also how to recognize the multiple factors that might influence a student's health and well-being (CACREP, 2009).

In 2008, there were 275,800 school counselors in the United States (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). ASCA defined the proper roles of a school counselor. In the past, school counselors were giving vocational and college admissions guidance and, therefore, were aptly named *guidance counselors*. The former name of *guidance counselor* created confusion as to what the modern school counselor does on a daily basis. Vocational guidance counseling has given way to Professional School Counseling.

As student needs have changed, school counselors are changing to meet the student needs. ASCA dictates that professional school counselors should be freed up from clerical duties and should spend 80% of their time delivering direct student services. These services include classroom guidance and small group counseling (ASCA, 2008). There is a shift in school counseling towards counselors working systemically with all students rather than providing individual counseling to only a few students (Walsh, Barrett, & Depaul, 2007).

Historical Context

School counseling started out as vocational guidance. Frank Parsons, the *father of guidance*, established the Vocational Bureau of the Civics Service in Boston in 1908. The bureau helped individuals with choosing a career, preparing for it, and finding a job (Neukrug, 2007). Parsons ran his vocational services through the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the Economics Club, and Women's Educational and Industrial Union. Parsons had a vision that vocational guidance would be in all public schools. He was a lawyer and an engineer who worked with settlement houses and gained a compassionate view of the plight of immigrants. Parsons did not believe that immigrants' abilities were being aptly used which led him to develop a counseling approach for vocational guidance. His book, *Choosing a Vocation*, was published after he died in 1908.

Before Parsons, there were several pioneers in the school counselor movement. George Merrill developed the first systemic vocational guidance program in 1895. Jesse B. Davis was the first counselor to work in a school (1898, at Detroit's Central High School). In 1908, Davis helped organize a vocational and moral guidance program for the Grand Rapids, Michigan school system. That same year, Eli Weaver, a high school principal in Brooklyn, wrote the book *Choosing a Career* (Herr & Erford, 2011).

In 1913, the National Vocational Guidance Association (NVGA) was established (Neukrug, 2007). The NVGA legitimized guidance counseling as a profession and helped to increase the number of guidance counselors in the United States workforce. NVGA would eventually merge with other professional organizations to become the American Counseling Association (ACA). In 1917, The Vocational Bureau expanded and became a part of the Division of Education at Harvard University.

The 1920s through the 1940s saw the expansion of guidance into counseling (Neukrug, 2007). Psychiatrists introduced *child guidance clinics* (Levine & Levine, 1970) which addressed maladaptive behaviors and developed treatments for children. John Dewey introduced Cognitive Theory and Carl Roger's Client-Centered Counseling revolutionized the counseling community (Lambie & Williamson, 2004). In 1937, Cowley suggested that counselors should be added into schools to add a personal touch to education that would help fight the "deadening mechanical limitations of mass education". In *Principles of Guidance*, Arthur Jones (1969) advocated for adding counselors into the schools (Herr & Erford, 2011).

ASCA was created in 1952 and it became a division of the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA) in 1953. APGA had recently merged the National Vocational Guidance Association (NVGA), American College Personnel Association, the National

Association of Guidance Supervisors and Counselor Trainers, and the Student Personnel Association for Teacher Education. Definitions of school counseling terms were then used across the counseling world and accepted. The term *guidance* was used to encompass all that counselors do in their job. School counselors were called *guidance counselors* and, at that time, did much of the work in personnel services including administrative scheduling and records duties (Lambie & Williamson, 2004). In 1953, the professional journal *School Counselor* was created by ASCA. Also in 1953, the US Office of Education added a division for Pupil Personnel Services. This addition to the US Office of Education led the education community to broaden its view of school counselors to include responsibilities for more than just vocational guidance (APGA, 1954).

In 1957, the launch of the first space rocket Sputnik ushered in *the Space Race* as well as legislation that aided in identifying, guiding, and supporting students studying mathematics and sciences. This legislation, known as the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958, provided funding to increase the number of counselors in schools. ASCA, along with NDEA, brought school counseling to the forefront of education. In 1957, APGA created a board for professional standards for vocational guidance. In 1959, the National Association of Guidance Supervisors and Counselor Trainers took on a five-year project to create a set of standards for education of secondary school counselors. Also, in 1959, Conant wrote *The American High School Today* which argued for one school counselor for every 250 students in each high school (Herr & Erford, 2011).

The 1960s saw an addition to the National Defense Education Act which added school counselors to the elementary and high school levels to help with the gifted children. In 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) designated money for guidance and

counseling. The 1970s saw the addition of the Educational Act for Handicapped Children which added advocacy to school counselor responsibilities. School counselors were then thrust into the process of creating Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for disabled children and serving on child study teams. In addition, children who had once been required to be in separate classes due to an illness or minor handicap were integrated into regular classrooms. The 1980s and 1990s saw the growth of research and development of school counseling as an identity and profession (Lambie, 2004).

School Counseling Today

There are several pieces of legislation that have had a big impact on current school counseling. For instance, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 stated that individuals with disabilities are protected from being discriminated against in the workplace and in schools. Schools have the responsibility to provide reasonable assistance to students with disabilities so that they can be successful in the classroom. Confidentiality concerns were addressed within the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This act allowed parents access to their children's educational records. Counseling notes were excluded from these records; however, the act did not protect counseling notes from being subpoenaed in court (Neukrug, 2007). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 1975 gave students the right to be tested for any disabilities that might interfere with learning. It became the schools' responsibility to make accommodations for the least restrictive learning environment for each individual student (Herr & Erford, 2011).

In 1981, American Counseling Association created the CACREP standards to oversee the accreditation of counseling programs at colleges and universities. The goal of CACREP is to

insure that all counselors get the same training with high standards and a common curriculum (Neukrug, 2007).

In 2001, Congress enacted the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. The NCLB act was designed to make schools more accountable for student learning. This brought in an era of testing for all students. Students are measured in all academic areas and schools are held accountable for all students succeeding and graduating. Each state has its own standardized tests. At the end of the courses, students complete and must pass a certain number of tests in order to graduate high school. This standardized testing was designed to insure that students are well rounded and have a certain amount of knowledge in order to go on in life to be successful adults (Neukrug, 2007).

The ASCA National Model was introduced in 2003 and a new era emerged. This era includes a redefinition of the roles and responsibilities for school counselors. The ASCA National Model provides the four sections of advocacy, collaboration, leadership, and systemic change that school counselors now work within. The ASCA National Model is discussed in more detail below.

Trends in counseling for the next five years have been predicted to include cyber bullying, poverty, technology, the school counselor's role, and school funding (Burnham, 2011). Schools are also expected to be providing school-wide anti-bullying awareness programs. Studies have shown that cracking down on bullying has to be a school-wide initiative to reduce bullying by 50% as opposed to addressing it on a case-by-case basis. Other predictions have stated helping disadvantaged students struggling with poverty issues to achieve academically, in accordance with the No Child Left Behind standards, will continue to be a struggle (Holley, 2011).

Technology has continued to move forward and school counselors should reap the benefits. Many programs have emerged that make data collection and analysis easier and user friendly for the school counselor (Forrester, 2011). School counselors have continued to struggle to establish themselves as non-clerical counselors within the school and utilize the ASCA National Model (Sax, 2011). The recent negative economic changes in the United States of America have also pointed to the continued struggle to do more with fewer available resources (McGinley, 2011).

Professional School Counselor Identity

Historical changes within the past century and recent legislation have influenced how professional school counselors have defined their roles in schools. As noted in the historical section, school counselors began as vocational guidance professionals and, over time, transitioned into highly trained counselors within the school setting. This professional identity transition of the school counselor has been a struggle for many in the field and the school system to accept (Rayle, 2006).

Professional identity is defined as the process in which professionals form their definition of self over the years of their work experience. Skovholt and Ronnestad (1995) found that in the beginning stages of counselor identity, counselors relied on rules and models to counsel. Eventually, counselors integrated the different counseling models, tools, and techniques that create their own counseling style that has more flexibility.

Skovholt and Ronnestad continued their studies of counselor development and developed a model, in 2003, based on a qualitative empirical study of 100 counselors. The four stages of counselor development that emerged are the lay helper, the beginning student stage, the advanced student, and the novice professional phase. The lay helper stage begins as the student

first starts his or her counseling education and is untrained. In this stage, counselors tend to offer advice and a quick solution. During the beginning student stage, students are in a counseling program and are enthusiastic, intimidated, and seeking to find balance in their personal lives and in school. Students in this stage generally question themselves and struggle to discover if they belong in the counseling field. In the advanced student stage, counselors begin to practice what they have been taught. They grow with conflicts between confidence and vulnerability and stretch their intellectual and emotional boundaries. During this time, they build their own counseling skills and rely more on their own knowledge than being told what to do by other counselors (McAuliffe, 2011)

Other factors influence counselor roles and identity as well. For instance, Brott and Myers (1999) found in a qualitative study that counselors who worked in the school when a new counselor started working passed on the definition, roles, and structure of the job as school counselor within that school. In a study by Barnett (2010), Oklahoma school counselors indicated that they could not agree on their *role*. Some saw themselves as counselors in an educational setting, while others defined their role to be an educator trained in counseling. A third set of respondents refused to focus on either role, insisting on performing both duties; not surprisingly, they found this double focus to be difficult. These same counselors were not familiar with the ASCA National Model (Barnett, 2010).

ASCA National Model

The ASCA National Model attempts to clarify what a school counselor's activities should include in the schools. Clearly defined roles of the school counselor are necessary because, in many schools, counselors have been bogged down with paperwork and have not been counseling students (Rayle, 2006). ASCA identified several appropriate activities for school counselors

Appropriate activities identified by ASCA include creating individual student academic plans, interpreting cognitive, aptitude, and achievement tests, counseling students who are tardy or absent, collaborating with teachers on classroom guidance lessons, working with students to provide small and large group counseling services, and counseling students with disciplinary problems. Further, ASCA outlined inappropriate activities for professional school counselors including registration and scheduling of all new students, coordinating or administering achievement, cognitive, or aptitude tests, computing grade point averages, data entry, working one on one with students in a therapeutic clinical mode, and performing disciplinary actions. In contrast to ASCA's recommendations for appropriate activities for school counselors, inappropriate activities are clerical in nature and do not have to be performed by a school counselor. Appropriate activities are more closely aligned with the skills and training school counselors received in their educational programs.

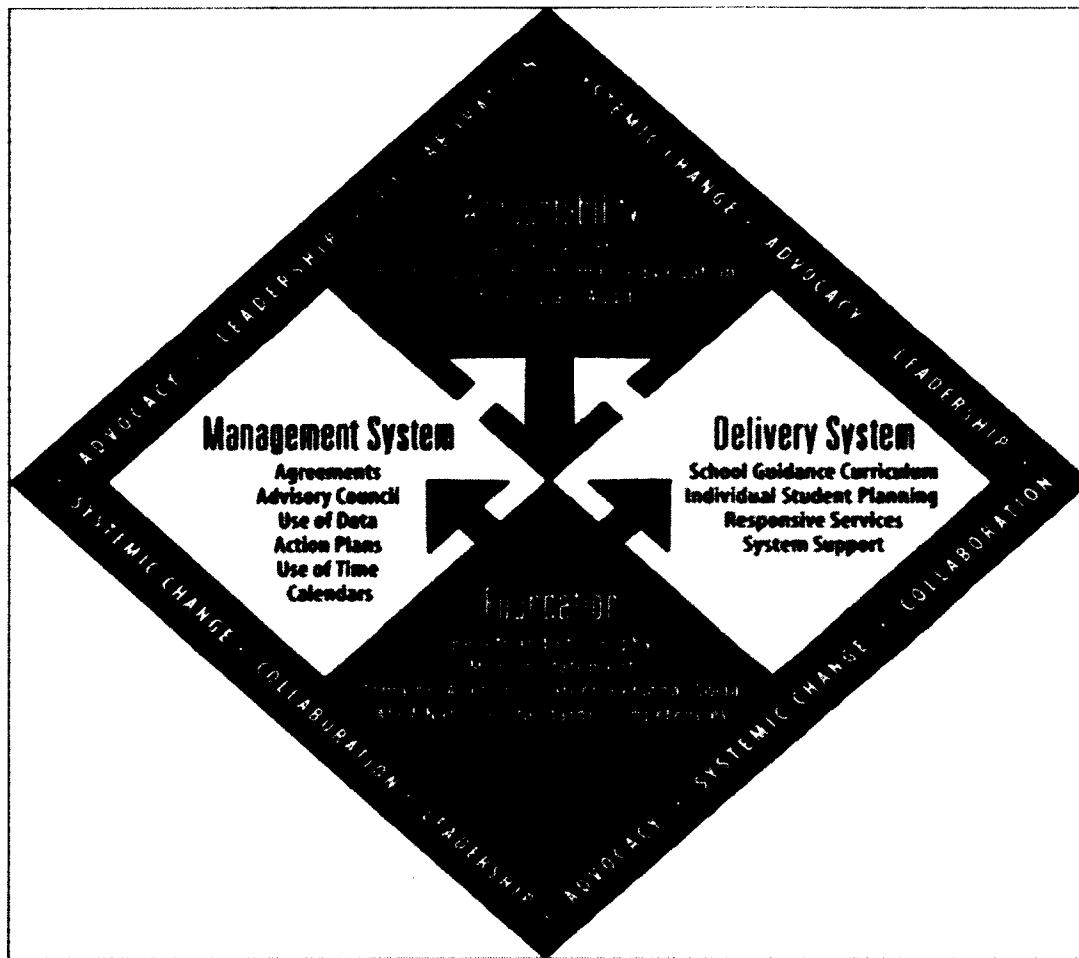
Unfortunately, current literature indicates that professional school counselors are not necessarily performing activities that ASCA articulates as appropriate for their roles. A quantitative study by Scarborough (2005) examined 600 elementary, middle, and high school counselors in two southern states and noted a couple of key findings related to school counselor activities by school level. Scarborough developed a School Counselor Activity Rating Scale (SCARS) in order to quantify the data that was gathered using a Likert scale. This study found high school counselors spend significantly more time on clerical, non-counseling related duties than middle and elementary school counselors and middle school counselors spend more time on administrative duties than high school and elementary school counselors.

ASCA National Model Components

The ASCA National Model is composed of four sections: advocacy, leadership, collaboration, and systemic change. Advocacy refers to the role that school counselors must assume in schools to speak up for those programs that will address the needs of the students. This role also mandates counselors must be the voice of students who are being neglected or abused. Collaboration, a second role, requires school counselors to work in conjunction with all stakeholders involved including administrators, teachers, parents, students, and community leaders. School counselors are also assigned the role of leadership in the school to be a voice of change. Systemic change refers to school counselors working with school-wide data and using it to promote positive changes in the school system. These roles are infused in four key model areas that articulate the school counselor program: foundation, management system, accountability, and delivery system.

Figure 1 displays the ASCA National Model. (ASCA, 2011)

Figure 1



Foundation. Foundation is the philosophy of the counseling program, management system is the use of time and data, accountability has the audit of the program itself, and delivery system is the guidance curriculum. A strong foundation is important for a school counseling program. The foundation should align with a school's goals for its students and should be focused on how a student will benefit from the school counseling program (ASCA, 2011).

Management system. Management overlaps with some of the organization components of the delivery system. School counselors should have management agreements with administrators. These agreements should be renegotiated and discussed every year to accommodate the changing needs of students and management. An advisory council should also be in place and composed of teachers, parents, students, counselors, administrators, and

community members to review counseling program results and make recommendations to improve school counseling programs.

The school counseling program must be data driven. School counselors need to insure that everything they are doing in the school is benefiting students and stakeholders. Action plans should be put in place outlining how goals will be met. ASCA dictates that school counselors should use 80% of their time in direct contact with students (ASCA, 2008). To this end, management should allow counselors time to create a system to track how counselors spend their time. Tracking and analyzing this data can also demonstrate the amount of time spent on non-counseling duties to school administrators which could lead to the reassignment of those duties to other staff members. Calendars should be made with monthly goals and activities and displayed weekly (ASCA, 2011).

Accountability. Accountability is important because data-driven reports detailing the effectiveness of school counselors are helping to create and maintain school counseling jobs. A report detailing school counselor effectiveness should be shared with stakeholders to advocate for students and school counselors. School counselors should be evaluated yearly by school administrators and counselor self-evaluation should be utilized as well. The school counseling program should be evaluated yearly by the school counselors (ASCA, 2008).

Delivery system. The delivery system encompasses the activities, interactions, and methods that will be used to deliver the counseling program. Delivery systems include the guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services, and system support. Responsive services include peer mediation, consulting with teachers, parents and students, and helping students obtain what they need to be effective in the learning environment. System support is part of the organizing process for the program (ASCA, 2011).

Research on Components of the ASCA National Model

Research has found several factors relevant to implementing the ASCA National Model. Walsh et al. (2007) found, in a qualitative study in which four new counselors were asked to write logs of their activities, that it was possible for newly hired school counselors to effectively implement the four components of the delivery system of the ASCA National Model. However, these counselors were unable to focus on collecting data for the accountability component of the ASCA National Model. In another study by Barnett (2010), 53 counselors were asked to define their jobs within the ASCA National Model. These school counselors indicated that they spent the least amount of time on the accountability component of the ASCA National Model. Other school counselors recognized that in order to implement an ASCA National Model program in their school, they need to be leaders (Scarborough & Luke, 2008). By advocating for a strong counseling program within the school and volunteering for committees, school counselor can be seen as school leaders.

A qualitative study of 23 elementary, middle, and high school teachers from across the southwestern states found that teachers identified collaboration, communication, and teamwork as expectations they had for school counselors (Clark & Amatea, 2004). When counselors are seen a part of a team that is essential to the school program, then counselors will be accessed by students more readily.

Recognized ASCA Model Programs (RAMP)

Schools that have implemented the ASCA National Model are called Recognized ASCA Model Programs (RAMP). To be classified as RAMP, schools undergo data collection and are required to have the support of school and district administrators. Implementing an ASCA National Model Program can take three to five years. There are currently 313 schools

nationwide that are RAMP. There are 17 schools in Virginia that are RAMP: five elementary schools, five middle schools, and seven high schools (ASCA, 2011).

ASCA provides a checklist to assess whether a particular school counseling program is RAMP ready. Checklist items include the following: school administrator support, measurable goals congruent with the school goals, presence of an advisory council of stakeholders, and school counselor use of a monthly and weekly calendar. The school counselors plan a yearly guidance curriculum, identify achievement gaps, collect, analyze, and evaluate data to drive the guidance program, and regularly deliver small-group lessons based on the specific needs of students and schools (ASCA, 2013).

Limited research has been conducted on RAMP schools and outcome measures. Dodson (2009) compared principals' perceptions of school counselors and their roles and responsibilities in RAMP and non-RAMP schools. All principals, regardless of school type, identified that school counselors worked in academic, personal, social, and career development areas with students. RAMP principals perceived school counselors to be in classrooms delivering classroom guidance more often than non-RAMP principals. RAMP principals also said that their counselors counseled students with discipline problems, collaborated with teachers on study hall management, and interpreted student records. Both RAMP and non-ramp principals indicated that counselors do individual student academic program planning.

Ward (2009) examined the association between student achievement and RAMP status. Ward found a significant positive correlation between RAMP school student achievement in language arts and a positive difference in the math scores than those schools that were not RAMP. Additionally, student attendance was higher at RAMP schools than non-RAMP schools. In her study, Ward (2009) also included open-ended questions about school counselors and their

RAMP experiences. The biggest barriers to implementing a RAMP program identified by school counselors were lack of time to focus on National Model initiatives, difficulty balancing other roles and responsibilities, and lack of support from school administrators and district supervisors. Also of interest, Ward (2009) found 66 percent of programs that had RAMP status already had programs in place that were close to the ASCA National Model before they started the RAMP process. School counselors felt that after achieving RAMP status, students demonstrated an increase in student abilities to understand and manage feelings, an increase in students benefitting from counseling services, and an increase in student conflict resolutions. School counselors indicated that they wanted to become RAMP to be recognized as a legitimate part of the school (Ward, 2009).

Fulthorp (2010) documented five key components found in common among three different schools which were successful in becoming RAMP. These components were administrative support, an existing school counseling program that closely aligned with the ASCA National Model, a highly performing school counseling team, a unique skill set for the counseling team, and a specific combination of school counseling skills. The administrators in the schools were either supportive or did not interfere with what the school counselors were trying to accomplish. The school counselors had an existing program that aligned with the ASCA National Model before they started the certification process. The school counseling team had camaraderie, flexibility, and were all committed to becoming RAMP. The school counselors in the study had different skills such as statistics, guidance curriculum, technology, and the ability to work with the administration and culture of the school. Fulthorp's findings support the findings in Ward's (2009) study.

Job Satisfaction and Burnout

Given the current trends and issues professional school counselors face and the push toward implementing the ASCA National Model and obtaining RAMP status, job satisfaction and burnout may be important variables to consider. This section will define terms used in this study and will present available related research.

Job Satisfaction

Variables for job satisfaction have been researched. Recent studies found career satisfaction was significantly correlated with the work itself, present pay, promotion opportunities, supervision, co-workers, and the work in general (Gambrell, 2010). School counselors who perceived that they mattered more to others at work reported greater levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of job related stress (Rayle, 2006).

Rayle (2006) conducted a qualitative study to determine the association between perceived mattering, job stress, and job satisfaction. She found that elementary school counselors had the highest job satisfaction, middle school counselors had higher stress and lower job satisfaction than elementary school counselors, and high school counselors had the lowest levels of job satisfaction. Mattering to others in the school accounted for 35% of the variance between job satisfaction and job stress. Mattering did not prove to be the only variable for job satisfaction or job stress.

Job satisfaction were found to be related to school counselors' performance of what they deem as appropriate duties as outlined by the ASCA National Model (Baggerly, 2006). Further, higher levels of commitment were related to higher levels of perceived appropriate duties and supervision (Baggerly & Osborn, 2006). In a descriptive research study by Smith (2009), the researcher created and utilized a survey called a School Counselor Job Assignment Survey and found that 89% of North Carolina school counselors surveyed reported job stress was a result of

performing non-counseling duties and 81% reported job dissatisfaction was a result of performing these non-counseling duties. Testing and clerical duties were listed as the two most common non-counseling tasks that interrupted counseling duties. In another study, Arizona school counselors reported that the way they spent their time was found to have a significant relationship to job satisfaction. Time spent with students and teachers made the school counselors more satisfied with their jobs, while performing non-guidance activities resulted in less satisfaction (Kolodinsky, Draves, Schroder, Lindsey, & Zlatev, 2009).

Additional job satisfaction research by Bane (2006) found that 41% of middle school counselor respondents indicated that they planned to stay in their jobs in the next five years. Over 80% of Virginia middle school counselor respondents reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs. These data were gathered utilizing the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ).

However, in direct contrast, Windle (2009) found that school counselor respondents, reported job satisfaction and planned to stay in school counseling despite experiencing frustration with non-counseling related duties and caseloads above the recommended ASCA 250:1 ratio.

School Counselor Burnout

Burnout is a type of prolonged response to the emotional and interpersonal stressors that are experienced on the job. There are three major symptoms of burnout: (1) emotional exhaustion (emotionally overextended and depleted emotional resources); (2) depersonalization (negative detached response to others on the job); and (3) reduced personal accomplishment (decline in feelings of competence and productivity) (Maslach & Goldberg, 1998).

The causes of counselor burnout have been debated for a number of years (Brown & Srebalus, 2003). Personality types have been thought to play an important part in burnout. Type A personalities have been linked to coronary and other health issues but these studies are greatly debated since other studies have found that less assertive personalities have more health problems than type A personalities (Brown & Srebalus, 2003). Counselor state and national level conferences have been inserting stress relief breakout sessions into programs (VCA, 2008; ACA, 2009).

Schure, Christopher, and Christopher (2008) completed a four year qualitative study on teaching self-care to graduate level counseling students. Positive changes were noted in the students counseling skills and in their personal lives. The researchers found positive changes in the students' ability to empathize with clients in addition to increased positive perceptions and attitudes.

School counselor stress can be understood in terms of perceived stress and resources for coping with work demands (McCarthy et al., 2010). McCarthy used the School Counselor Job Stress Assessment (SCJSA) and the Classroom Appraisal of Resources and Demands (CARD-SC), to measure job stress. This study found the most demanding stressors of a counselor's job to be paperwork and high caseloads. Another study found non-counseling activities significantly predicted a decrease in work wellness in school counselors (Woods, 2009). Woods used the School Counselor Activity Rating scale (SCARS), School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (SCSE), and the five-factor wellness inventory (5FWel) to collect data. This study supported earlier research that found that self-efficacy has an impact on wellness and counselor activities.

Research has also shown that counselors across all specializations show no significant differences in job satisfaction, but that counselor educators were more satisfied with promotion

opportunities in their jobs than other types of counselors. Doctoral level counselors were found to have significantly more satisfaction with promotion opportunities than master's level counselors (Gambrell, 2010).

In a research study of school counselors from Texas, respondents gave three main reasons for quitting their jobs: personal reasons (pregnancy, moving), professional reasons (stress), and other. Those school counselors who were leaving the profession identified high stress, high caseloads of students, and having few resources for the school and counselor (McCarthy et al., 2010).

There is some research available associating job satisfaction and burnout. Kansas rural mental health counselors were found to have moderate or higher burnout rate. Seventy-two percent of the respondents scored below normal for social support and were found to have high counselor burnout (Kee, Johnson, & Hunt, 2002). Further, Layne (2001) noted in a study with rehabilitation counselors that increased stress was associated with decreased coping skills. Layne surmised that counselors under increased stress might be more likely to leave their jobs. Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) found a positive correlation between job satisfaction and burnout with clear links between the two concepts and concluded the terms are not identical in definition.

Demerouti (2001) found that human service professionals experience burnout symptoms of mental exhaustion and depersonalization. Demerouti noted that feelings of both exhaustion and disengagement are related to burnout syndrome. In this study, mental health counselors were found to score over the baseline for the Weiman Occupational Stress Survey (WOSS), indicating that the mental health counselor respondents had greater levels of stress (Demerouti,

2001). Another study found that mental health counselors indicated that they deal with stress by debriefing with co-workers, using humor, and seeking supervision (Braaten, 2000).

International research has been conducted on job satisfaction and burnout. A study with psychiatrists in Milan, Bressi et al. (2009) found that job satisfaction plays a protective role against job burnout. The psychiatrists in the study showed high levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Most of the stress felt by those in the study stemmed from the work environment. Mental health professionals in Croatia were found to have a moderate degree of burnout syndrome; job satisfaction and occupational stress were the relevant predictors of burnout syndrome (Ogresta, Rustac, & Zorec, 2008). Lasalavia et al. (2009) found nearly two-thirds of Italian psychiatrists and one-fifth of psychiatric staff members in the study suffered from burnout. Psychiatrists and social workers reported the highest levels of burnout. Burnout was found to be predicted by higher frequencies of face-to-face interaction, longer time working in mental health, weak group cohesion, and perceived unfairness. Bakker, Demerouti, and Euwema (2005) noted, in a Netherlands study, that employees had high fatigue and demoralization when job demands were high and resources were low.

The most frequently used burnout scale utilized in recent studies has been the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and the most frequently used school counselor scale has been the School Counselor Activity Rating Scale (SCARS). The SCARS inventory, while comprehensive, can be daunting for participants who have to fill it out twice; respondents first answer what school counselors do every day and answer second with what activities they want to be doing at work. For the purpose of this study, the adherence to the ASCA National Model is being evaluated with school counselor burnout which the School Counselor Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS) measures.

Maslach created the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) in 1981 and it was revised in 1986 and 1996. The MBI has 22 items and uses a seven point Likert scale ranging from never to everyday. The scale measures emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment (Kokkinos, 2006).

The School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS) was originally developed by Elsner and Carey (2005) to aid in conducting research on the new ASCA National Model. The first survey had 25 items and was based on characteristics identified in research that were related to ASCA National Model school programs. Clemens, Carey, and Harrington (2010) explored and refined the survey with factor structure. The factor analysis led the researchers to drop five items. The scale uses a four point Likert scale ranging from *Not Present* to *Fully Implemented* on each item characteristic of a school counseling program.

Cronbach's alpha reliability estimates for subscales ranged from .79 to .87. Subscales of the instrument may be used to assess ASCA National Model program implementation, programmatic orientation, school counseling services, and the school counselor's use of computer software (Clemens, et al., 2010). There is not enough data available yet to verify the internal validity of this instrument. SCPIS was initially evaluated on the psychometric properties of the survey which revealed that it has solid internal consistency (Clemens, et al., 2010). Face validity of SCPIS appears strong as the items mirror components of the ASCA National Model (Mason, 2008).

Summary

This chapter expanded on the rationale for the study presented in Chapter One. First, an introduction to the school counseling profession was presented which outlined relevant statistics pertaining to school counselors. Then, the historical context of the school counseling profession

was articulated to provide foundational material. The old term *guidance* does not accurately encompass all that a *professional school counselor* does daily. Components that were discussed include school legislation, school-based mental health intervention, professional identity, and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model. Finally, school counseling research on job satisfaction and counselor burnout was presented. Burnout is a problem both nationally and internationally; it is detrimental to both counselors and students.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter is organized in the following order: purpose of the study, description of the research design, research questions, participant selection, instrumentation, data collection procedures, methods of data analysis, validity threats, and strengths of design.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate the relationship between the degree to which school counselors have implemented the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model program (2012) and job burnout symptoms. For the purpose of this study, the degree of implementation of the ASCA National Model program has been assessed by school counselor participants through their completion of the School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS). The SCPIS instrument asks counselors to rate the school counseling programs in their schools in relation to the ASCA National Model program. The school counselors' overall assessment of their programs was the independent variable. Job burnout symptoms were measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Education Survey (MBI-ES) and were the dependent variable. In addition, the degree of implementation of the ASCA National Model and job burnout were examined in relation to demographic characteristics of the counselors participating in the study. Additional information regarding participants was collected and reported in order to describe the school counselors further.

Research Design

A non-experimental survey research study was conducted that collected information from Virginia school counselors about their perceptions of the degree to which their school has

implemented the ASCA National Model and their experiences of job burnout. This study was descriptive and correlational.

Research Questions

The following are the research questions in this study:

1. To what extent do school counselors in Virginia report having implemented the ASCA National Model in their schools?
2. To what extent do school counselors in Virginia report job burnout?
3. Is there a relationship between the degree to which school counselors report that the ASCA National Model has been implemented in their school and their level of job burnout?
4. To what extent is a counselor's personal background (gender; age; school setting; level; years as a school counselor; caseload size; part- or full-time employment status; and professional organization membership) related to either their implementation of the ASCA National Model in their schools or to their job burnout?

Participants

Participants included professional school counselors from all levels (elementary, middle, and high school) in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Criteria for participation was that the school counselor was actively working in a Virginia public school.

Email addresses of the School Counseling Directors of the Commonwealth of Virginia were obtained through personal connection to a school counseling director in one of the Virginia school districts. Virginia School Counseling Association (VSCA) members' email addresses were obtained through use of membership website. School Counseling Directors and VSCA members received an email message requesting participation in the survey (Appendix D).

School counseling directors received an email message asking them to forward survey participation requests to their school counselors (Appendix E). The directors were asked to reply if they forwarded the request and, if they did forward it, how many counselors in their school district were informed of the survey. A second email message was sent two weeks after the first request thanking the directors for forwarding the survey participation request to the school counselors in their district if they did so and asked them to consider forwarding the survey participation request to the school counselors in their district if they had not yet done so (Appendix F).

An email message was also sent to the Virginia School Counselor Association (VSCA) members petitioning them to participate in this research. Email addresses were taken from the membership directory online. A reminder email message was sent to those members two weeks after the first request was sent. After another two weeks, the final email message reminder and a thank you to those who have already filled out the survey was sent out.

An email message was sent to the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) members who reside in Virginia. These email addresses were taken from the membership directory online. A reminder email message was sent out two weeks after the initial email message to those members reminding them of the survey and thanking those who had already completed the survey.

Instrumentation

The instruments selected to create the survey for this study were chosen based on their ability to measure job burnout and school counseling program implementation. The online survey instrument contained five sections (Appendices A-C). The first section explained the study and asked school counselors to participate by going to a website and completing the

survey. The second section collected demographic information. The demographic information survey contains 11 items. The first three items ask for personal identification information (gender, age, and ethnicity). The United States Census Department's (2013) racial background categories (White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander) were used. Five questions related to the participants' school setting, level, years as a school counselor, caseload size, and part- or full-time employment status. The last question related to the professional organizations participants belong to (Appendix C).

The third section was a survey instrument that contained the School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS). The fourth section contained the Maslach Inventory (MBI) Educator's Survey (ES). The fifth section thanked participants for taking the survey.

The School Counseling Program Implementation Survey

The School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS) was originally developed by David Elsner and John Carey (2005) to aid in conducting research on the new ASCA National Model. The first survey contained 25 items and was based on characteristics identified in research that were related to ASCA National Model school programs. Clemens, Carey, and Harrington (2010) explored and refined the survey with factor structure. The factor analysis led to them dropping five items. The scale uses a four point Likert scale ranging from *Not Present* to *Fully Implemented* on each item characteristic of a school counseling program. Cronbach's alpha reliability estimates for subscales ranged from .79 to .87. Subscales of the instrument may be used to assess ASCA National Model program implementation, programmatic orientation, school counseling services, and the school counselor's use of computer software (Clemens et al., 2010).

There is not enough data available yet to verify the internal validity of this instrument. SCPIS was initially evaluated on the psychometric properties of the survey which revealed that it has solid internal consistency (Clemens, et al., 2010). Face validity of SCPIS appears strong as the items mirror components of the ASCA National Model (Mason, 2008). Permission to use the instrument in this study was granted by Dr. Carey.

Maslach Burnout Inventory

Christina Maslach, Susan Jackson, Michael Lieter, and Wilmar Schaufeli created the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) in 1981. The scale has 22 items and uses a seven point Likert scale which range from *never* to *every day*. The three general areas measured are emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment (Kokkinos, 2006). Emotional exhaustion measures feelings of being emotional overextended and exhausted by one's work. Emotional exhaustion is measured by nine questions in the survey. "I feel emotionally drained from my work" and "working with people all day is a real strain for me" are examples of items on the instrument. Depersonalization is measured an unfeeling and impersonal response towards a recipient of one's service, care, or instruction. Depersonalization is measured by five questions in the survey. Examples of these items are "I feel I treat students as if they were impersonal objects" and "I feel students blame me for their problems." Personal accomplishment is determined by measuring the feeling of competence and successful achievement in one's work. Eight survey questions measure these feelings. "In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly" and "I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job" are survey items that measure personal accomplishment.

Crandall (1994) found a coefficient alpha of .88 for MBI, indicating strong internal consistency. A meta-analysis of 84 studies that used the MBI showed that the mean coefficient

alpha for reliability was between .70-.80 (Wheeler et al., 2011). The responses have a Likert scale measuring frequency from 1 (a few times a year) to 6 (every day). Langballe et al. (2006) completed a factor analysis and found that the MBI is suitable to measure job burnout across the different occupations. Cronbach alpha ratings were .90 for emotional exhaustion, .76 for depersonalization, and .76 for personal accomplishments (Gold, 1984; Schwab, 1981). Slayers et al. in 2013 found Cronbach's alpha was .93 for emotional exhaustion, .79 for depersonalization, and .85 for personal accomplishment. Test-retest reliability ranged from (.60-.82) for three weeks to (.54-.60) for retesting a year later (Gold, 1984; Schwab, 1981).

Permission was purchased from mindgarden.com for 350 uses of the MBI-ES. The original MBI was created to be used with human service professionals. In response to the interest in job burnout by teachers, a second version of the MBI was developed for use by educational occupations (Maslach, 2001). School Counselors are both human service professionals and educators. The MBI-ES uses the word *student(s)* and not *client(s)* as the MBI uses. School counselors work with students of all grade levels so the MBI-ES was chosen for this study.

Procedures

Email messages were sent to all school counseling directors in the Commonwealth of Virginia that asked them to distribute the request to complete the survey to their current school counselors. The email message provided a request for the professional school counselor recipients to participate in the research project through completing the survey form along with a hyperlink to the survey instrument hosted on Survey Gizmo (<http://www.surveygizmo.com>). Survey Gizmo does not reveal any information about the participants other than the information collected through the instrument. A second email message was sent out to the directors after two

weeks reminding them to forward the request and thanking them for sending out the surveys to their school counselors.

An email message was sent to all Virginia School Counselor Association (VSCA) and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) members asking them to complete the survey through Survey Gizmo. They received an email message two weeks later reminding them to complete the survey and thanking them for completing the survey if they already had done so.

When participants clicked on the website link, they were directed to the landing page of the survey instrument. This page presented more detailed information about the study. After clicking to continue, participants were guided through completing the instrument. The instrument provided ongoing information to participants about the percentage of content remaining. At the end of the survey, participants found a message thanking them for completing the survey and provided information on how they could contact me with any questions or comments. As a feature of Survey Gizmo, participants will be able to complete the survey only once based on the unique link sent by email message to individuals in the sample.

Data Collection

The study was conducted in January 5, 2014, and surveys were no longer accepted after February 5, 2014. School counseling directors in the Commonwealth of Virginia received an email message from me asking them to forward the request for participation in this study to all their school counselors. They were also asked to reply to the request stating how many school counselors they forwarded the surveys to so that the rate of return could be calculated. School counselors who are members of the Virginia School Counseling Association (VSCA) and members of the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) members living in Virginia also received an email message asking them to participate.

Data Analysis

A statistician was hired, Dr. Simone Celant, to assist with the technical aspects of the data analysis. As part of data screening, a statistical analysis program, eRm was used to report frequencies for all variables. Procedures to determine outliers and erroneous data were conducted and data which were clearly incorrect were removed. The remaining missing data were analyzed against demographic data to look for patterns of missing data that may have distorted the findings. These data were collected from the surveys and analyzed by generating the computed means and standard deviations of the two data sets, those following the ASCA National Model and those who do not was analyzed using a regression and correlation analysis. The correlation analysis provided many different points to get a broad view of the deviances between the perceptions of counselors in schools who implement the ASCA National Model programs in their schools and those who do not use the ASCA National Model program compared job burnout rates. Descriptive statistics for the demographic questions and the two instruments were compiled. Frequencies, means, and standard deviations were used to screen items and scales for variability and for consideration in further analyses. A MANOVA was used to examine group mean differences of categorical variables, such as professional degree, work setting, and licensure.

Research Question 1

To what extent do school counselors in Virginia report having implemented the ASCA National Model in their schools?

Participants were asked to complete the SCPIS survey and the data were compiled and descriptive statistics reported.

Research Question 2

To what extent do school counselors in Virginia report job burnout?

Participants were asked to fill out the MBI-ES surveys. These data were compiled and descriptive statistics reported.

Research Question 3

Is there a relationship between the degree to which school counselors report that the ASCA National Model has been implemented in their school and their level of job burnout?

Participants were asked to complete the SCPIS and the MBI-ES surveys. A linear regression was used to determine the relationship between established fully implemented school counseling programs and job burnout. The linear regression was used to compare the means of the SCPIS and the MBI-ES. There are some assumptions that should be met with a linear regression. A scatterplot showed that the variables had a linear relationship. There were no significant outliers in the data. As demonstrated with the scatterplot, the data has homoscedasticity, the data followed a line showing predictability.

Research Question 4

To what extent is a counselor's personal background (gender; age; school setting; level; years as a school counselor; caseload size; part- or full-time employment status; and professional organization membership) related to either their implementation of the ASCA National Model in their schools or to their job burnout?

School Counselors were asked to complete information about themselves and their personal characteristics (gender; age; school setting; level; years as a school counselor; caseload size; part- or full-time employment status; and professional organizations). These demographic data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to report the mean and standard deviations of each population. These variables were individually measured and analyzed against the information

from the MBI-ES using a MANOVA, to measure interactions between all the different variables. The MANOVA measures the multiple variables analyzing for factors that may increase or decrease burnout or implementation.

For establishing validity of the complete survey a convenience sample of school counselors took the complete survey in a test pilot in December of 2013. From the feedback it was found that the survey took between 10-15 minutes to complete with a variable of interruption adding time to finish the survey. SurveyGizmo has estimated the amount of time to finish the survey as being 5-10 minutes. One of the items was mistakenly typed in twice and was removed after being discovered.

Limitations and Delimitations

Threats to the internal validity of this study are the treatments, experiences of the participants, and experimental procedures that imply alternative explanations of the data other than those proposed by the researcher. External validity is threatened when researchers incorrectly generalize the findings of a study to other people, places, and settings (McMillian, 2009).

Other internal threats to this study include attitudes, history, instrumentation, and selection of participants. Participants' experiences and their history may influence responses beyond variables included in this study. For example, recent experiences with training at conferences that school counselors attended may bear a greater influence on their knowledge and bias regarding the ASCA National Model and their school counseling programs. While sampling will include all school counselors in Virginia, due to the voluntary nature of the survey, a selection bias exists. Therefore, there may be differences between those school counselors who chose to fill out the survey and those who choose not to complete the survey. Researcher bias

may exist against the chosen instrumentation. Participants' attitudes also create a threat to internal validity. Depending on participants' view of the study, responses may be skewed to show more or less job burnout or too much or not enough implementation of the school counseling program.

Different regions of Virginia and the timing that the school counselors received the email message requests to participate in the study may have created varying results and response rates. For example, school counselors from larger schools with larger school counseling departments may have more or less time to complete the survey, compared to counselors in smaller schools where the school counselor may be alone. Thus, the findings of the study may be less generalizable in circumstances where data may be limited due to geographic region. Also, if school counselors complete the survey early in the school year, they may report less job burnout than if they completed the survey later in the school year.

This study limits itself to school counselors in the Commonwealth of Virginia from all school educational levels (elementary, middle, and secondary). A necessary consideration involves survey response rate; only those participants who complete the survey and return it will be included in the study. Therefore, the research will include input only from individuals who choose to answer and return the survey. In addition, the results may not be generalizable to school counselors in other states or countries.

The School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS) instrument measured the perception of school counselor participants and their individual school's counseling program. Participants may have been biased in favor of their own programs.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educator's Survey (MBI-ES) measured how school counselor participants feel about their jobs. Participants will be asked to reflect on their feelings

regarding their jobs as school counselors.

Strengths of Study

A strength of this study is the potential for a diverse and large sample. The sample was obtained from a comprehensive list of school counseling directors who, in turn, passed the survey on to the school counselors in their school system. Perspective study participants included all elementary, middle, high school, and multi-level school counselors in the Commonwealth of Virginia. In addition, members of ASCA who live in Virginia, and all members of VSCA were surveyed.

Assumptions of Study

It is assumed that all participants understood the questions of the surveys and were able rate each item honestly and accurately with minimum outside influence from their social world and experiences. It is also assumed that participants are able to answer the survey with a minimum of assistance needed as it is expected that the respondents have the ability to read and be familiar with computer surveys.

Summary of Methodology

This chapter has explained the methods used in this quantitative study of multi-level school counselors in Virginia. The next chapter presents the results obtained.

Chapter Four

Results

The purpose of this research study was to assess the degree of implementation of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model and to determine whether that implementation is related to burnout among school counselors. This chapter provides the results of the study. It is organized in the following order: preliminary data screening and description of variables, descriptive data for participants, and analysis of results as they relate to the research questions.

Preliminary Data Screening and Description of Variables

Prior to analysis related to research questions, SurveyGizmo separated the unfinished and the missing data from the complete survey data so that it would not be calculated into the final analysis. For individual variables, no variable had more than 5% of the cases missing. SurveyGizmo automatically checks the responses and sends this variable analysis to the researcher.

Descriptive Data for Participants

In total, the directors of 100 school districts in Virginia were asked to forward the survey to their school counselors. Of these directors, five responded stating that they had forwarded the survey to their school counselors resulting in 114 surveys being sent from directors. The five directors were from the western part of the state of Virginia in smaller school districts. A total of 1,175 American School Counseling Association (ASCA) members living in Virginia were sent surveys. In addition, 522 Virginia School Counseling Association members who were not in ASCA were sent surveys. Out of the 1,811 surveys sent, 409 (N= 409) counselors responded,

equating to a response rate of 22%. After data screening, it was determined that all of the 409 responses were complete and usable.

Of these 409 participants, 89% self-reported as female, 79% as White, and over half (57%) indicated they worked in either suburban or urban settings. Of the school counselors who responded, 44% worked in elementary schools and 91% worked full time (see Table 1).

Table 1

Demographics of School Counselors

	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Female	365	89.24
Male	42	10.27
Other	2	4.90
Racial Background		
White	327	79.95
African American	57	13.94
Other	25	6.11
Work Location		
City	37	9.05
Rural	135	33.01
Suburban	183	44.74
Urban	51	12.47
Unanswered	3	0.73

Level of Work

Elementary	182	44.50
Middle	76	18.58
High	126	30.81
Other/Mixture	25	6.11
Full time/Part time		
Full time	373	91.20
Part time	32	7.82
Mixture	4	0.98

The average respondent was 44 years old, with 11 years of experience and had a caseload of 406 students (see Table 2).

Table 2

Demographics of School Counselors, Continued

	Average	Median	SD
Years Experience	11.05	10	8.57
Age	43.96	43	11.57
Caseload	406.40	370	204.18

In response to questions regarding the ASCA model, 97% of the school counselors reported that they were very or somewhat familiar with the ASCA model, but less than 10% reported that their schools were Recognized ASCA Model Programs (RAMP). A total of 65% reported their school counseling programs were in alignment with the ASCA model. A total of 79% of school counselors indicated that they talked about the ASCA model more than once a

year. Over half (52%) of the school counselors in this study indicated that their principal was supportive of the ASCA model (see Table 3).

Table 3

ASCA National Model

	Frequency	Percent
Familiar with ASCA model		
Not Familiar	3	0.73
Somewhat familiar	131	32.03
Very Familiar	267	65.28
RAMP school		
Yes	39	9.54
No	329	80.44
Don't know	35	8.56
Aligned with ASCA		
Yes	266	65.04
No	108	26.41
Don't know	27	6.60
Often ASCA model discussed		
Always	34	8.31
Frequently	128	31.30
Sometimes	164	40.10
Once a year	22	5.38

Never	58	14.18
Principal support		
Yes	212	51.83
No	31	7.58
Don't know	162	39.61

Research Question 1

The first research question was the following: To what extent do school counselors in Virginia report having implemented the ASCA National Model in their schools? On the School Counselor Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS), respondents were asked to indicate for 20 items that are included in the ASCA model the degree to which their school counseling program had implemented those items, specifically whether the area had been fully implemented, partially implemented, development in progress, or not present.

The school counselors in this study reported high levels of implementation of the ASCA model. Respondents indicated that the four areas of the ASCA National Model that were most often fully implemented in their schools included the following: referral system for student crises (78%); school counselors use computer software (75%); students receive guidance lessons (72%); and all students served (71%). Around half of those responding reported that three additional areas were often reported as being fully implemented: 80% spent in activities that benefit students (50%); all students have academic plans (50%); and includes interventions to improve school (49%).

The two areas most often reported as not having been implemented at all include the following: analyzing data to close achievement gaps (21%) and school counselors

represented on committees (20%). Seven additional areas were reported as having high levels of not having been implemented: use data for school improvement (14%); job descriptions match actual duties (14%); needs assessments (13%); annual review of program (13%); attend professional development (13%); all students have academic plans (12%); and use of software to analyze student data (12%; see Table 4).

The item “all students have academic plans” appeared on the list of most implemented and on the list of least implemented. This is most likely due to the fact that high school counselors ensure students have academic plans, while elementary and middle school counselors do not usually create academic plans for younger students.

Table 4

School Counselor Program Implementation Survey

Items	FI	PI	DIP	NP
1 Mission statement	58.92	20.05	8.07	2.96
2 All students served	70.66	22.68	4.65	1.71
3 Plan for closing achievement gaps	39.36	33.99	16.87	9.78
4 Clear measurable student goals	44.99	31.54	13.69	9.78
5 Needs Assessments	32.52	34.96	19.80	12.71
6 Students receive guidance lessons	72.37	15.16	4.40	8.07
7 All students have academic plans	49.63	28.61	9.54	12.22
8 Referral system for student crisis	77.51	16.87	3.18	2.44
9 Use of data to meet student needs	44.25	41.56	9.54	4.65

10	Analyzing data to close achievement gaps	28.85	33.01	17.36	20.78
11	Job descriptions match actual duties	34.37	36.67	15.16	13.69
12	80% spent in activities that benefit students	49.88	32.03	9.54	8.56
13	Includes interventions to improve school	49.39	34.72	12.22	3.67
14	Annual review of program	38.88	32.76	15.65	12.71
15	School counselors use computer software	75.31	16.38	2.93	5.38
16	Use of software to analyze student data	44.74	31.78	11.49	11.98
17	Use data for school improvement	39.12	33.25	13.69	13.94
18	Attend professional development	43.52	32.76	11.00	12.71
19	School counselors represented on committees	27.87	31.78	20.29	20.05
20	Parent feedback for improvement	47.19	34.72	12.47	5.62

FI = Fully Implemented
 PI = Partly Implemented
 DIP – Development in Progress
 NP = Not Present

Research Question 2

The second research question was: To what extent do school counselors in Virginia report job burnout?

Counselors in this study were asked to complete the 22-item Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educator’s Survey (MBI-ES). On the survey, counselors were asked to indicate how often they experienced each of 22 emotions or actions: everyday; a few times a week; once a week; a few times a month; once a month; a few times a year; or never.

Overall, school counselors participating in this study reported low levels of burnout and high levels of personal achievement (see Table 5).

Table 5

Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educator's Survey

Items	E	FW	OW	FM	OM	FY	N
1 Emotionally drained	5.87	15.65	11.98	25.92	13.94	23.96	2.69
2 Used up	7.58	20.54	9.54	27.87	10.02	20.54	3.91
3 Fatigued in the morning	4.65	9.29	6.11	18.83	8.31	29.34	23.47
4 Easily understand	77.02	14.18	2.93	3.42	1.22	1.22	0.00
5 Treat student impersonal	0.00	0.73	0.00	2.20	0.98	15.16	80.93
6 Strain working with people	0.49	0.98	2.20	5.62	8.31	41.32	41.08
7 Deal effectively with problems	76.53	19.56	1.71	0.73	0.24	0.73	0.49
8 Burned out from work	4.40	5.38	2.93	14.67	15.16	44.99	12.47
9 Positively influencing	57.21	25.92	5.13	7.33	2.69	1.71	0.00
10 Callous toward people	0.49	1.22	0.73	4.40	3.91	22.74	66.50
11 Worry about job hardening	1.47	1.71	1.22	3.91	6.85	26.65	58.19
12 Feel energetic	30.56	41.56	8.56	12.21	3.18	2.69	1.22
13 Feel frustrated	4.65	11.74	10.51	17.36	14.43	34.72	6.60
14 Working too hard	7.58	12.71	6.60	18.83	11.98	26.16	16.14
15 Don't care about students	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.49	0.00	6.11	93.40
16 Working directly stresses	0.24	1.47	0.49	4.40	4.89	32.27	56.32
17 Create a relaxing atmosphere	84.84	11.98	1.71	0.98	0.00	0.00	0.49
18 Feel exhilarated	51.59	32.27	7.33	4.89	1.22	1.22	1.47
19 Have accomplished much	44.50	33.01	8.07	9.29	2.69	2.44	0.00

20	Feel at end of my rope	1.22	2.93	1.47	4.65	4.65	31.54	53.55
21	Deal with emotional problems	75.31	21.03	1.71	1.47	0.24	0.24	0.00
22	Feel that students blame me	0.00	0.49	1.22	3.91	2.93	27.14	64.30

E= Everyday

FW = Few times a week

OW = Once a week

FM = Few times a month

OM = Once a month

FY = Few times a year

N = Never

The school counselors in this study were asked to indicate how often they experienced burnout symptoms, from every day to never. This survey measured three different criteria of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Higher scores in depersonalization and emotional exhaustion and low scores on personal accomplishment are indicative of burnout in this survey. The items in which high scores indicated feelings of personal accomplishment were easily understanding student (4), dealing effectively with problems (7), positively influencing others (9), feeling energetic (12), creating a relaxing atmosphere (17), feeling exhilarated (18), feeling accomplished (19), and dealing with emotional problems (21). High numbers in the other items of the survey (1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, and 22) were indicative of feelings of depersonalization and emotional exhaustion.

Counselors who participated in this study indicated that every day they experienced the following: create a relaxing atmosphere (85%); easily understand (77%); deal effectively with problems (77%); and deal with emotional problems (75%).

On the contrary, the majority of the counselors in this study indicated they never experienced the following: don't care about students (93%); treat student impersonal (81%);

callous toward people (67%); feel that students blame me (64%); worry about job hardening (58%); working directly stresses (56%); and feel at end of my rope (54%).

Research Question 3

The third research question was the following: Is there a relationship between the degree to which school counselors report that the ASCA National Model has been implemented in their school and their level of job burnout?

After analyzing the data utilizing a regression, it was determined that the degree of implementation of the ASCA National Model is inversely related to burnout rate. The regression was used to predict burnout in relation to the implementation of the ASCA National Model. Implementation of the ASCA National Model accounted for 11.25% outcome for burnout rates (see Table 6).

Table 6

Summary of Multiple Linear Regression Predicting Burnout based on Implementation of the ASCA National Model

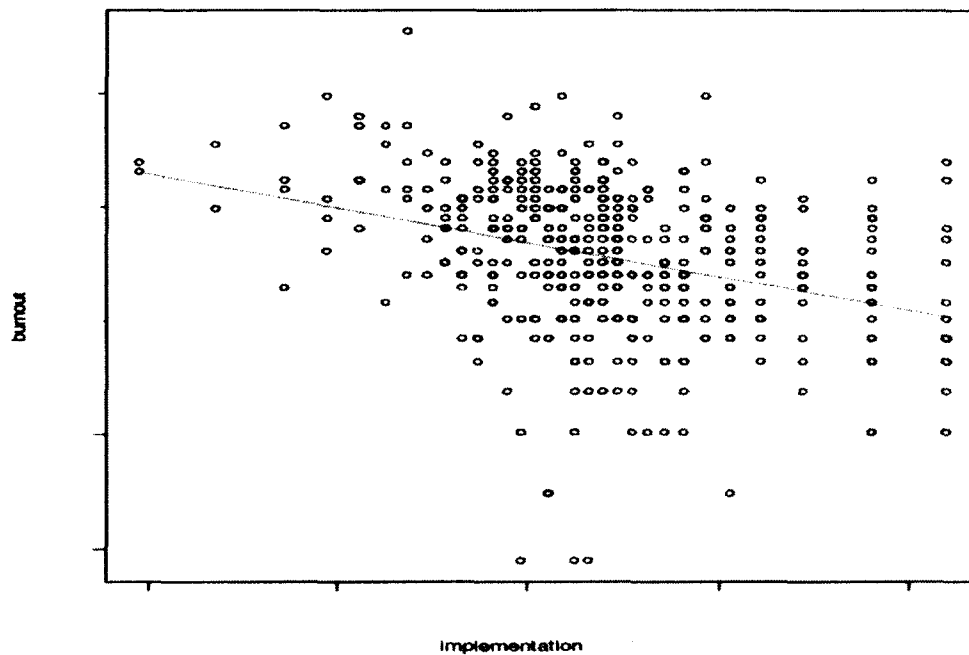
Coefficients	B SE	B	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Burnout	-0.63	0.07	-8.78	0.000 ***
Implementation	-0.30	0.04	-7.18	0.000 ***

Notes: $R^2 = .1125$ $p = >.00$

As indicated above, burnout decreases with greater levels of implementation of the ASCA National Model (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Scatterplot of Burnout and Implementation correlation



A greater implementation of the ASCA National Model in a school results in lower burnout experienced by school counselors. Higher burnout rates indicate a lower degree of implementation of the ASCA National Model.

Research Question 4

The fourth research question was the following: To what extent is a counselor's personal background (gender; age; school setting; level; years as a school counselor; caseload size; part- or full-time employment status; and professional organization membership) related to either their implementation of the ASCA National Model in their schools or to their job burnout?

A Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to analyze the data.

Implementation outcomes appear to be statistically influenced by work location (Rural, Suburban, Urban, and City) and level (Elementary, Middle, High), as well as by variables related to how much the school is aligned with ASCA program. Burnout levels appear to be statistically influenced by gender, work level and by variables related to how much the school is aligned with ASCA program (see Table 7).

Table 7

Summary of variables interacting with Burnout and Implementation

Coefficients	Pillari's Trace	df	F	<i>Pr(>F)</i>
Gender	.10408	1	2.0278	.00*
Work Location	.16002	3	.98	.52
Part/Full time	.066576	1	1.2384	.21
Work Level	.2485	3	1.57	.00**
Familiarity ASCA	.094364	2	.85082	.74
Alignment ASCA	.18486	2	1.7498	.00**
Freq. discussed	.43545	4	2.3516	<0.0
Principal Support	.22372	2	2.2977	< 0.0
RAMP	.11933	2	1.096	.31

Note: $p > .05$

Female school counselors reported higher levels of burnout than their male counterparts. Counselors in rural settings reported higher levels of implementation. Full time school

counselors showed higher burnout rates than part time counselors. Elementary school counselors indicated higher levels of implementation and lower burnout than high school counselors. Familiarity with the ASCA model was not significant in regards to burnout or implementation. How much a school is aligned with the ASCA model was directly related to high implementation and low burnout. Frequently talking about the ASCA National Model, principal support, and being a RAMP school had no significant relationship to burnout or implementation ($p=.0$).

Summary

This chapter provided the results of the study.

Research question 1 findings indicated that school counselors in Virginia reported high implementation of the ASCA National Model. Respondents indicated that the most implemented areas of the ASCA National Model in their schools were a written mission statement; organized services for students; diverse guidance lessons; effective referrals for students in crisis; and using computers to access student data. The areas of least implementation were needs assessments guiding the program; analyzing student data to close achievement gaps; an annual review of the program; counselors being represented on education committees; and the job description matching the actual job.

Research question 2 results showed that school counselors in Virginia reported low levels of burnout and high levels of personal achievement. This survey measured three different criteria of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Higher scores in depersonalization and emotional exhaustion and low scores on personal accomplishment are indicative of burnout in this survey. The items in which high scores indicated feelings of personal accomplishment were easily understanding student (4), dealing effectively with problems (7), positively influencing others (9), feeling energetic (12), creating a

relaxing atmosphere (17), feeling exhilarated (18), feeling accomplished (19), and dealing with emotional problems (21). High numbers in the other items of the survey (1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, & 22) were indicative of feelings of depersonalization and emotional exhaustion.

The analysis for research question 3 found a significant relationship between high implementation of the ASCA National Model and low burnout. Implementation of the ASCA National Model accounts for 11.25% outcome for burnout rates. Burnout decreases with greater levels of implementation of the ASCA National Model. Greater implementation of the ASCA National Model in a school results in lower burnout experienced by school counselors. Higher burnout rates indicate a lower degree of implementation of the ASCA National Model.

Research question 4 results indicated that work setting and level are related to implementation of the ASCA National Model. Gender and work level affects burnout experiences by counselors. Counselors in rural settings reported higher levels of implementation. Elementary school counselors indicated higher levels of implementation and lower burnout than high school counselors. Female school counselors reported higher levels of burnout than their male counterparts. Full time school counselors showed higher burnout rates than part time counselors. How much a school is aligned with the ASCA model was directly related to high implementation and low burnout.

This study found that Virginia school counselors reported high levels of implementation of the ASCA National Model and low burnout rates. In addition, analysis of the data collected indicated that counselors in schools that had implemented the ASCA model had less burnout than counselors in schools that had not adopted the model.

Chapter Five

Discussion

This chapter presents a discussion of the results of this study. This chapter is organized in the following order: summary of findings, implications for school counselors, implications for counselor educators, implications for ASCA, limitations of the study, and suggestions for future research.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate school counselor burnout in Virginia and the effects of the implementation of the ASCA National Model. Variables of age, years of experience, gender, and level of work were assessed to determine whether they were related to level of burnout experienced and degree of implementation of the ASCA National Model in their school counseling program. The population for this survey was school counselors in the Commonwealth of Virginia who were members of the Virginia School Counselor Association (VSCA), members of the American School Counselors Association (ASCA) living in Virginia, and whose directors agreed to pass the survey to them. Of the 1,811 surveys sent, 409 were returned completed, equating to a 22% response rate.

A diversity of school counselors responded to the study. Both full- and part-time counselors participated, representing the full range of K-12 schools. Participants had an average of 11 years of experience as school counselors. The majority of the school counselors were full-time workers. Most of the school counselors were from elementary school settings. A total of 89% of the respondents indicated that they were female. Schools from various settings were represented: suburban areas, rural areas, and urban areas/cities.

Generally the survey sample matches the profile of school counselors nationally. However, more elementary school counselors returned surveys than would have been expected. According to Stephanie Wicks (personal correspondence, 2014), ASCA administrator, elementary school counselors account only 25% of the ASCA membership, yet the majority of the participants in this study were elementary school counselors. A total of 80% of the ASCA membership is female and in this study 89% of the participants were female.

Research Question 1

The participants in this study reported an overall high level of implementation of the ASCA National Model. Respondents indicated that the four areas of the ASCA National Model that were most often fully implemented in their schools included the following: referral system for student crises; school counselors use computer software; students receive guidance lessons; and all students served. Around half of those responding reported three additional areas as being fully implemented: 80% of counselor time spent in activities that benefit students; all students have academic plans; and counseling program includes interventions to improve school.

The results are not surprising. Previous studies have shown that school counselors enjoy counseling their students but do not enjoy non-counseling duties (Baggerly, 2009; Kolodinsky, Draves, Schroder, Lindsey, & Zlatev, 2009; Smith, 2009). School counselors are student focused. They are counseling students and meeting student needs in their schools. The areas in which these fully implemented programs fall short are in the delivery system and foundation areas of the ASCA National Model. The delivery system encompasses all areas of student services, crisis interventions, curriculum, and academic planning. A mission statement, goals, and the ASCA National standards for students fall under the foundation area (ASCA, 2011).

The two areas of the ASCA National Model most often reported as not having been implemented were analyzing data to close achievement gaps and school counselors represented on committees. Seven additional areas were reported as having high levels of not having been implemented: use data for school improvement; job descriptions match actual duties; needs assessment; annual review of program; attend professional development; all students have academic plans; and use of software to analyze student data. The lowest levels of the implementation of the ASCA National Model were using data to analyze student achievement gaps and interventions; having an annual evaluation; and doing needs assessments. These items are all included under the accountability aspect of the ASCA National Model. Another low-ranked item, job description matching the actual job, falls under the management systems aspect of the model.

These findings are surprising given the push toward a data driven school counseling curriculum in recent years. Being data-driven is the topic of many school counseling conferences. However, perhaps few counselors feel comfortable with the technical portion of data analysis and do not know how to devise surveys. Gathering and analyzing data might be a good area for school counselors to collaborate with their math departments to partner together to gather data and then analyze it after it has been collected. These findings suggest that school counselors are still not comfortable with aspects of the ASCA National Model relating to accountability. On a very positive note, school counselors are student focused. They are meeting student needs on a daily basis and they are counseling. Now, school counselors need the data to demonstrate the effectiveness of their counseling groups, curriculum, and planning sessions.

There is not much research regarding the ASCA National Model components and implementation within the schools, as discussed in Chapter 2. The findings in this study are consistent with the study by Barnett (2010), which found that school counselors indicated that the least amount of their time was spent on the accountability component of the ASCA National Model. Walsh et al. (2009) also found that school counselors were experiencing difficulty in finding time to spend on the accountability piece of the ASCA National Model. Walsh et al. (2009) found that it is possible for newly hired school counselors to effectively implement the four components of the delivery system of the ASCA National Model. However, counselors in the study were unable to focus on collecting data for the accountability component of the ASCA National Model.

The types of job duties that are fully implemented are all related to direct student support services. This finding is in alignment with the ASCA recommendation that school counselors spend at least 80% of their time in direct service to students. School counseling has shifted from individual counseling with a few students to systemically working with all students (Walsh, Barrett, & Depaul, 2007).

It is promising that school counselors indicated that they were in the process of developing needs assessments, sitting on education committees, and using data to help students improve school interventions. The ASCA National Model emphasizes that school counselors should be data-driven in school programs to enhance accountability and to assist with school counselor retention (ASCA, 2012). Being seen as a part of the school team working with teachers and administrators helps enhance positive relations and understanding of school counselors (Clark & Amatea, 2004). School counselors recognized that in order to implement

the ASCA National Model program in their school, they need to be leaders (Scarborough & Luke, 2008). By advocating for a strong counseling program within the school and volunteering for committees, school counselors can be seen as school leaders.

Research Question 2

This study found that school counselors reported low levels of burnout and high levels of personal accomplishment. This survey measured three different criteria of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Personal accomplishment questions encompassed personal connection and empathy with students. These questions asked about easily understanding students, feeling effective, being a positive influence, and feeling energetic. Ranking high in personal accomplishment indicates that overall school counselors are happy in their jobs.

On the opposite end of the emotional spectrum, questions include the frequency of feeling *used up* at the end of the day, frustrated by aspects of the job, and not caring what happens to students. Strong responses to these types of questions were indicative of feelings of depersonalization and emotional exhaustion, which are classic indicators of burnout.

Most counselors who participated in this study indicated that they could easily create a relaxing atmosphere for their students, could easily understand their students, and could effectively deal with problems confronting their students on a daily basis.

Further, most of the respondents to the survey indicated that they never lapsed into not caring for their students or treating them impersonally. A smaller majority reported never having feelings that they were hardened by their job, that their job directly affected stress levels in their lives, or that they were at the end of their rope.

These findings correspond with Bane's (2006) findings that school counselors in Virginia were satisfied with their jobs and planned to stay in their jobs for at least the next 5 years. The study's findings also parallel those of Windle, who in 2009 found that school counselor respondents reported job satisfaction and planned to stay in school counseling despite experiencing frustration with non-counseling related duties and caseloads above the recommended ASCA 250:1 ratio.

The population of school counselors that participated in this study did not score high in burnout overall. Perhaps the reason behind these results is due to high implementation of the ASCA National Model. The ASCA National Model, when incorporated properly in the schools, allows school counselors to work with their students more and not be bogged down with non-counseling duties. In a study by Smith (2009), 89% of the North Carolina school counselors surveyed reported job stress was a result of performing non-counseling duties and 81% reported job dissatisfaction was a result of performing these non-counseling duties. Testing and clerical duties were listed as the two most common non-counseling tasks that interrupted counseling duties. In another study, Arizona school counselors reported that the way they spent their time was found to have a significant relationship to job satisfaction (Kolodinsky, Draves, Schroder, Lindsey, & Zlatev, 2009). Time spent with students and teachers made the school counselors more satisfied with their jobs, while performing non-counseling activities resulted in less satisfaction.

Research Question 3

Research question 3 found a significant relationship between high implementation of the ASCA National Model and low burnout. Implementation of the ASCA National Model accounts for an 11.25% outcome difference for burnout rates. Burnout decreases with greater levels of

implementation of the ASCA National Model. Greater implementation of the ASCA National Model in a school results in lower burnout rates experienced by school counselors. Higher burnout rates indicate a lower degree of implementation of the ASCA National Model.

These findings correlate with those of Baggerly (2006), McCarthy et al. (2010), Woods (2009), Smith (2009), and Kolodinsky et al. (2009). These studies found that the more school counselors were able to do jobs that were defined by ASCA as appropriate counseling duties, the more satisfied the school counselors felt with their jobs. Smith (2009) found that 89% of North Carolina school counselors surveyed reported job stress was a result of performing non-counseling duties and 81% reported job dissatisfaction was a result of performing these non-counseling duties. In an Arizona study, it was found that the way school counselors spent their time had a significant relationship to job satisfaction (Kolodinsky, Draves, Schroder, Lindsey, & Zlatev, 2009). Time spent with students and teachers made the school counselors more satisfied with their jobs, while performing non-counseling activities resulted in less satisfaction. McCarthy et al., (2010) found the most demanding stressors of a school counselor's job to be paperwork and high caseloads. Another study found non-counseling activities significantly predicted a decrease in work wellness in school counselors (Woods, 2009).

The findings in this study agree with other studies that have shown that school counselor stress is due to performing non-counselor duties. Prolonged stress of executing these tasks on a daily basis leads to burnout (Maslach & Goldberg, 1998). Job satisfaction can be a protective measure against burnout (Bressi et al., 2009) With current budget cuts there are less resources to work with and this adds stress for counselors (Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005). Teaching

counselors self-care and meditation leads to less symptoms of burnout (Schure, Christopher, & Christopher, 2008).

Research Question 4

This study examined personal and environmental factors that may have influenced implementation of the ASCA National Model or burnout among school counselors. Gender and work level had a significant relationship with burnout and implementation. Women indicated higher levels of burnout. High school counselors reported high levels of burnout and lower implementation. No statistically significant effect on ratings was found as a result of familiarity with the ASCA National Model, age, years of experience, frequently talking about the ASCA National Model, principal support, or being a RAMP school. This study found that the personal and environmental variables of school counselors listed above did not affect the implementation of the ASCA National Model or burnout in the schools.

Research question 4 results indicated that some interactions with gender, work setting, and level are related to implementation of the ASCA National Model. Counselors in rural settings reported higher levels of implementation. Elementary school counselors indicated higher levels of implementation and lower burnout than high school counselors. Female school counselors reported higher levels of burnout than their male counterparts. Full time school counselors showed higher burnout rates than part time counselors. How much a school is aligned with the ASCA National Model was directly related to high implementation and low burnout.

These findings coincide with other earlier studies. Rayle (2006) found that high school counselors indicated less job satisfaction and higher stress than other levels of school counselors. Windle (2009) found that school counselors are willing to stay in their jobs despite the higher caseloads and daily frustrations. Rayle (2006) further found that elementary school counselors

had lower burnout and higher implementation and were more satisfied and had less paperwork to do than their middle and high school counterparts. Scarborough's study in 2005 found that work level has significant interactions with job duties which in turn affects ASCA National Model implementation, which also supports the findings in this study.

The findings in this study are different from the findings in a study conducted by Kee, Johnson, and Hunt, who in 2002 found that rural counselors had higher burnout and lower social support. In this study, rural counselors reported lower burnout due to higher ASCA National Model implementation. Maslach, Scheufeli, and Leiter (2001) found that gender had not been positively identified as a significant variable in burnout, while this study positively identified women as having a higher burnout rate.

Implications for School Counselors

As indicated in the data, the more the ASCA National Model is implemented in schools the lower the burnout among school counselors. When school counselors begin to feel burned out, perhaps they should look at the ASCA National Model, analyze where the weaknesses in implementation are, and work to close that gap in order to lessen the effects of their own personal burnout. School counselors need to examine the weakest areas of implementation of the model and strengthen them. Management systems and accountability areas of the model should be investigated and implemented within the schools. Once these items are addressed, there will be a stronger basis for implementation of the full model as intended.

In the test oriented education system of today, it behooves school counselors to use data to show improvement of student achievement and the entire school through the school counseling program curriculum. Budget cuts in schools tend to cause worry among staff and

data showing the effectiveness of school counseling programs can prove the necessity of school counselors. School counselors should view research as a daily active piece of their jobs.

The student caseload of the participants in this study was an average of 406 students per counselor, which is much higher than the ASCA National Model recommendation of 250 students per counselor. Although caseload did not seem to bear any significant influence on burnout or implementation in this study, other studies have pointed to caseload being a variable worth further study. With the lack of school counselors on education and curriculum committees advocating for the school counseling program, it is important that counselors volunteer to be an active member on important school committees.

High school counselors should be aware that there has been a trend shown in studies that they do more clerical duties and have higher burnout. They should take proactive steps toward eliminating the excessive paperwork and to improve their self-care. School counselors should use the results of this study as proof that implementing the ASCA National Model helps to create a healthier and more effective school counselor. School counselors should be applauded for their empathy and care of students evidenced in the results of this study. They should be reminded that they do great work with their students and with the overall balance of burnout prevention.

The foundation and delivery areas of the ASCA National Model are well developed in schools. Student services and having a mission statement with goals which are parts of the foundation and delivery system are highly implemented. It is because of the focus by school counselors to be active with their students that this survey obtained such positive results. The results of this study pointed out how dedicated school counselors are and how they care for their students. School counselors are an integral part of schools and help make student achievement

happen. With a little shift of focus, hopefully school counselors will come to understand that being data driven further helps students by giving measureable data that enables administrators the means to advocate for their school counseling program and their students more effectively.

Data will show that school counselors are effective and that the programs that they have in place work. Data will also provide school counselors with developing an awareness of real student needs and how to evolve the counseling program to fit the new needs and challenges of today's youth. It is the data that will end up saving school counselor jobs when budgets run low and positions must be cut. School counselors need to use the free resources provided to them through the ASCA website to increase their collection and analysis of data. They also should network with counselors in nearby districts to see how their colleagues are using data to justify their school counseling programs. Collecting and analyzing data to support school counseling programs is an ongoing task that will evolve over time. By working together, all school counselors in all schools, districts, and states can learn to utilize data in their jobs.

Implications for Counselor Educators

As indicated by this study's findings school counselor educators should shift some of the focus in their courses to include more emphasis on the accountability and management systems piece of the ASCA National Model. Foundations, which focus on goals, the delivery system, and student services, tend to get more focus. Foundation and delivery system may be the easiest to accomplish. Accountability, with data collection and analysis is not practiced enough in school counseling master's degree programs so that when it comes to actual day to day practice, counselors shy away from collecting and analyzing data.

The ASCA National Model management system, which encompasses use of time, agreements with the principal, and advisory councils, can also be a tough area to implement. Principals may not want to agree to another *contract* after the school counselor has already signed one with the school board. An agreement may create boundaries that a principal may not wish to create. Starting an advisory council means time after school hours to plan and meet.

Having students come up with a plan on how they could implement these different difficult tasks may help school counselors include these items in their jobs easier. Having future school counselors present to the class how they would communicate to different stakeholders would be a tool counselor educators could put into practice. This step could also allow school counselors to practice advocacy in the classroom to take into their future work places. These findings suggest that school counselor educators could become advocates to mandate that job descriptions match actual duties for school counselors. The ASCA expectation of advocacy can be more broadly taught to include more emphasis on self-advocacy as pertaining to school counselor responsibilities.

School counselor educators could also place more emphasis on counselor self-care and relaxation techniques to help act as a barrier against burnout. As the findings of this study suggest, educators should recognize that within the next 16 years, there will be a need for school counselors as current counselors reach retirement age. Since there is a lack of male and diverse ethnicities in school counselors, counselor educators should actively recruit these minorities into their graduate programs.

School counselor educators should be proud to know that their education of the ASCA National Model through the years is working. This study found that school counselors felt

comfortable in their knowledge of the ASCA National Model. The next step might be for school counselor educators to teach students how to seek RAMP status and to emphasize the importance of RAMP status to their school counseling program. More research should be completed regarding the implementation of the ASCA National Model and positive changes in the schools and students. If more connections can be made between implementation and academic success such as Ward's 2009 study, then there will be more evidence supporting further implementation of the ASCA National Model. School counselor educators should continue to advocate for change, educate for the future, and conduct studies to support the important of the ASCA National Model.

Implications for ASCA

American School Counseling Association (ASCA) leaders should be pleased that this study found that the ASCA National Model is helping to relieve some stress from school counselors and is preventing burnout. They have helped to define the role of the modern school counselor. Advocacy at state levels down to local levels can address the ongoing job description versus actual job activities discrepancy. ASCA leaders can use the results of this research study to prove that the ASCA National Model promotes healthier work environments for school counselors.

ASCA leaders might want to re-evaluate management systems and accountability guidelines to determine how to more easily implement these items. There are many resources available for the process for becoming a RAMP school however; not many school counselors are actively seeking RAMP status for their schools. ASCA should examine the RAMP process and

investigate whether the process itself can be streamlined or changed. It may be that the RAMP process is too time consuming.

Elementary school counselors are typically alone and have full days of groups, classroom guidance, special education meetings, child study meetings, and whatever crisis may occur during the day. Middle schools may have more counselors and counselors in those schools have pre-adolescence issues, groups, classroom guidance, and some academic planning. High schools have multiple counselors and their time is filled throughout the day with guidance lessons, groups, scheduling, special education meetings, and crisis management. Finding time on a daily basis to collect information and then analyze data collected can be a challenge. The list of counselor responsibilities above does not even encompass the responsibilities that fall under the ASCA designated non-counseling duties that counselors have to do because the jobs still need to be done by someone and they have been given to school counselors to handle.

RAMP has been known to take up to three years to achieve. Changes in staff may hinder this process since it takes perseverance and years to complete. Some school districts may not have the money to pay for the RAMP process with budget cuts happening every year. ASCA should continue lobbying on behalf of school counselors in Congress and in state legislatures. Education reform should include added support for school counselors and funds for implementing the ASCA National Model.

Limitations to the study

Limitations exist that should be examined when interpreting the results of this study. These limitations relate to the instrument and the sample used. This research study was limited to only Virginia school counselors.

Instrumentation limitations

While the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) has had validity, reliability, and test re-test examined and authenticated, the School Counselor Implementation Program Survey (SCIPS) is a relatively new instrument. Data is still being compiled each time this survey is used in order to obtain validity, reliability, and solid test re-test results.

Another limitation relates to school counselors' interpretations of the questions asked in the demographic survey. The way the counselors defined words such as *city* and *urban* may have affected the demographic results. Survey data may be positively skewed due to the possibility that participants reported what they believed to be true or what they believed the researcher wished to hear (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The participants may have had a bias for or against the surveys used in this study.

Sampling limitations

The sample for this investigation consisted of school counselors who were employed in Virginia public school and most participants were members of either ASCA or VSCA. School counselors not belonging to professional organizations may have different experiences and attitudes. Research has suggested that membership in professional organizations is positively related to job satisfaction (Levinson, Fetchkan, & Hohenshil, 1988). Therefore, results may not apply to populations who are not in a professional organization, to those working in a private school setting, or to counselors working in schools outside of Virginia.

Although the number of survey responses was adequate for this study, the scope of the survey is inadequate to support generalizations on a regional or national basis. Another limitation of this study is related to the nature of responses to the survey. Although the survey was emailed to ASCA and VSCA members, it also was emailed to every director of counseling

in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Ideally, this distribution would reach every school counselor working in the state. However, due to the low rate of positive response from the counselor directors (a total of five), most responses were from counselors belonging to professional school counselor associations. The list of the school counseling directors was three years old (it may not have been up to date) and some of the directors may have passed on the e-mail and forgotten to respond; these two factors may have affected the response rate. There are school districts that do not allow their school counselors to take part in research studies without prior approval, thus counselors working in these districts were probably left out of the sample

The time of year during which the research took place may have also affected results due to testing schedules and other school activities. This data collection took place in the month of January in 2014, a time in which Virginia received a record amount of snow which may have hindered some counselors from answering the survey due to catching up after the school closings.

Suggestions for Future Research

As a follow up to this study, future research could explore other variables including (for example, educational background of counselors, job satisfaction, or relationship with the principal) in relation to implementation of the ASCA National Model. One suggested approach would be to survey only high school counselors to determine which factors are related to whether they have implemented the ASCA National Model.

Additionally, it is important to study the ASCA National Model components and areas that seem to be missing in the full implementation. Management systems and accountability (the two lowest scoring ASCA National Model aspects) should continue to be studied and analyzed to check for best practices in everyday work.

School counselors are indicating a high level of ASCA National Model implementation, and yet the number of Recognized ASCA Model Programs (RAMPs) in the Commonwealth of Virginia is surprising low. While over half the school counselors reported that their school counseling programs were in alignment with the ASCA National Model and that their principals supported the ASCA National Model; it is surprising that less than 10% are RAMP schools. Previous studies have pointed to principal support, counselor advocacy and programs already in existence that align with the ASCA National Model being necessary to seek RAMP status. A study should be completed to determine whether any systemic obstacles exist to impede full implementation of the model.

Similarly, it would be helpful to conduct research on advocacy and leadership among school counselors. There may be misunderstandings regarding the types of advocacy possible for school counselors and how to advocate in school and districts. Leadership has many definitions and many school counselors are leaders in their school, but how does ASCA want school counselors to be leaders? Clearly defined terminology might help school counselors achieve more in their schools.

An additional important area for future research is in technology use as it pertains to data analysis for school counselor use in schools. More use of technology may be an important tool to help school counselors continue toward their goal of being data driven. School counselors use computer programs to access student information on an everyday basis. A study could be completed to determine how to make data collection and analyzing user-friendly so that such tasks could be completed in an efficient and timely manner.

Burnout should continue to be monitored and studied due to potential for student and counselor damage. It would be enlightening to see a study that compared all duties that school counselors do on a yearly basis to the ASCA National Model. A study could compare how students, parents, teachers, administrators, and school counselors view a school counselor's roles and responsibilities.

It would be interesting to better understand how the grade level of students, parents of students in different grade levels, teachers of electives versus core subjects, assistant and principals in different settings affect how they view schools counselors. A study like this would have to include multiple schools and many different districts but would offer a unique view into routine jobs and responsibilities that are perceived by stakeholders as compared to how school counselors view themselves.

Summary

The purpose of this research study was to evaluate the implementation of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model and how that implementation is related to burnout among school counselors. Results indicated that the higher the implementation of the ASCA National Model in a school, the lower the burnout rate was for school counselors. The results may help school counselors working or interested in working in the school system to show another positive result of implementation of the ASCA National Model.

The results may also help school counselors strengthen the identified weakness in management systems and accountability. The results of this study may help counselor educators identify areas to improve training based on items listed as less implemented. The results of this study may help ASCA to continue to improve their National Model. Future research is

recommended to further explore the importance and positive results of full implementation of the ASCA National Model.

Chapter 6

Manuscript

DEGREE OF IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION MODEL
AND SCHOOL COUNSELOR BURNOUT

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the perceptions of school counselors in Virginia of the implementation of the ASCA National Model and burnout. Results indicated that school counselors with higher implementation of the ASCA National Model showed lower signs of burnout. Findings, suggestions for further research, and impact on the ASCA National Model are presented.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past 100 years, professional school counselors have undergone an evolution not only in name but in job description. School counselors face significant stress in their positions (Rayle, 2006). This stress leads to burnout, taking more days off, lower job satisfaction, and ultimately a search for a new job (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001).

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model (2005) provides guidelines for what school counselors should be doing in schools. School counselors are to avoid non-counselor duties. School administrators often thrust non-counselor duties upon school counselors. According to Rayle (2006), a school counselor's day has often been overtaken by tasks that include scheduling students for classes, registering students in schools, administering standardized tests, and paperwork. The ASCA National Model set a counselor-student ratio limit of 250 students per counselor. The reality is that student to counselor ratios often exceed the maximum recommended by the ASCA National Model (Portsmouth Public Schools, 2009). In addition, The ASCA National Model sets a clear standard that school counselors should be providing services in classrooms, seeing individual students, and running small groups. Some schools have added a testing coordinator to administer statewide testing which takes this non-counselor duty away from school counselors.

ASCA has defined the role of a school counselor for the profession (ASCA, 2008). ASCA dictates professional school counselors should be freed from performing clerical duties and should spend 80% of their time with direct student services. These direct student services include classroom guidance and small groups (ASCA, 2008). School counseling has shifted from individual counseling with a few students to systemically working with all students (Walsh, Barrett, & Depaul, 2007).

Schools that have adopted the ASCA National Model are awarded the status of Recognized ASCA Model Programs (RAMP). To be classified as RAMP, schools collect extensive data and have the consistent support of school and district administrators. Putting the program into practice can take three to five years (ASCA, 2012). The biggest factors identified as barriers to implementation of a RAMP program were lack of time to focus on ASCA National Model initiatives, difficulty balancing other roles and responsibilities, and lack of support from school and district administrators (Ward, 2009). Given the current trends and issues faced by professional school counselors and the push toward attaining RAMP status, job satisfaction and burnout may be important issues to consider. School counselors who perceived that they mattered more to others at work have reported greater levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of job related stress (Rayle, 2006).

Graduate counseling programs are expected to prepare students for the responsibilities of contemporary school counselors. A study conducted by Jaeger and Tesh (1989) found that school counselor preparation programs need to better prepare students for the broad spectrum of duties they will be expected to perform. CACREP standard number 5 mandates that graduate students should be familiar with the current ASCA National Model (2009), which defines school counseling and the roles of the counselor within the school. A recent study of school counselors in Arizona found that most of the frustration experienced by school counselors came from requirements to perform duties not associated with their primary roles (Kolodinsky, Draves, Schroder, Lindsey, & Zlatev, 2009). Their frustrations reflect a reality that is considered problematic for school counselors across the nation. Most school divisions do not adhere to the ASCA National Model. Patrick (2007) found that school counselors were torn between wanting to shift toward the ASCA National Model and needing to perform tasks not associated with that

model. Since school systems cannot be forced to adopt the ASCA National Model, counselors are expected to continue to perform all the non-counselor duties currently required of them. However, college-level and graduate school-level curricula focus on the role of the counselor and providing the skills necessary to counsel students (Brown & Srebalus, 2003).

It has been suggested that increased burnout experienced by school counselors is due to school administrators urging school counselors to follow the ASCA National Model, which adds more tasks to counselor workloads while disregarding ASCA recommendations to shift non-counselor duties to others (Kolodinsky, Draves, Schroder, Lindsey, & Zlatev, 2009). The result is a dramatic increase in workload (with concurrent stress), which results in accelerated burnout and more departures from the profession.

Job satisfaction may be related to school counselors' performance of what they deem as appropriate duties as outlined by the ASCA National Model (Baggerly, 2006). Baggerly and Osborn (2006) found that higher levels of commitment were related to greater adherence to appropriate tasks and supervision. In a study using the instrument, the School Counselor Job Assignment Survey, Smith (2009) found that 89% of North Carolina school counselors reported job stress is a result of performing non-counseling duties and 81% reported job dissatisfaction.

Prolonged job dissatisfaction has been linked to mental health issues such as burnout (Shields, 2006). Burnout is a prolonged response to the emotional and interpersonal stressors experienced on a job. Maslach and Goldberg (1998) said there are three major symptoms of burnout: emotional exhaustion (emotionally overextended and depleted emotional resources); depersonalization (negative detached response to others on the job), and reduced personal accomplishment (decline in feelings of competence and productivity).

McCarthy et al. (2010) found that school counselors from Texas who were leaving their jobs gave three main reasons for quitting: personal reasons (pregnancy, moving), professional reasons (stress), and other (McCarthy et al., 2010). Those school counselors who were leaving the profession reported feelings of higher stress, higher caseloads, and less perceived support.

METHOD

Participants

The population used in this study included professional school counselors from all levels (elementary, middle, and high school) in the Commonwealth of Virginia. A criterion for participation was that school counselors were actively working in a Virginia public school.

In total, the directors of 100 school districts in Virginia were asked to forward the survey to their school counselors. Of these directors, five responded stating that they had forwarded the survey to their school counselors resulting in 114 surveys being sent from directors. The five directors were from the western part of the state of Virginia in smaller school districts. A total of 1,175 American School Counseling Association (ASCA) members living in Virginia were sent surveys. In addition, 522 Virginia School Counseling Association members who were not in ASCA were sent surveys. Out of the 1,811 surveys sent, 409 (N= 409) counselors responded, equating to a response rate of 22%. After data screening, it was determined that all of the 409 responses were complete and usable.

Of these 409 participants, 89% self-reported as female, 79% as White, and over half (57%) indicated they worked in either suburban or urban settings. Of the school counselors who responded, 44% worked in elementary schools and 91% worked full time (see Table 1). A diversity of school counselors responded to the study. Both full- and part-time counselors participated, representing the full range of K-12 schools. Participants had an average of 11 years

of experience as school counselors. The majority of the school counselors were full-time workers. Most of the school counselors were from elementary school settings. A total of 89% of the respondents indicated that they were female. Schools from various settings were represented: suburban areas, rural areas, and urban areas/cities.

Generally the survey sample matches the profile of school counselors nationally. However, more elementary school counselors returned surveys than would have been expected. According to Stephanie Wicks (personal correspondence, 2014), ASCA administrator, elementary school counselors account for only 25% of the ASCA membership, yet the majority of the participants in this study were elementary school counselors. A total of 80% of the ASCA membership is female and in this study 89% of the participants were female.

Procedure

Email messages were sent to school counseling directors, VSCA members, and ASCA members residing in Virginia requesting participation in this study with a link to the survey and a follow-up reminder email was sent two weeks later. The link led school counselors to the SurveyGizmo website to complete the five sections of the survey. The surveys were collected between January 5, 2014 and February 5, 2014.

Instrument

The survey instruments used in this study were the School Counseling Program Implementation Survey (SCPIS), the Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educator Survey (MBI-ES), and a demographic survey.

RESULTS

Findings indicated that school counselors in Virginia reported high implementation of the ASCA National Model. Respondents indicated that the most implemented areas of the ASCA National Model in their schools were a written mission statement; organized services for students; diverse guidance lessons; effective referrals for students in crisis; and using computers to access student data. The areas of least implementation were needs assessments guiding the program; analyzing student data to close achievement gaps; an annual review of the program; counselors being represented on education committees; and the job description matching the actual job.

School counselors reported low levels of burnout and high levels of personal achievement on the MBI-ES. Results indicated that work setting and level are related to implementation of the ASCA National Model. Gender and work level are related to burnout experiences by counselors. Counselors in rural settings reported higher levels of implementation. Elementary school counselors indicated higher levels of implementation and lower burnout than high school counselors. Female school counselors reported higher levels of burnout than their male counterparts. Full time school counselors showed higher burnout rates than part time counselors. How much a school is aligned with the ASCA model was directly related to high implementation and low burnout.

A significant relationship was found between high implementation of the ASCA National Model and low burnout. Implementation of the ASCA National Model accounted for 11.25% outcome for burnout rates. Burnout decreased with greater levels of implementation of the ASCA National Model. Greater implementation of the ASCA National Model in a school resulted in lower burnout experienced by school counselors. Higher burnout rates indicated a lower degree of implementation of the ASCA National Model.

This study found that Virginia school counselors reported high levels of implementation of the ASCA National Model and low burnout rates. In addition, analysis of the data collected indicated that counselors in schools that had implemented the ASCA model had less burnout than counselors in schools that had not adopted the model.

DISCUSSION

The participants in this study reported an overall high level of implementation of the ASCA National Model. Respondents indicated that the four areas of the ASCA National Model that were most often fully implemented in their schools included the following: referral system for student crises; school counselors use computer software; students receive guidance lessons; and all students served. Around half of those responding reported three additional areas as being fully implemented: 80% of counselor time spent in activities that benefit students; all students have academic plans; and counseling program includes interventions to improve school. (see Table 2)

The results are not surprising. Previous studies have shown that school counselors enjoy counseling their students but do not enjoy non-counseling duties (Baggerly, 2009; Kolodinsky, Draves, Schroder, Lindsey, & Zlatev, 2009; Smith, 2009). School counselors are student focused. They are counseling students and meeting student needs in their schools. The areas in which these fully implemented programs fall short are in the delivery system and foundation areas of the ASCA National Model. The delivery system encompasses all areas of student services, crisis interventions, curriculum, and academic planning. A mission statement, goals, and the ASCA National standards for students fall under the foundation area (ASCA, 2011).

The two areas of the ASCA National Model most often reported as not having been implemented were analyzing data to close achievement gaps and school counselors represented on committees. Seven additional areas were reported as having high levels of not having been implemented: use data for school improvement; job descriptions match actual duties; needs assessment; annual review of program; attend professional development; all students have academic plans; and use of software to analyze student data. The lowest levels of the implementation of the ASCA National Model were using data to analyze student achievement gaps and interventions; having an annual evaluation; and doing needs assessments. These items are all included under the accountability aspect of the ASCA National Model. Another low-ranked item, job description matching the actual job, falls under the management systems aspect of the model.

These findings are surprising given the push toward a data driven school counseling curriculum in recent years. Being data-driven is the topic of many school counseling conferences. However, perhaps few counselors feel comfortable with the technical portion of data analysis and do not know how to devise surveys. Gathering and analyzing data might be a good area for school counselors to collaborate with their math departments to partner together to gather data and then analyze it after it has been collected. These findings suggest that school counselors are still not comfortable with aspects of the ASCA National Model relating to accountability. On a very positive note, school counselors are student focused. They are meeting student needs on a daily basis and they are counseling. Now, school counselors need the data to demonstrate the effectiveness of their counseling groups, curriculum, and planning sessions.

This study found that school counselors reported low levels of burnout and high levels of personal accomplishment. This survey measured three different criteria of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Personal accomplishment questions encompassed personal connection and empathy with students. These questions asked about easily understanding students, feeling effective, being a positive influence, and feeling energetic. Ranking high in personal accomplishment indicates that overall school counselors are happy in their jobs.

These findings correspond with Bane's (2006) findings that school counselors in Virginia were satisfied with their jobs and planned to stay in their jobs for at least the next 5 years. The study's findings also parallel those of Windle, who in 2009 found that school counselor respondents reported job satisfaction and planned to stay in school counseling despite experiencing frustration with non-counseling related duties and caseloads above the recommended ASCA 250:1 ratio.

Results indicated that some interactions with gender, work setting, and level are related to implementation of the ASCA National Model. Counselors in rural settings reported higher levels of implementation. Elementary school counselors indicated higher levels of implementation and lower burnout than high school counselors. Female school counselors reported higher levels of burnout than their male counterparts. Full time school counselors showed higher burnout rates than part time counselors. How much a school is aligned with the ASCA National Model was directly related to high implementation and low burnout. (see Table 3)

These findings coincide with other earlier studies. Rayle (2006) found that high school counselors indicated less job satisfaction and higher stress than other levels of school counselors. Windle (2009) found that school counselors are willing to stay in their jobs despite the higher

caseloads and daily frustrations. Rayle (2006) further found that elementary school counselors had lower burnout and higher implementation and were more satisfied and had less paperwork to do than their middle and high school counterparts. Scarborough's study in 2005 found that work level has significant interactions with job duties which in turn affects ASCA National Model implementation, which also supports the findings in this study.

Implications for School Counselors

As indicated in the data the more the ASCA national model is implemented in schools the lower the burnout that a school counselor will experience. Conversely, when a school counselor begins to feel burnt out, they should look at the ASCA model and analyze where the weakness in implementation is and work to close that gap in implementation to lessen the effects of burnout. School counselors need to look at the weakest areas of implementation and strengthen them. Management systems and Accountability areas should be looked at and used within the schools. Once these are utilized then there will be a stronger argument for more school counselors and perhaps even lowering the student caseloads. The student caseload average was 406 students per counselor which is much higher than the ASCA recommended 250 students per counselor.

In the test oriented education system of today, it behooves school counselors to use data to show improvement of student achievement and the entire school through the school counseling program curriculum. Budget cuts in schools tend to cause worry among staff and data showing the effectiveness of school counseling programs can prove the necessity of school counselors. School counselors should view research as a daily active piece of their jobs.

Data will show that school counselors are effective and that the programs that they have in place work. Data will also provide school counselors with developing an awareness of real

student needs and how to evolve the counseling program to fit the new needs and challenges of today's youth. It is the data that will end up saving school counselor jobs when budgets run low and positions must be cut. School counselors need to use the free resources provided to them through the ASCA website to increase their collection and analysis of data. They also should network with counselors in nearby districts to see how their colleagues are using data to justify their school counseling programs. Collecting and analyzing data to support school counseling programs is an ongoing task that will evolve over time. By working together, all school counselors in all schools, districts, and states can learn to utilize data in their jobs.

Limitations and Areas of Future Research

While the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) has had validity, reliability, and test re-test examined and authenticated, the School Counselor Implementation Program Survey (SCIPS) is a relatively new instrument. Data is still being compiled each time this survey is used in order to obtain validity, reliability, and solid test re-test results.

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The sample for this investigation consisted of school counselors who were employed in Virginia public school and most participants were members of either ASCA or VSCA. School counselors not belonging to professional organizations may have different experiences and attitudes. Research has suggested that membership in professional organizations is positively

related to job satisfaction (Levinson, Fetchkan, & Hohenshil, 1988). Therefore, results may not apply to populations who are not in a professional organization, to those working in a private school setting, or to counselors working in schools outside of Virginia.

Although the number of survey responses was adequate for this study, the scope of the survey is inadequate to support generalizations on a regional or national basis. Another limitation of this study is related to the nature of responses to the survey. Although the survey was emailed to ASCA and VSCA members, it also was emailed to every director of counseling in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Ideally, this distribution would reach every school counselor working in the state. However, due to the low rate of positive response from the counselor directors (a total of five), most responses were from counselors belonging to professional school counselor associations. The list of the school counseling directors was three years old (it may not have been up to date) and some of the directors may have passed on the e-mail and forgotten to respond; these two factors may have affected the response rate. There are school districts that do not allow their school counselors to take part in research studies without prior approval, thus counselors working in these districts were probably left out of the sample

The time of year during which the research took place may have also affected results due to testing schedules and other school activities. This data collection took place in the month of January in 2014, a time in which Virginia received a record amount of snow which may have hindered some counselors from answering the survey due to catching up after the school closings.

As a follow up to this study, future research could explore other variables including (for example, educational background of counselors, job satisfaction, or relationship with the principal) in relation to implementation of the ASCA National Model. One suggested approach

would be to survey only high school counselors to determine which factors are related to whether they have implemented the ASCA National Model.

Additionally, it is important to study the ASCA National Model components and areas that seem to be missing in the full implementation. Management systems and accountability (the two lowest scoring ASCA National Model aspects) should continue to be studied and analyzed to check for best practices in everyday work.

School counselors are indicating a high level of ASCA National Model implementation, and yet the number of Recognized ASCA Model Programs (RAMPs) in the Commonwealth of Virginia is surprising low. While over half the school counselors reported that their school counseling programs were in alignment with the ASCA National Model and that their principals supported the ASCA National Model; it is surprising that less than 10% are RAMP schools. Previous studies have pointed to principal support, counselor advocacy and programs already in existence that align with the ASCA National Model being necessary to seek RAMP status. A study should be completed to determine whether any systemic obstacles exist to impede full implementation of the model.

Similarly, it would be helpful to conduct research on advocacy and leadership among school counselors. There may be misunderstandings regarding the types of advocacy possible for school counselors and how to advocate in school and districts. Leadership has many definitions and many school counselors are leaders in their school, but how does ASCA want school counselors to be leaders? Clearly defined terminology might help school counselors achieve more in their schools.

Burnout should continue to be monitored and studied due to potential for student and counselor damage. It would be enlightening to see a study that compared all duties that school counselors do on a yearly basis to the ASCA National Model. A study could compare how students, parents, teachers, administrators, and school counselors view a school counselor's roles and responsibilities.

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Table 1

Demographics of School Counselors

	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Female	365	89.24
Male	42	10.27
Other	2	4.90
Racial Background		
White	327	79.95
African American	57	13.94
Other	25	6.11
Work Location		
City	37	9.05
Rural	135	33.01
Suburban	183	44.74
Urban	51	12.47
Unanswered	3	0.73
Level of Work		
Elementary	182	44.50
Middle	76	18.58
High	126	30.81
Other/Mixture	25	6.11
Full time/Part time		
Full time	373	91.20

Part time	32	7.82
Mixture	4	0.98

Table 2

School Counselor Program Implementation Survey

FI = Fully Implemented

PI = Partly Implemented

DIP – Development in Progress

NP = Not Present

Items	FI	PI	DIP	NP
1 Mission statement	58.92	20.05	8.07	2.96
2 All students served	70.66	22.68	4.65	1.71
3 Plan for closing achievement gaps	39.36	33.99	16.87	9.78
4 Clear measurable student goals	44.99	31.54	13.69	9.78
5 Needs Assessments	32.52	34.96	19.80	12.71
6 Students receive guidance lessons	72.37	15.16	4.40	8.07
7 All students have academic plans	49.63	28.61	9.54	12.22
8 Referral system for student crisis	77.51	16.87	3.18	2.44
9 Use of data to meet student needs	44.25	41.56	9.54	4.65
10 Analyzing data to close achievement gaps	28.85	33.01	17.36	20.78
11 Job descriptions match actual duties	34.37	36.67	15.16	13.69
12 80% spent in activities that benefit students	49.88	32.03	9.54	8.56
13 Includes interventions to improve school	49.39	34.72	12.22	3.67
14 Annual review of program	38.88	32.76	15.65	12.71
15 School counselors use computer software	75.31	16.38	2.93	5.38
16 Use of software to analyze student data	44.74	31.78	11.49	11.98
17 Use data for school improvement	39.12	33.25	13.69	13.94

18	Attend professional development	43.52	32.76	11.00	12.71
19	School counselors represented on committees	27.87	31.78	20.29	20.05
20	Parent feedback for improvement	47.19	34.72	12.47	5.62

Table 3

Summary of variables interacting with Burnout and Implementation

Coefficients	Pillari's Trace	df	F	Pr (>F)
Gender	.10408	1	2.0278	.004349**
Work Location	.16002	3	.98	.5216
Part/Full time	.066576	1	1.2384	.2112
Work Level	.2485	3	1.57	.002766**
Familiarity ASCA	.094364	2	.85082	.7431
Alignment ASCA	.18486	2	1.7498	.002275**
Freq. discussed	.43545	4	2.3516	6.589e-10***
Principal Support	.22372	2	2.2977	6.303e-06***
RAMP	.11933	2	1.096	.31

Note: $p > .05$

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Appendix A

School Counseling Program Implementation Survey

Please rate each statement below in terms of the degree to which it is currently implemented in your school counseling program. Circle your response using the following Rating Scale:

1 = Not Present; 2 = Development in Progress; 3 = Partly Implemented; 4 = Fully Implemented

1. A written mission statement exists and is used as a foundation by all counselors. 1234
2. Services are organized so that all students are well served and have access to them. 1234
3. The program operates from a plan for closing the achievement gap for minority and lower income students. 1234
4. The program has a set of clear measurable student learning objectives and goals are established for academics, social/personal skills, and career development. 1234
5. Needs Assessments are completed regularly and guide program planning. 1234
6. All students receive classroom guidance lessons designed to promote academic, social/personal, and career development. 1234
7. The program ensures that all students have academic plans that include testing, individual advisement, long-term planning, and placement. 1234
8. The program has an effective referral and follow-up system for handling student crises. 1234
9. School counselors use student performance data to decide how to meet student needs. 1234
10. School counselors analyze student data by ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic level to identify interventions to close achievement gaps. 1234

11. School counselor job descriptions match actual duties. 1234
12. School counselors spend at least 80% of their time in activities that directly benefit students.
1234
13. The school counseling program includes interventions designed to improve the school's ability to educate all students to high standards. 1234
14. An annual review is conducted to get information for improving next year's programs. 1234
15. School counselors use computer software to access student data. 1234
16. School counselors use computer software to analyze student data. 1234
17. School counselors use computer software to use data for school improvement. 1234
18. The school counseling program has the resources to allow counselors to complete appropriate professional development activities. 1234
19. School counseling priorities are represented on curriculum and education committees. 1234
20. School counselors communicate with parents to coordinate student achievement and gain feedback for program improvement. 1234

Appendix B
Personal Information

What is your gender?

Male

Female

Other

How old are you?

What is your racial background ?

Asian/Pacific Islander Black/African-American Caucasian Hispanic Native American

Other/Multi-Racial or Decline to answer

Describe your work location setting:

Rural

Urban

Suburban

City

Years as a school counselor:

What level do you work in?

Elementary

Middle

High

Combination

Do you work as a full time or part time counselor?

Full time school counselor

Part-time school counselor

How familiar are you with the ASCA National Model?

Very familiar somewhat familiar Not at all familiar

Which professional organizations do you belong to?

Virginia Counseling Association (VCA)

Virginia School Counselor Association (VSCA)

American Counseling Association (ACA)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA)

Local school counselor association

Other: Please list

None

Appendix C

Letter to school counselors

January 8, 2014

Dear School Counselor,

I am a school counselor in Portsmouth, Virginia and I am working on my dissertation to finish my PhD at Old Dominion University. I know that your time is very valuable and how busy you are. I would appreciate it if you would take 10-15 minutes to fill out the survey at the link below. This survey is for current Virginia school counselors working in all levels in public education.

<http://edu.surveymoz.com/s3/1499593/School-Counseling-Survey-2>

Dr. Ted Remley is my dissertation chair. You are receiving this email message either from your school counseling district coordinator, or because you are a member of the Virginia School Counseling Association (VSCA) or a member of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) and living in Virginia. If you receive duplicate copies, I do apologize and please complete the survey only once.

Thank you for taking your time to help me to participate in this study,

Katrina M. Steele

Katrina M. Steele, M.S.

Professional School Counselor

Letters H-O

Anti-Bullying Specialist

Scholarship Coordinator

AP Coordinator

Appendix D

Letter to School Counseling Directors

January 7, 2014

Dear Directors of School Counselors:

I am a school counselor in Portsmouth, Virginia and I am working on my dissertation to finish my PhD at Old Dominion University. I know that your time is very valuable and how busy you are. I would appreciate it if you would forward this email message that includes a 10-15 minute survey to all the school counselors in your district. If you could email me back and tell me how many school counselors this was forwarded to that would help out my study.

<http://edu.surveymoz.com/s3/1499593/School-Counseling-Survey-2>

This survey will enhance the understanding of the American School Counseling Association National Model. Dr. Ted Remley is my dissertation chair. My IRB Human Subjects approval code is 20140150. If you have any questions regarding this survey, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for taking your time to help me,

Katrina M. Steele

Katrina M. Steele, M.S.
Professional School Counselor
Letters H-O
Anti-Bullying Specialist
Scholarship Coordinator
AP Coordinator

Appendix E
Reminder Email Message to School Counseling Directors

January 24, 2014

Dear School Counseling Directors:

Two weeks ago, I sent an email message asking for your help with my dissertation research by forwarding my survey link to your school counselors. If you already have done so already, thank you very much. If you haven't, I hope that you will consider forwarding this message to all of the school counselors in your district today which includes a survey. The deadline for the surveys is January 30, 2014.

<http://edu.surveymoz.com/s3/1499593/School-Counseling-Survey-2>

If you have any questions or concerns about the survey please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your consideration,

Katrina M. Steele

Katrina M. Steele, M.S.
Professional School Counselor
Letters H-O
Anti-Bullying Specialist
Scholarship Coordinator
AP Coordinator

Appendix F

Reminder Email Message to School Counselors

January 27, 2014

Dear School Counselor:

A few weeks ago you were asked to fill out an online survey about school counseling that would help with my dissertation research. If you have already filled out the survey, I really appreciate it. I have been overwhelmed with the amount of positive emails supporting me in my endeavor and in the responses. As a school counselor myself I understand how busy we all get throughout the day. If you haven't had a moment to fill out the survey, I ask that you consider taking the survey. The last day to fill out the survey is January 30, 2014. Just click on the below link.

<http://edu.surveymizmo.com/s3/1499593/School-Counseling-Survey-2>

If you have any questions or concerns about the survey, please feel free to contact me at Katrina.steele@pps.k12.va.us.

Thank you for your time.

Katrina M. Steele

Katrina M. Steele, M.S.
Professional School Counselor
Letters H-O
Anti-Bullying Specialist
Scholarship Coordinator
AP Coordinator

Appendix G

IRB Approval

Eddie Hill, Ph.D., CPRP Assistant Professor Park, Recreation and Tourism Studies Program

Old Dominion University, Student Recreation Center, Room 2019, Norfolk, VA 23529 Phone: (757) 683-4881; Fax: (757) 683-4270 E-mail: ehill@odu.edu Accredited by the National Recreation and Park Association Council on Accreditation

December 5, 2014 Approved Application Number 20140150

Dr. Theodore P. Remley, Jr.

Department of Counseling and Human Services

Dear Dr. Remley:

Your Application for Exempt Research with Katrina Steele entitled, "Degree of Implementation of the American School Counselor Association and School Counselor Burnout," has been found to be EXEMPT under Category 6.2 from IRB review by the Human Subjects Review Committee of the Darden College of Education with the condition that a CITI completion certificate be submitted to me verifying that **Dr. Ted Remley and Ms. Katrina Steele** have completed the Basic Course in the Protection of Human Research Participants – Social and Behavior Focus. You may begin the research project when this condition has been met. The determination that this study is EXEMPT from IRB review is for an indefinite period of time provided no significant changes are made to your study. If any significant changes occur, notify me or the chair of this committee at that time and provide complete information regarding such changes.

In the future, if this research project is funded externally, you must submit an application to the University IRB for approval to continue the study.

Best wishes in completing your study.

Sincerely,

Eddie Hill

Eddie Hill, Ph.D., CPRP

Assistant Professor

Old Dominion University

Human Movement Sciences

Darden College of Education Human Subjects Review Committee

CURRICULUM VITAE

KATRINA M. STEELE

Katrina Marie Steele was a graduate from Longwood College in 2002. She completed a Bachelor's Degree in Communication Studies. She earned a Master's Degree in Counseling and Guidance from Longwood University in 2004.

Katrina is a member of the American School Counselors Association, Virginia School Counselors Association, Virginia Counselor Association, and the Virginia Alliance of School Counselors. She has attended national and statewide conventions and presented locally and statewide on bullying at the high school level.

While attending Old Dominion University's Counseling Ph.D. program, she supervised counseling students completing their practicum and internship field experience in schools and the community.

Katrina has served as a high school counselor since 2004. She has reported child abuse, helped improve graduation rates, provided academic and personal counseling to students and parents, and started an anti-bullying program in the high school.