

Virginia Commonwealth University
VCU Scholars Compass

Theses and Dissertations | Graduate School

2018

The Experiences of School Counseling Directors in Relation to Job Satisfaction and Leadership

Robyn Walsh
Virginia Commonwealth University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/etd

 Part of the Counselor Education Commons, and the Student Counseling and Personnel Services Commons

© The Author

Downloaded from
https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/etd/5308

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at VCU Scholars Compass. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of VCU Scholars Compass. For more information, please contact libcompass@vcu.edu.

© Robyn L. Walsh 2018

All Rights Reserved

The Experiences of School Counseling Directors in Relation to Job Satisfaction and Leadership

A dissertation submitted in partial requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education with a concentration in Counselor Education and Supervision at Virginia Commonwealth University.

By

Robyn L. Walsh
Bachelor of Arts, University of Virginia, 2008
Master of Education, Virginia Commonwealth University, 2010

Dr. Donna Gibson, Committee Chair
Dr. Donna Dockery, Committee Member
Dr. Mary Hermann, Committee Member
Dr. Michael Southam-Gerow, Committee Member

Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond, VA
April 2018

Acknowledgements

It takes a village to get to the point where a person is writing a dissertation. I first must thank all my wonderful teachers throughout my entire educational experience for always encouraging my learning journey, challenging me to work hard, and pushing me to better myself. I always loved school, and it is because of all of you. Especially to the Humanities program at Monacan High School...what an impact that a caring group of faculty can have on a teenager. That experience resonated with me throughout college and into my career. You all have my endless gratitude.

This would not have been possible without a multitude of people, but I will start with the faculty I have built relationships with during my program, especially my dissertation committee. Dr. Southam-Gerow, Dr. Hermann, and Dr. Dockery: you are the type of educators I strive to be, and I am in admiration of your advocacy, open spirit, and accepting nature. Furthermore to Dr. Hermann and Dr. Dockery, who I had the pleasure of being taught by in my M.Ed. program as well, it has been wonderful to learn from you throughout my adult life and guiding my journey into school counseling. My chair, Dr. Gibson, you were "stuck" with me every semester for two years, constantly challenging me, teaching me, and pushing me outside my comfort zone while always having the best spirit and outlook (and tolerating all my quirks). I am indebted to you forever. Thank you for being you.

I am so thankful for all former and current doctoral students at VCU, especially the counselor education doctoral students. These wonderful people encouraged me, guided me, taught me, listened to me, and showed me that it can be done. You are all amazing, and I am so grateful to have met you and become such great friends. A special thanks to Dr. Jen Gerlach and Tom Mitchell for giving your time and expertise to this study. But the biggest thank you goes to Elizabeth Bambacus, my cohort member, who was with me in every single class. I learned so much from you, but most importantly I enjoyed being with you, presenting with you, and even publishing with you! Thank you for letting my extroverted tendencies overwhelm you on a daily basis but always being in good spirit. I feel like we were the best fit for each other, and I am in awe of your growth and accomplishments on this journey. It would not taste as sweet without you by my side! We did it!

I have the best family. Brian, Nathan, Sarah, and Abbie, you are role models for following your dreams, learning at every opportunity, and experiencing what life has to offer. From travel to wine to smart money choices to poker, it is always fun and educational being with you. To my parents, thank you for letting me grow up in a household where education was important and expected. You never let me feel like I couldn't do anything I set my mind to. You never questioned or judged my feelings or choices. Without you, I would not be here. To my Dad especially, thank you for being a role model Professor (who also writes really cool syllabi and is an awesome teacher) that impacts future professionals on a daily basis. You never pushed me to get a PhD, yet I wouldn't have without your example.

Finally, though I will have a few new letters after my name, I am really proud to be a school counselor. This doctoral process and research reiterated my love for what I do, the students and families I get to work with, and all the caring educators alongside me. Education is under-funded and imperfect, but the relationships founded in the school building are some of the most influential of many peoples' lives. I am very grateful for my career path, but I hope we all remain passionate and fight for the future of our schools. If I could narrow down one word to describe what k-12 and higher education has done for me as a person, it would easily be the *relationships* it has brought me, both within myself and through other people. Let's not forget the power of people.

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandparents who have passed, Ruth and Gus Simpson, and my amazing (living) 98-year-old grandmother, Rosella Walsh. College-educated or not, they showed me that intelligence and learning is a continuous part of life, yet family, friends, and experiences are the most important. If I could have dinner with anyone in the world it would be you three.

Thankful and Grateful,

Robyn

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables……...……....x

Abstract…….……..……xi

Chapter 1: Introduction…….…….……..1

Need for the Study…….…..….……6

Purpose of the Study……..……....…….7

Significance of the Study…….……...……..……...7

Definition of Terms…….……...……..……9

Organization of the Study……..……...…….……10

Chapter 2: Literature Review…….……...12

The School Counseling Profession…….……...13

The Beginning of School Counseling……..……...……...14

From Career to Developmental Guidance……..……...15

School Counseling Accountability and Standards……...…….16

American School Counselor Association……..……17

Council for the Accreditation of Counselor Related Education

Programs……..…….…….……18

Current Role of School Counselors……..……...…19

Recommendations vs. Reality……..……..21

Perceptions of the School Counselor's Role……23

Role of the School Counseling Director……24

Job Satisfaction in k-12 Schools……27

The Influence of External Factors……29

School Counselor Job Satisfaction……31

Burnout……36

Cultivating Satisfied School Counselors Through Leadership……39

Leadership and Job Satisfaction……41

Leadership Models in School Counseling……41

Transformational Leadership……42

Effects of Transformational Leadership……43

Counselors as Transformational Leaders……44

Locke's Range of Affect Theory……44

Summary……48

Chapter 3: Methodology……49

Role of the Researcher……50

Research Question……51

Participants……52

Design Procedures……53

Data Collection and Analysis……54

Trustworthiness……56

Credibility……..…..……..……56

Confirmability……..…….……57

Transferability…..…….……..…….……..58

Dependability…....……..……..……..58

Conclusion…...……..59

Chapter 4: Results…….……60

Description of the Participants……...…60

Analysis of Research Findings……..62

Description of the Role……...64

Intentionality……..……...……66

Leadership Training and Knowledge……...…...……...70

Limited Counselor-Specific Training……..…..……...……..70

Limited Recognition of Identifiable Style.……...……..72

Collaboration…….……...……..74

Influence of Administration……...……...…75

Overload of Responsibilities Assigned to Role……..78

Sacrifice…….…82

Time to Complete Duties…..……..83

Gender-Related Influence on Role Acquisition...…….……..……85

Conclusion……...……...87

Chapter 5: Discussion……89

Overview of the Study……...89

Role of the School Counseling Director……...……..90

Discussion of the Themes……..92

Intentionality…….……..93

Leadership Training and Knowledge…….….95

Limited Counselor-Specific Training…..…...……..……..96

Limited Recognition of Identifiable Style……..…98

Collaboration…….……...……..…99

Influence of Administration…….…...……...……..….100

Overload of Responsibilities Assigned to Role……102

Sacrifice……105

Time to Complete Duties…..……..……..105

Gender-Related Influence on Role Acquisition…..……..…107

Limitations……109

Implications……...111

Streamlined Job Expectations…….……..…….……...…111

Policies to Alleviate Gender Impact on Role Acquisition……....112

Understanding and Implementing an Identifiable Leadership Style...……..…113

Counselor-Specific Leadership Training Programs…...…..……...…….114

Continual Need for Wellness Training……..……...…115

Recommendations for Future Research……117

Conclusion……120

References…….…….…….....121

Appendix A: Invitation to Participate……...……...……137

Appendix B: Demographic Questionnaire……..…….....…….……138

Appendix C: Informed Consent……...……139

Appendix D: Questioning Route…….....……140

Vita……...141

List of Tables

Table 1. Participant Demographics……62

Table 2. Themes and Subthemes……..……..64

Abstract

THE EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL COUNSELING DIRECTORS IN RELATION TO JOB SATISFACTION AND LEADERSHIP

By Robyn L. Walsh, Ph.D.

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Counselor Education and Supervision at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2018

Major Director: Donna Gibson, Professor and Department Chair, Counseling and Special Education

The current literature on school counselor job satisfaction does not address the experiences of school counseling directors. This is a unique set of counselors due to their role as leaders and supervisors in the building. Therefore, this study sought to better understand the experiences of school counseling directors in relation to job satisfaction and leadership. The researcher collected data through 10 interviews with participants having met the criteria of serving as a school counseling director of a middle or high school, supervising a department of at least two counselors, and working in the role for at least two years. Data analysis showcased the different expectations in the role of the school counseling director in addition to four major themes: Intentionality, Leadership Training and Knowledge, Overload of Responsibilities Assigned to Role, and Sacrifice. The subthemes for Leadership Training and Knowledge include limited counselor-specific preparation, limited recognition of leadership style, collaboration, and influence of administrators. The subthemes of Sacrifice include time to complete duties and

gender-related influence on role acquisition. These themes are discussed in relation to current research as well as in regards to implications about the expectations of the school counseling director's role, gender influence, leadership training standards and programs, and wellness. Recommendations for further research about school counseling directors, district-level supervisors, and leadership training are also given.

Chapter 1

Introduction

School counseling has emerged over the last century (Davis, 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2007). Beginning with the vocational guidance movement in the 1890s (Davis, 2015), the increased presence of counselors in schools to help students align coursework with careers (Remley & Herlihy, 2007) has morphed into the comprehensive and developmental academic, social/emotional, and career orientation that encompasses school counseling today (American School Counselor Association; ASCA, 2012). In the past fifty years, legislation and training standards have further unified the profession and provided school counselors credibility among helping professionals (Capuzzi & Douglas, 2008). The establishment of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA; 2012) streamlined the professional identity of the school counselor and provided the framework for the foundation, delivery and management system, and accountability practices for school counselors. The continual need of counseling services in schools and proper counselor training has evolved as counselors are increasingly placed at schools and their roles have changed due to current student and school concerns (Remley & Herlihy, 2007). Relatedly, school counseling directors have been added to many middle and high school counseling departments to supervise counselors, serve as leaders in the school and profession, and advocate for a comprehensive school counseling program (ASCA, 2012).

The role of the school counselor has evolved to include formal graduate education with an emphasis on professional ethics, advocacy, and counseling skills necessary to implement a comprehensive school counseling program (ASCA, 2012). A major aspect of the current role of the school counselor includes direct services to students. The ASCA National Model recommends that a school counselor should be conducting classroom lessons 15-25% of the time, engaging in individual student planning 25-35% of the time, participating in response services 25-35% of the time, and assisting in indirect services or system support 15-25% of the time (ASCA, 2012). Realistically, a school counselor's time is not divided up as neatly as the model suggests (Agresta, 2004; Partin, 1993). School counselors are also tasked with maintaining ethical responsibilities and confidentiality, assisting students with personal/social, academic, and career planning, referring students to outside agencies, addressing behavioral supports, being multicultural advocates, collaborating with stakeholders in the schools and community, and engaging in leadership (ASCA, 2012; Davis 2015).

Though these are recommended standards, the reality of the job of a school counselor varies (Argesta, 2004; Evans & Payne, 2008). Agresta (2004) surveyed school social workers, counselors, and psychologists on their ideal schedule in comparison with the actual amount of time spent practicing direct and non-direct professional roles. Counselors felt that their roles were shifting away from the traditional functions of academic advisement, scheduling, and college advisement, to engaging in more individual and group counseling (Agresta, 2004). This is in line with the new ASCA model standards (ASCA, 2012). Furthermore, the increase of safety and mental health issues has impacted the role of the school counselor (Evans & Payne, 2008). The importance of a resilient mindset, joy of working with students, consultation with

colleagues, helpfulness of supervision requirements, work-life balance, wellness, self-disclosure, and holistic self-care all affect a counselor's role (Evans & Payne, 2008). The changing realities of school counselors, including the push for data-informed decision making (ASCA, 2012), are important to note when discussing the role of school counseling directors and the factors that impact job satisfaction due to the influence of leadership on a school counselor's role (Dollarhide, 2003; Mason & McMahon, 2009).

A school counseling director or coordinator, as defined in this study, is a school counselor who is the designated department leader at a middle or high school (ASCA, 2012; Chesterfield County Public Schools, 2013). ASCA (2012) recommends that school counseling programs have directors to oversee a variety of functions within the school counseling department, including advocating for students and families, helping with education equity, and providing leadership and supervision to counselors. Different states have different standards for the allotment of school counseling directors in each school, but typically directors exist in schools where there are multiple counselors and larger caseloads, specifically in the middle and high schools (ASCA, 2012). There are also county or district level directors and supervisors (ASCA, 2012). For example, in Chesterfield, Virginia, which is a large school district in the state where this study takes place, a school counseling director is described as someone who "provides leadership and manages the daily activities of the school counseling department at the assigned secondary school and mentors school counselors and ensures the effective utilization of staff and resources" (Chesterfield County Public Schools, 2013). While this description is in line with ASCA, it is not necessarily the reality of the role for many directors due to limited information and recommendations on the school counseling director role.

There is no literature specifically on school counseling director job satisfaction, yet there is literature on perceptions of school counselors, burnout in school counseling, and overall school job satisfaction (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006; Bryant & Constantine, 2006; Boon, Jaafar, & Baba, 2015; Curry & Bickmore, 2012; Falls & Nitcher, 2007; Gabe & Hoydek, 1993; Kolodinsky, Draves, Schroder, Lindsey, & Zlatev, 2009; McCarthy, Kerne, Calfa, Lambert, & Guzman, 2010; Lambie, 2007; Pyne, 2011; Rayle, 2006; Wilkerson, 2009). While some of the findings are contradictory, job satisfaction for educators varies within position with many studies finding school environment (Ghavifek & Pillai, 2016; Lee, Dedrick, & Smith, 1991; Lowry, 2004; Liu & Ramsey, 2008), leadership style (Aldrige & Fraser, 2016; Lee, 2006), federal control of schools (Hursh, 2002) and pay (Koustelios, 2001; Perrachione, Rosser & Petersen, 2008) as factors that affect job satisfaction. While the findings are complex, there are consistent indications that school counselor burnout can have a negative impact on job satisfaction (Lambie, 2002; Lawson & Myers, 2011; Mullen & Guiterrez, 2016; Smith, Robinson, & Young, 2007) as can role ambuguity (Cervoni & DeLucia-Waack, 2011; Falls and Nitcher, 2007), lack of sense of mattering (Rayle, 2006), and the presence of a high amount of non-counseling duties (Burnham & Jackson, 2000; Cervoni & DeLucia-Waack, 2011).

Leadership is an important component when examining the experiences of school counseling directors. While the limited information on the role of school counseling directors showcases that directors need to be capable supervisors and collaborators, the exact nature of how to be a good leader and advocate is left to interpretation. Yet, much of the research findings about factors that negatively affect job satisfaction, like role ambiguity (Cervoni & DeLucia-Waack, 2011; Falls and Nitcher, 2007), burnout (Lambie, 2009; Moyer, 2011; Wilkerson &

Bellini, 2006), and type of support for the counseling program (Pyne, 2011; Rayle, 2006) can be impacted by a good department leader and advocate. Therefore, examining leadership styles, models, and training may promote school counselor job satisfaction.

The leadership qualities of a successful school counselor and school counseling director include flexibility and adaptability (Davis, 2015). However, since school counselors vary on their leadership practices and comfort level (Mason & McMahon, 2009), there are discrepancies in the leadership style and training. School counselors who have clear and focused goals, self-define their role, have supportive colleagues, and grow from resistance are perceived as being effective and successful leaders (Dollarhide, Gibson, & Saginak, 2008). There are many models that encompass these leadership qualities, yet because ASCA does not promote a specific model, directors are left to find and embrace their individual style (ASCA, 2012). This has implications for studying school counseling directors since leadership method or style may be the biggest factor in their job satisfaction due to leadership impacting all parts of their job: collaboration, advocacy, and programming.

Despite the recent changes in the ASCA National Model and more leadership training in graduate school, the development of leadership as a school counselor requires experience (Mason & McMahon, 2009). ASCA highlights and values all school counselors as leaders (ASCA, 2012) and "visionary thinking, challenging inequities, shared decision making, collaborative processing, modeling excellence and a courageous stance" (p.11) as the effective qualities of a school counseling leader. Yet the job of a director is clearly related to leadership and advocacy, as is shown in the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2012). Thus, to become

successful leaders, school counselors need to be educated in leadership skills and given opportunities to explore their own leadership style (Stone & Clark, 2001).

Need for the Study

While research exists in examining school counselor job satisfaction, the findings are limited to quantitative studies with contradictory results (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006; Bryant & Constantine, 2006; Curry & Bickmore, 2012; Gabe & Hoydek, 1993; Kolodinsky et al., 2009; McCarthy et al., 2010; Pyne, 2011; Rayle, 2006; Wilkerson, 2009). There are no studies on the experiences of school counseling directors in relation to leadership or job satisfaction. This is a problem because school counseling directors are not only leaders in their building, but also in the field, and training programs need to ensure that they are adequately prepared for and satisfied in their role.

Generally, studies show that job satisfaction among school counselors is high, specifically with counselors who attend to their appropriate duties as defined by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA, 2012). These duties include direct service in individual counseling, school counseling curriculum, and group counseling (Baggerly & Osborn, 2006; Pyne, 2011). Slaughter (2015) found that high school counselors at schools that have qualified as Recognized ASCA Model Programs (RAMP), meaning they have met the ASCA standards for delivering a comprehensive, data-driven school counseling program (ASCA, 2017a), identified themselves as satisfied and validated within their jobs and roles. However, Bentley (2014) found that counselors in RAMP schools were not more satisfied in their jobs than those at schools not RAMP-certified. Relatedly, school counselor role ambiguity and an increased time devoted to non-counseling duties (e.g.. paperwork) were strong predictors of job dissatisfaction, especially

among high school counselors (Cervoni & DeLucia-Waack, 2011). Rayle (2006) uncovered differences in the self-reported experiences of job satisfaction, a sense of mattering to others, and job-related stress for counselors at different school levels. Contrary to these results, however, Kolodinsky et al. (2009) found that all levels of counselors were similarly satisfied.

The framework of this study explores how the expectations versus the reality of the job of a school counseling director influences job satisfaction, framed by the transformational leadership model (Bass, 1991; Balyer, 2012; Berkovich, 2016) and ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2012). Both models complement each other on the leadership characteristics of a school counselor who enacts change, motivates followers, and advocates in schools. Finally, Locke's Range of Affect Theory (Locke, 1976) provides a framework for viewing career experiences and job satisfaction with regard to how counselors view their work and derive satisfaction from their roles.

Purpose of the Study

Since no research exists on school counseling director job satisfaction, the researcher used phenomenological research to explore potential themes (Hays & Singh, 2012). The primary research question was "What are the experiences of school counseling directors in relation to job satisfaction and leadership?" The goal of study was to investigate the current gap in literature about the experiences of school counseling directors and provide recommendations, trends, and further areas to study that relate to job satisfaction and leadership for school counseling directors.

Significance of the Study

The current study sought to address a gap in literature about school counseling director's experiences; specifically their leadership experiences and how satisfied they are in their role.

This is a significant gap because directors exist in most middle and high schools (ASCA, 2012) and their experiences are unique to their specific, often administrative role. However, nothing is known regarding their overall job satisfaction. The goal of the findings are to better prepare school counselors for leadership roles and provide recommendations for how to support, retain, and train school counseling directors. This outcome is in line with initiatives in counseling and counselor education to cultivate counselors who are advocates and leaders in the field. The findings may impact in the effective training of school counselors considering the current demands in education.

In counselor education programs, the findings can reinforce or change current training requirements for school counselors. Specifically, there are findings that impact leadership training from master's programs and how to adequately prepare school counselors for the realities of their role in the school which may impact the school counseling core curriculum or mandate specific electives or even new courses. The findings also reinforce the current literature on school counselor job satisfaction and add qualitative narratives, providing additional layers to the research.

For schools and school divisions, these results have implications for how to hire, train, and support school counseling directors. School employee retention is important to establish consistent strong counselors, teachers, and leaders (Hughes, 2012; Martinez, Frick, Kim, & Fried, 2010; Sass, Seal, & Martin, 2011), so job satisfaction is important to all schools and school divisions. The implications from gender also impact how school divisions can better support directors. By establishing what school counseling directors find fulfilling and challenging in their roles, school divisions can prepare school counselors for these positions.

Definition of Terms

Alternative High School. A high school that students must apply and be selected to attend based on specific academic needs. The school is composed of small class sizes and career personalization.

American School Counselor Association (ASCA). ASCA aims to provide professional development to school counselors, support research effective practices for school counselors, support resources on best practices, and enhance school counseling programs (ASCA, 2012).

ASCA National Model. A framework for school counseling programs to define the role and responsibility of school counseling programs and show the necessity of school counseling for the development of every student (ASCA, 2012). This encompasses the academic, personal/social, and career needs of every student, as well as the foundation, accountability, management, and delivery system for school counseling programs.

Comprehensive School. The most traditional model of a school that is sponsored by the state and students are not selected based on specific academic achievement.

Council for the Accreditation of Counselor Related Education Programs (CACREP). The Council for Accreditation of Counselor and Related Education Programs (CACREP) was established in 1981 from the development of the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) standards in the 1960s and 1970s to establish training requirements and accreditation standards for counselors (CACREP, 2018). CACREP accreditation is a voluntary accreditation program for counseling programs.

Facet Theory/Range of Affect Theory. Locke's (1976) range of effect hypothesis states that the discrepancies between what we expect and want versus what we actually get determine how

satisfied we are in a job. When a facet's importance is high, a person will experience a great range in how satisfied he or she is depending on possession of that facet. If a facet importance is low, then a person won't experience as much of a range in satisfaction.

Job Satisfaction**.** The extent to which an employee is satisfied with his or her current job.

Non-Counseling Duties. Duties that are not associated with the ASCA National Model but are assigned to school counselors. Many of these duties may be clerical or administrative in nature (ASCA, 2012).

School Counseling Director. A school counseling director is a school counselor at a school who is the designated department leader. ASCA (2012) recommends that school counseling programs have directors/coordinators to oversee a variety of functions within the school counseling department, including advocacy and leadership. This does not include district level supervisors or directors in this study.

Transformational Leadership. Transformational leadership is a popular leadership model for leaders working in schools (Bass, 1991; Bayler, 2012; Berkovich, 2016). It is defined as "a leadership approach that causes change in individuals and social systems. In its ideal form, it creates valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of developing followers into leaders" (Langston University, 2016, p. 1). The leader shapes their environment by inspiring and motivating the followers to embrace change (Smith & Bell, 2011).

Vocational Center. A school that high school students attend for specific career and technical education courses in addition to the core academic classes they take at their home high school.

Organization of the Study

This chapter provided an overview of the background, purpose, and need to investigate the experiences of school counseling directors. Chapter Two explores an in-depth look at the development of school counseling, the roles of school counselors and directors, the existing literature on job satisfaction, and the framework of the theoretical and leadership models used for the study. Chapter Three outlines the methodology and procedures for this study. Chapter Four provides the data analysis and explores the themes from the study. Chapter Five entails a discussion about the findings and implications for the future.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The profession of school counseling has evolved over the course of the last century (Capuzzi & Douglas, 2008; Davis, 2015) into the unique field that it is today, serving the developmental needs of k-12 students (ASCA, 2012). While the roles and responsibilities of school counselors vary according to school level, administrative expectations, and demographics (Agresta, 2004; Burnham & Jackson, 2000; Dahir, Burnham, Stone, & Cobb, 2010; Partin, 1993), the recommendations for the profession include direct services to students' academic, career, and personal/social needs (ASCA, 2012). While accountability standards exist through ASCA (2012) and CACREP (2016), the roles of school counselors vary in ways that impact their satisfaction in the work (Aldrige & Fraser, 2016; Hursh, 2005; Pyne, 2011; Rayle, 2006; Smith et al., 2007). Job satisfaction is important to explore as it is an indicator of productivity, retention, and wellness (Pyne, 2011; Perrachione et al., 2008; Rayle, 2006; Rhodes, Nevill, & Allan, 2004).

There are many factors that impact job satisfaction in schools, including school climate, demographics, education standards, and leadership (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016; Ghavifek & Pillai, 2016; Hursh, 2005; Lee, 2006; Lee et al., 1991; Saiti & Papadopoulos, 2015). School counselor satisfaction is no different, and research illustrates the variety of factors that impact their job

satisfaction (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006; Bryant & Constantine, 2006; Boon et al., 2015; Curry & Bickmore, 2012; Falls & Nitcher, 2007; Gabe & Hoydek, 1993; Kolodinsky et al., 2009; McCarthy et al., 2010; Lambie, 2007; Pyne, 2011; Rayle, 2006; Wilkerson, 2009). Role ambiguity, which occurs when there is not a clear understanding of a counselor's role (Falls & Nitcher, 2007), and time spent on tasks not related to direct student services (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006), are strong predictors of job dissatisfaction and confusion among counselors (Cervoni & DeLucia-Waack, 2011; Dietz, 1979). Burnout also has negative effects on job satisfaction and effectiveness (Moyer, 2011; Mullen & Guiterrez, 2016).

There are no studies that measure the experiences of school counseling directors, who have a unique role in the school. While the job training and leadership style for school counseling directors varies, they are seen as leaders in the building, and are tasked with creating a counseling department with solid goals, incorporating evidence-based practices, and mentoring satisfied counselors (ASCA, 2012; Bass, 1991; Bayler, 2012; Berkovich, 2016). In addition to leadership theory, Locke's Range of Affect Theory (Locke, 1976) provides a foundation for examining job satisfaction for school counseling directors. Therefore, this chapter includes a review of the literature of the primary areas addressed in this study: school counselors, job satisfaction, and leadership in school counseling.

The School Counseling Profession

When examining the role of school counselors and school counseling directors, it is important to consider how school counseling has developed since its inception over 130 years ago with the vocational guidance movement (Davis, 2015). Though counselors have been around since that time, the training, job-skills and job expectations have constantly changed and evolved

(Capuzzi & Douglas, 2008; Davis, 2015; Gybers, 2010; Remley & Herlihy, 2007). The profession has grown from career-focused guidance to a field that assists students in addressing their academic, career and social/emotional needs (ASCA, 2012). This "whole student" developmental approach has changed the nature of the job and also the stressors that accompany the work.

The Beginning of School Counseling

The vocational guidance movement was established to assist people in finding a job which would match their skills to specific jobs and schools (Bloomfield, 1915; Davis, 1914; Gysbers, 2010; Parsons, 1930) following the late 19th century social reform movement that formed in response to the difficulties of people living in urban slums and the widespread use of child labor (Capuzzi & Douglas, 2008). Frank Parsons is often credited with being the "father of the vocational guidance" movement and remains one of the most influential people in counseling (Capuzzi & Douglas, 2008; Remley & Herlihy, 2007). He believed in helping students making the transition from school to work (Gysbers, 2010) and brought career classification to light as the development of counseling psychology separate from psychology (Remley & Herlihy, 2007). Counseling was focused on the normal, healthy developments of people within their developmental stages and career goals. Parson's work with the Civic Service House led to the development of the Boston Vocation Bureau and the writing of his book *Choosing a Vocation* (Capuzzi & Douglas, 2008). Due to his influence, the National Vocation Guidance Association (NVGA) was established in 1913 to "better promote vocational guidance through schools, centers, and the distribution of information" (Davis, 2015, p. 20). By 1918, most high schools had some type of vocational guidance system (Capuzzi & Douglas, 2008). Early vocational

guidance counselors were often teachers appointed to assume the extra duties of the position in addition to their regular teaching responsibilities (Davis, 2015), thus creating a job that workers were not specifically trained for and one in which there were no accountability standards.

From Career to Developmental Guidance

The United States' entry into World War I and World War II changed the field even further. The early psychological assessments used in World War I were quickly identified as being valuable tools to use in the educational system (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). From the 1920s to the 1930s, school counseling and guidance grew because of the rise of progressive education in schools (Davis, 2015; Gysbers & Henderson, 2001). This movement emphasized personal, social, and moral development. Later in the 1940s, the United States began using psychologists and counselors to select, recruit, and train military personnel for World War II. The counseling movement in schools addressed ways to test students and meet the emerging national workforce needs. In 1946, the George Barden Act provided funds to develop and support guidance and counseling activities in schools and other settings. This was the first time school counselors and state and local supervisors received resources, leadership, and financial support from the government (Davis, 2015; Gybers & Henderson, 2001)

Following the aftermath of the war, a greater emphasis on psychological testing directly influenced school guidance and the movement away from vocational testing occurred (Davis, 2015; Gysbers & Henderson, 2001). Due to the “Race to Space” in the 1950s, Congress funded programs for science and technology related careers (Remley & Herlihy, 2007). Schools began placing guidance counselors in high schools to help with scheduling students into necessary

courses. Many of these counselors were teachers who had taken additional coursework, however the training was minimal (Remley & Herlihy, 2007).

One of the core persons indirectly responsible for the shift away from vocational testing was the American psychologist Carl Rogers (Corey, 2009). Many in the counseling field adopted his emphasis on nondirective counseling that focused on the client. Carl Rogers originated and developed the humanistic movement in psychotherapy, pioneered psychotherapy research and influenced all fields related to the helping professions. He established nonjudgmental listening and acceptance, otherwise known as client-centered counseling, which was a dramatic shift from the counselor-centered approach that had been popular previously (Corey, 2009).

School Counseling Accountability and Standards

During the expansion of more guidance counselors in schools, the 1958 National Defense Education Act (NDEA) provided educational aid in the United States at all levels, public and private, in the training of counselors for middle and secondary schools (ASCA, 2012). Part of the NDEA focused on providing funds to help states establish and maintain school counseling, testing, guidance activities, and authorizing the establishment of counseling institutions and training programs in colleges and universities (ASCA, 2012). This act also further united counselors in practices and counseling techniques. Additional support for school counseling was spurred by the Soviet Union's launching of Sputnik and fears that other countries were outperforming the United States in the fields of mathematics and science (Capuzzi & Douglas, 2008). Therefore, by providing appropriate funding for education, including guidance and counseling, it was thought that more students would find careers in the sciences (Capuzzi & Douglas, 2008).

American School Counselor Association. In the 1950s ASCA was formed as an additional factor in uniting the professional identity of school counselors (ASCA, 2012). By the 1980s, ASCA promoted models of comprehensive guidance and counseling programs, such as competency-based guidance, developmental guidance, and comprehensive school guidance and counseling (Davis, 2015). Due to the new professional standard and the developing nature of the workforce and school systems, the NDEA, which until that time did not mandate elementary school counselors, was updated to include elementary school counselors (Davis, 2015).

For the past thirty years more legislation has occurred and additional training standards have been developed, further unifying the profession and providing counselors the credibility they deserve (Capuzzi & Douglas, 2008). School social workers, school psychologists, and school counselors are trained in similar manners (Radin & Welsh, 1984) and overlap in their school functions (Arguesta, 2004). However, unique to counselors is the wellness model of mental health to help clients and the important role of client self-actualization (Remley & Herlihy, 2007). In the 1990s, due to the push for more accountability and credibility for counseling standards, ASCA developed a national framework to clearly define the role and responsibility of school counseling programs and show the necessity of school counseling for the development of every student (ASCA, 2012). The Transformational School Counseling Initiative was funded in 1996 to refine school counselor training programs and practices, and the National Standard for School Counseling Programs was published a year later (Davis, 2015). The school counselor role continued to evolve to include impacting the increasingly diverse student populations (Adelman & Taylor, 2002) and counseling within the current personal/social, academic and career issues (ASCA, 2012).

ASCA standards were revised in 2005 and again in 2012 to provide an updated framework for comprehensive programs (ASCA, 2012). In 2005, the Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) began to recognize schools that demonstrate effective school counseling practices and demonstrate accountability practices (ASCA, 2012; Davis, 2015). The need for more training, education, and counseling services gradually grew from there as counselors were added to all school levels and their roles shifted from guidance counselors to school counselors in the new millennium (Remley & Herlihy, 2007).

Council for Accreditation of Counselor Related Education Programs. As ASCA gained recognition and prominence, additional accreditation programs evolved. CACREP was established in 1981 from the growth of the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) standards in the 1960s and 70s to establish training requirements and accreditation standards for counselors (CACREP, 2018). This is a voluntary accreditation program for counseling programs. CACREP promotes professionalism, leadership, and preparation for counselors in areas of addiction; career; clinical mental health; marriage, family, and couples; school; and student affairs and college counseling. For school counseling, programs have to meet the foundations of school counseling, contextual dimensions, and practice areas of school counseling (CACREP, 2016). Schools that are accredited have met the content and standards set by the profession. As of April 2018, there are over 860 CACREP accredited programs, with 57 programs in the process of accreditation (CACREP, 2018).

Requirements for this accreditation have changed over the years (CACREP, 2016). Currently, to receive accreditation universities need to complete a self-study that demonstrates how they are meeting CACREP standards in the areas of the learning environment and

professional counseling identity, which includes subsections on professional orientation and ethical practice; social and cultural diversity; human growth and development; career development; counseling and helping relationships; group counseling and group work; assessment and testing; and research and program evaluation (CACREP, 2016). These standards are important because they influence how counselors, and specifically school counselors, are prepared for their work in the field and their expectations of the job.

CACREP is important to the history of the counseling profession because it has impacted the training of school counselors. While not all school counselors graduate from a CACREP institution, studies show that school counselors from CACREP institutions score significantly higher on the National Counselor Exam (NCE; Adams, 2005). Regardless of the training program from which a counselor comes, all school counselors are bound by ethical standards from ASCA (2012), the American Counseling Association (ACA; 2014), and the state guidelines for policies and procedures in which they reside (ASCA, 2017c; Davis, 2015). The school counselor role can also vary by school (ASCA, 2012, 2017b), resulting in unique experiences for each counselor depending on her school. Counselors in community agencies or private schools also may have different roles and responsibilities than those in schools (Davis, 2015). However, the development of ASCA and CACREP have streamlined the preparation, roles, and responsibilities of school counselors.

Current Role of School Counselors

With the evolution of school counseling and its accountability standards, ASCA provides a framework for current school counselors to develop, plan, deliver, and manage an effective

comprehensive school counseling program (ASCA, 2012; Davis, 2015). ASCA (2012) states that school counselors:

> have a minimum of a master's degree in school counseling, and abide by the laws of the states in which they are employed. They uphold the ethical and professional standards of ASCA and other applicable professional counseling associations and promote the development of the school counseling program based on the following areas of the ASCA National Model: foundation, delivery, management, and accountability (p. 1).

A major aspect of school counseling includes the direct services to students (ASCA, 2012). School counselors are also tasked to maintain ethical responsibilities and confidentiality of behaviors and records; help students with personal/social, academic, and career planning; refer students to outside agencies when needed for more serious mental health concerns; effectively use technology; assist in schools with behavioral supports, testing, and scheduling; be multicultural advocates; collaborate with stakeholders in the schools and community; and engage in leadership (ASCA, 2012; Davis 2015). While other roles of school counselors vary by level, school demographics, and school setting, the ASCA National Model is the framework for how counselors should perform in their role (ASCA, 2012).

The ASCA National Model recommends specific standards for time allocations of duties. Specifically, ASCA recommends that a school counselor conducts classroom lessons 15-25% of the time, engages in individual student planning 25-35% of the time, participates in response services 25-35% of the time, and assists in school support 15-25% of the time (ASCA, 2012). In general, 60-75% of a school counselor's time should be devoted to direct student services, whether that is through individual counseling, school counseling core curriculum, groups, or

individual advisement and consulting (Partin, 1993). Regardless of the method of direct services, multicultural counseling, advocacy, knowledge of the trends in the schools and community as well as collaborating with the community on issues at large, are keys to effective counseling (Eckenrod-Green & Culbreth, 2008).

Recommendations vs. reality. Though ASCA has recommended standards, the reality of the job of a school counselor varies (Agresta, 2004; Burnham & Jackson, 2000; Dahir, et al., 2010; Evans & Payne, 2008). A school counselor's time is not divided up as neatly as the ASCA model suggests (Agresta, 2004; Partin, 1993), and 80 surveyed school counselors identified that while individual counseling is the main component of their time, group work is the most efficient and effective (Burnham & Jackson, 2000). Agresta (2004) conducted a survey with 486 participants, including school social workers, counselors and psychologists, who were asked about their ideal time versus actual amount of time spent practicing specific cross-occupational professional roles. School counselors surveyed reported spending at least 20% of their time in individual counseling and 8% in group counseling, but they stated that they ideally would like to spend even more time in both areas. While academic and college advisement took up a more limited amount of time, counselors were satisfied with that aspect of the job. All groups surveyed agreed that test coordination is not appropriate for school counselors, psychologists, or social workers. Counselors felt that their roles were shifting away from the traditional functions of academic advisement, scheduling, and college advisement, for example, to more time being spent on individual and group counseling (Agresta, 2004). This is in line with the new ASCA model standards (ASCA, 2012) that a counselor should spend 80% of her time in direct student services. However, there is also an increase in school counselors engaging in non-counseling

duties, such as testing, which are recommended to be carried out through other school personnel (Burnham & Jackson, 2000).

Though school counselors have acquired the attitudes and skills needed to successfully implement school counseling programs with the ACSA standards (ASCA, 2012), they base their counseling programming on their own priorities, school needs, and program management standards (Dahir et al., 2010). School level (e.g, elementary, middle, or high) also affects the school counselor's role and the relationship between the principal and counselor in that role. Dahir et al. (2010), in a survey of 999 Tennessee school counselors, found significant differences among the three school levels in the overall subscales of a comprehensive school counseling program, which measure academic, career, and personal/social initiatives. High school counselors had the lowest averages in time spent working in all subscales, illustrating that they needed to take initiative within their building to establish comprehensive school counseling program. The career and postsecondary scale was where high school counselors spent the most time, which is in line with the extra tasks of scheduling and college/career planning that high schools counselors undertake. Middle school counselors demonstrated an overall balance in all areas (Dahir et al., 2010). A study of principals also supported the research on the positive impact of school counselors for students in the area of emotional and social realms (Zalaquett & Chatters, 2012).

While there are ideal standards for which counselors should spend their time (ASCA, 2012), societal factors impact that balance (Evans & Payne, 2008). The increase of safety and mental health issues have greatly impacted the school counseling profession (Evans & Payne, 2008). However, the importance of a resilient mindset, joy of working with students, and

supervision and consultation with colleagues are protective factors to help the counselor's role. Despite counselors having an overall positive feeling about the job, many counselors have had thoughts about quitting before retirement due to other career options (Evans & Payne, 2008). The standards for school counseling are also continually changing as states change licensure laws and different programs are implemented in schools (Hursh, 2005), which impacts the reality of a school counselor's job.

Perceptions of the school counselor's role. Research shows that school levels impacts school counseling programs (Dahir et al., 2010), but the presence of a comprehensive school counseling program is also affected by the relationship and collaboration between principals, teachers, and school counselors. Students agree that they want school counselors who are more accessible with smaller caseloads (Johnson, 2010), and students who have strong relationships with counselors have stronger social and academic adjustment following high school (Hudley et al., 2009). Often, it is the school counselors and school counseling leaders who must be the advocates to principals and district level personnel for counselor accessibility and smaller caseloads (Hudley et al., 2009; Johnson, 2010), thereby showing the importance of the administrative relationship with directors (Clemens, Milsom, & Cashwell, 2009). Relatedly, principals have been found to be satisfied with school counseling services and report satisfaction in areas of school counseling core curriculum lessons, individual and group counseling, consultation, and program coordination (Beesley & Fry, 2006). A survey of 337 Iowa principals, showed that while some principals had limited knowledge of the ASCA model (Leuwerke, Walker, & Shi, 2009), the way they viewed counselor time allocations is similar to the recommendations from the ACSA model. School counselors who advocated for their role to

principals, teachers, and stakeholders created positive perceptions in their building (Kirchner & Setchfield, 2005; Shimoni & Greenberger, 2014) and impacted the perceptions about what school counselor duties are appropriate (e.g. individual counseling) and not appropriate (e.g. testing or clerical tasks) (Ginter & Others, 1990; Kirchnew & Setchfield, 2005; Reiner, Colbert & Pérusse, 2009). A survey of 637 school counselors in the southeast showed that school counselors' relationship with administration and their use of advocacy skills had a significant effect on how their roles were defined and the implementation of specific programs (Clemens et al., 2009). The stronger school counselors perceived their relationship to be with their principal, the smaller gap there was between actual versus ideal program implementation (Clemens et al., 2009).

It is beneficial to look at the perception of school counselors since school counselors and school counseling directors are leaders in their department, their school, and their district (ASCA, 2012; Stone & Clark, 2001). Specifically, school counseling directors are an important piece of school counseling programming and impact the outside perception of the department. They are leaders and advocates for serving students, families, and the community through the school counseling services recommended by ASCA (2012). Therefore, it is important to establish what the exact role of the school counseling director is, and how that might impact job satisfaction.

Role of the School Counseling Director

A school counseling director is a school counselor at a school who is the designated department leader. Different states have different standards for the allotment of school counseling directors in each school, but typically directors exist in schools where there are

multiple counselors and larger caseloads, specifically middle and high schools (ASCA, 2012). ASCA (2012, 2017d) recommends that school counseling programs have directors/coordinators to oversee a variety of functions within the school counseling department. These include but are not limited to:

- advocating for the needs of students, based on school and district data
- working to eliminate barriers to access and equity to a rigorous education for all students
- providing information about the need for a k-12 comprehensive school counseling program to school-, district- and state-level administrators, school boards, and the community
- providing leadership toward the implementation of the comprehensive school counseling program at the school, district, and state levels
- providing leadership in the process of hiring qualified, diverse school counselors, and encouraging membership and involvement in school counselor associations
- advocating for programs and services that lead to student success and achievement with school staff members, parents, district-, and state-level staff, school board members and the community
- advocating for a school-counselor-to-student ratio of 1:250
- advocating for professional school counselors to spend 80 percent of their time in direct services to students as defined by the ASCA National Model
- providing individual and group supervision to school counselors in practice
- providing leadership in the evaluation process to ensure school counselor performance appraisal is aligned with the appropriate role of the school counselor

- ensuring regularly scheduled professional development for school counselors and for the continuous improvement of the school counseling program
- collaborating in the supervision of school counseling interns/fieldwork students coordinate the integration of school counseling programs with the total educational curriculum of the school district and state; and
- providing leadership to promote equity in policies and procedures that have an impact on students

Due to the current study being completed in Virginia, it serves to compare a district in Virginia to the ASCA recommendations for the duties of a director. Chesterfield County educates about 60,000 students (Schools, n.d.) and the director is described as someone who "provides leadership and manages the daily activities of the school counseling department at the assigned secondary school, mentors school counselors, and ensures the effective utilization of staff and resources" (Chesterfield County Public Schools, 2013). They are assigned the following:

- managing the daily activities of the school counseling department at the assigned school
- mentoring school counselors and assigned clerical staff in the day-to-day operation of the department and conducting regular meetings to disseminate information
- providing leadership in the implementation of academic, personal, social and career guidance and counseling programs and keeping abreast of the latest developments, techniques and research in the profession

- providing overall coordination of special activities/events involving the school counseling department of the assigned school to include new student orientation programs
- serving as a liaison between the assigned school and community resource groups, feeder schools, colleges, and universities regarding school counseling related activities
- implementing a comprehensive and efficient system for maintaining records of school counseling services and student records at the assigned school
- demonstrating commitment to improving professional competence
- assessing student learning on an ongoing basis and altering instruction to meet group/individual needs; and
- using the curriculum of the district to plan daily instructional activities

The qualifications to be a director include holding a school counseling license, having a master's degree in school counseling, and having school counseling experience at the appropriate level (Chesterfield County Public Schools, 2013). There is no direct research on the actual range of activities of the school counseling director, so this information is used as an example of one district within the state of this study with the understanding that this may be different in other districts and schools. Therefore, these inconsistencies in the role of a director may impact the experience and job satisfaction of those counselors serving as directors.

Job Satisfaction in k-12 Education

Employee job satisfaction is important in all roles within a school setting. Pink (2011) argues that employees need a sense of autonomy, mastery and purpose to stay motivated. When given the opportunity to spend time on creating something rather than doing work mandated by a

company or boss, happiness and productivity increase. There needs to be a clear purpose and praise should be specific, focus on technique not results, and only used when there is a good reason to praise (Pink, 2011). Due to the extensive research in teacher job satisfaction, the focus in this section is to provide a framework in which to understand trends in the research.

Job satisfaction related to education varies over position and country and encompasses a wide range of school employees, including general education teachers, special education teachers and principals (Aldridge and Fraser, 2016; Dewa et al., 2009; Gahvifek & Pillai, 2016; Koustelios, 2001; Lee, 2006; Lee et al., 1991; Liu & Ramsey, 2008; Lowry, 2004; Rhodes et al., 2004; Turgut & Ibrahim, 2006; Saiti & Papadopoulos, 2015). While some research has shown positive teacher satisfaction (Ghavifek & Pillai, 2016; Saiti & Papadopoulos, 2015), there are many areas of concern affecting teachers. Saiti and Papadopoulos (2015) found that Greek teachers have positive job satisfaction, namely on factors such as administration, colleagues, and nature of work due to the protection of their jobs by the public sector, unlike other jobs in the country. Relatedly, Ghavifek and Pillai (2016) found a significant positive relationship between school organizational climate and teachers' job satisfaction in Malaysia. Gender had no impact on job satisfaction, but years of service did (Ghavifek & Pillai, 2016).

Other studies show that educational job satisfaction is impacted by external factors (Aldgridge & Fraser, 2016; Dewa et al., 2009; Turgut & Ibrahim, 2006). By studying principals, Turgut and İbrahim (2006) found that principals' attitude and behavior positively affects teacher's job satisfaction and motivation at private schools but not in public schools. In this research, private school teachers viewed the workplace environment and reputation of schools more positively (Turgut & Ibrahim, 2006). Principals surveyed from a Canada district were

found to be identified with a low mental health status (Dewa et al., 2009). The perceived job role and rewards of work had a great impact on mental health, but regardless, principals' mental health status was lower than vice principals'. The authors argue that the organization of the educational system is putting a lot of pressure on principals, which can account for the mental health burden. Principals in secondary settings were more likely to experience this mental health issue, which does not benefit the school in terms of leadership (Dewa et al., 2009). Aldridge and Fraser (2016) revealed that teacher perceptions about leadership and obtaining assistance, advice, and encouragement significantly influenced teacher self-efficacy and influenced job satisfaction indirectly, showing the importance of principal leadership.

The Influence of External Factors

Much of the control of schools has shifted from localized planning to the state and federal levels, which has introduced standardized testing for accountability purposes (Hursh, 2005). Each state has different measures and requirements. The No Child Left behind (NCLB) law, signed in 2002, was designed to hold teachers and schools accountable for what they were teaching and the standards for learning by each student. All states must conduct tests in reading and math in grades three through 12. These test scores must also be published to stakeholders and the public, including how each subgroup does. Schools that fail to meet average yearly progress (AYP) in even just one area are designated as a failing school. Schools failing for three years must go to extra measures to provide proof of instruction and supplemental services in the school. By year four, schools can fire teachers or extend the school day. Eventually students can opt to go to other schools in the same district. However, test scores often correlate with a student's family income rather than the teaching or curriculum, so schools with high numbers of

students from low socioeconomic backgrounds struggle. English Language Learners and special education students are also removed from consideration when determining AYP; thus, schools with larger sets of those populations may have trouble meeting the standards due to language and academic barriers (Hursh, 2005). Because of the need for schools to meet such accountability standards, teachers, and school counselors are impacted by testing and job responsibilities, which may not align with their preferred roles or what they are trained to do (ASCA, 2012; Falls & Nitcher, 2007; Hursh, 2005; Pyne, 2011).

In addition to the increased demands for testing and remediation, job satisfaction is greatly influenced by incentives, such as salary and the school environment, as well as school management, administration, and professional development opportunities (Lee, 2006; Rhodes, et al., 2004; Vittek, 2015). In a study that compared two United States' schools (Lee, 2006), the different satisfaction levels were closely associated with student demographics and achievement, which are negative consequences of NCLB and increased testing. A survey of teachers in Greece found that teachers were satisfied with the job itself but not with the pay and promotional opportunities (Koustelios, 2001). Overall, as shown in a multivariate analysis of surveys in the United States, teachers were least satisfied with work conditions and compensation, but minority teachers were generally less satisfied than non-minority teachers (Liu & Ramsey, 2008). Job satisfaction also varied with gender, teaching experience, and job status. Many teachers stated that not having enough time for planning and large class sizes were a negative factor in job satisfaction. Job satisfaction improved with years of teaching (Liu & Ramsey, 2008).

Teacher's professional efficacy is related to the environment in which they practice their profession (Lee et al., 1991). Lee et al. (1991) found that Catholic school teachers have more

self-efficacy than public school teachers due to organizational differences. Satisfaction was found to be intrinsic, but the students' levels of ability and the degree to which teachers have control in the classroom affects satisfaction. Salary, which is extrinsic, was found to not be related in this study. Principal leadership was positively associated with efficacy, but in schools with strong leadership, teachers' efficacy depended more on their degree of control in the classroom. Larger schools, with thereby more resources, lead to more teacher self-efficacy. A sense of community was also positively related to efficacy (Lee et al., 1991). High workload and lack of administrative support have a large role in dissatisfaction (Rhodes et al., 2004). Teachers expressed a large intrinsic desire to work with students and families, and the ability to do so effectively was impacted by many of the external factors facing schools (Rhodes et al., 2004). Mentoring programs, induction programs for new teachers, adequate administrative support, and increased job satisfaction can help retain satisfied teachers (Vittek, 2015).

Personal characteristics also affect job satisfaction (Liu & Ramsey, 2008; Lowry, 2004). Lowry (2004) found that age was the only personal characteristic related to overall job satisfaction among special education directors, and that special education directors were dissatisfied with legislation and paperwork (Lowry, 2004). Personal teaching efficacy and working with students influenced satisfaction and retention, which also led to better teacher retention. Interestingly, teachers who are single were found to be less likely to remain in teaching, as shown in a survey from 201 Missouri elementary school teachers (Perrachione et al., 2008). All these satisfaction factors for educators are important to keep in mind while examining job satisfaction of school counselors because they relate to and influence one another.

School Counselors' Job Satisfaction

Although school counselor job satisfaction research has been conducted (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006; Bryant & Constantine, 2006; Boon et al., 2015; Curry & Bickmore, 2012; Falls & Nitcher, 2007; Gabe & Hoydek, 1993; Kolodinsky et al., 2009; McCarthy et al., 2010; Pyne, 2011; Rayle, 2006; Wilkerson, 2009), the findings are limited to mainly quantitative surveys with no research with school counseling directors. The earliest study (Dietz, 1972), from a survey of 246 Tennessee school counselors, examined job satisfaction by ASCA defined activities and how the school counselors ranked their importance. Dietz (1972) found that the tasks counselors spent the most time doing were non-counseling duties and thus were low in the ASCA standards, which may have decreased job satisfaction due to confusing roles. Role ambiguity is a theme among most school counselor job satisfaction studies (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006; Bryant & Constantine, 2006; Boon et al., 2015; Cervoni & DeLucia-Waack, 2011; Curry & Bickmore, 2012; Falls & Nitcher, 2007; Gabe & Hoydek, 1993; Kolodinsky et al., 2009; McCarthy et al., 2010; Pyne, 2011; Rayle, 2006; Wilkerson, 2009).

Some research indicates that job satisfaction among school counselors is relatively high (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006; Yesilyaprak & Boysan, 2015). Over two-thirds of participants in two separate surveys totaling over 1300 school counselors reported that they are very or somewhat satisfied with their jobs (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006; Yesilyaprak & Boysan, 2015) and most plan to continue their positions until they retire (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006). Counselors who attended to appropriate duties as defined by the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2012), which include individual, core curriculum lessons, and groups, were also more satisfied than those whose duties were deemed inappropriate, such as testing or scheduling. School counselors had higher levels of self-efficacy in working with the appropriate duties compared to

inappropriate duties. However, this self-efficacy was not a positive predictor for career satisfaction or commitment, although other counseling duties and stress were negative predictors (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006). In a study with 541 Malaysia school counselors, positive predictors of school counselor job satisfaction were mastery experience, which relates to the experience of direct service to students that leaves the school counselor feeling accomplished, and counseling self-efficacy (Boon et al., 2015). Stress, anxiety and negative self-worth contributed negatively to satisfaction (Boon et al., 2015).

Role ambiguity is also a predictor of job satisfaction (Cervoni & DeLucia-Waack, 2011; Falls and Nitcher, 2007). Role ambiguity, which occurs when there is not a clear understanding of a counselor's role (Falls & Nitcher, 2007), was a strong predictor of job dissatisfaction, especially among high school counselors (Cervoni & DeLucia-Waack, 2011). Time spent on duties not recommended by the ASCA National Model was negatively related to job satisfaction, while the most positive predictor of job satisfaction was counseling tasks (Cervoni & DeLucia-Waack, 2011). Wilkerson (2009), in a national survey of 482 school counselors, found that counselors reported higher emotional exhaustion, which role incongruity is a predictor of, than other mental health professionals but had a high sense of personal accomplishment. In a qualitative study with school counselors with large (over 300 student) caseloads (Falls & Nitcher, 2007), there was cognitive dissonance, which is related to role ambiguity, between school counselors preparation and their actual role.

Following the ASCA National Model can be a predictor for school counselor job satisfaction (Pyne, 2011). Pyne (2011), in a study of 103 Michigan school counselors, found that administrative support and staff communication were highly correlated with job satisfaction,

while a comprehensive counseling program with clear plans and evaluation protocol was moderately to highly correlated with job satisfaction. Communication between staff members, time for program planning and evaluation, administrative support, a clear and directive philosophy, and a multicultural supportive environment for all students increased job satisfaction. This study indicated that when elements of a comprehensive school counseling program are implemented, job satisfaction is higher among school counselors (Pyne, 2011). Bentley (2014) also studied the relationship between job satisfaction in RAMP schools with 258 school counselors, and found that there was not a relationship among job satisfaction and a school being RAMP designated. However, school counselors in elementary schools had more of a positive relationship in job satisfaction and RAMP designation than those in middle or high schools. The same positive relationship was found for school counselors in public versus those in private schools (Bentley, 2014). Additionally, Slaughter (2015), who conducted a qualitative study with 10 high school counselors in the southeast, found that high school counselors at RAMP schools identified as satisfied with their jobs and roles as well. They felt validated about running a comprehensive school counseling program (Slaughter, 2015).

Rayle (2006), in a national survey of 388 school counselors, discovered significant differences in self-reported experiences of job satisfaction, a sense of mattering to others, and job-related stress for counselors at different school levels (elementary, middle or high). Overall, school counselors were satisfied at work with lower levels of job-related stress. Those who had been teachers before they became counselors had greater job dissatisfaction, yet school counselors working in gifted programs felt greater levels of mattering and job satisfaction. Elementary counselors reported the most job satisfaction and lowest amounts of job-related

stress, while high school counselors reported the lowest level of job satisfaction and sense of mattering and the highest level of stress. All school counselors felt they mattered most to their students and least to the teachers. Mattering and job-related stress are related and may serve to predict school counselor job satisfaction, which has implications for future training and practice (Rayle, 2006). The feeling of mattering for school counselors is manifested through interactions with administrators, positive student relationships and successes, and collaborating with the school and community (Curry & Bickmore, 2012). Lack of interaction with administrators, poor transitioning processes, and limited mentoring reduce the feelings of mattering (Curry & Buckmore, 2012). As stated above, Cervoni and DeLucia-Waack (2011) found role ambiguity was a great predictor of job dissatisfaction, but it should be noted again that is was especially true among high school counselors.

Contrary to these results, Kolodinsky et al. (2009), in a survey study of 155 Arizona school counselors, found that all levels of counselors were similarly satisfied. The majority reported high levels of satisfaction with teachers, principals, and parents. The greatest area of job dissatisfaction occurred from being overwhelmed by duties. There also was frustration with certain administrative relationships and lack of appropriate and consistent parent guidance for students. The higher levels of dissatisfaction occurred with those who responded to crises, provided system support, or were involved in non-counseling activities that took counselors away from working with students (Kolodinsky et al., 2009). Gade and Hoydek (1993) found, from a survey of 109 North Dakota school counselors, that a counselor position split between schools can be a more time consuming and less satisfying job. Counselors may suffer from role conflicts at each building with different job demands (Gade & Hoydek, 1993).

Goodman-Scott (2015), in a national survey of 1,052 school counselors, studied school counselor job preparedness and found that school counselors felt prepared for the recommended counselor activities, which include mental health counseling, working with students on academic issues and staff consultation. Counselors did not feel as prepared for non-counseling duties, such as scheduling, discipline, or teacher-related tasks (Goodman-Scott, 2015). This is similar to the results of Falls and Nitcher's (2007) study, where counselors reported not feeling prepared for the realistic roles of school counselors. Paperwork, high caseloads, and daily disruptions are the most demanding aspects of the job, and all are related to stress (McCarthy et al., 2010). Positive professional relationships are related to lower burnout and adequate trainings and access to resources can reduce role stress. School counselors who identify as a minority were more likely to report higher role demands (McCarthy et al., 2010).

Burnout

Burnout, which has been reported by school counselors as a negative factor related to job satisfaction (Lambie, 2009; Moyer, 2011; Wilkerson & Bellini, 2006), can be defined as a condition "of physical and emotional exhaustion, involving the development of negative self-concept, negative job attitude, and loss of concern and feeling for clients" (Pines & Maslach, 1978, p. 234). Burnout can manifest itself by low energy, fatigue, trouble sleeping, and other physical, mental, and emotional issues (Pines & Maslach, 1978). Wilkerson and Bellini (2006) elaborate that burnout can be measured by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization of services, and personal accomplishment. School counselors experience high levels of stress because of role demands, ambiguity, caseload size, and lack of supervision (Lambie, 2002). This can lead to a deterioration of services (Lambie, 2009) and can affect almost half of mental health counselors

(Lambie, 2007). It is essential for counselor educators to teach prospective counselors about burnout and coping strategies (Lambie, 2002), which also impact school counselor retention, job satisfaction, and fulfillment of job responsibilities (Moyer, 2011).

Ego development is an essential component in the development of adaptive and self-awareness that prevent burnout (Lambie, 2007). When studying this facet in a survey of 550 school counselors (Lambie, 2007), most school counselors scored as self-aware and conscientious on the ego development scale, which are the levels of ego functioning needed to be effective counselors and reduce occupational burnout. These results suggest that school counselors are operating on a low level of burnout and are able to effectively and appropriately work with students. Social support is supported as a buffer for burnout, which in counselors occurs through supervision and peer collaboration (Lambie, 2007).

Lack of supervision, high student-to-counselor ratios (higher than the recommended ratio of 250 to 1; ACSA, 2012), and the expectation of performing non-counseling activities (e.g., clerical, testing, or administrative; Gybers & Henderson, 2006) are correlated with high levels of burnout (Moyer, 2011). Supervision, when counselors are mentored and evaluated by a more experienced member of the counseling profession, allows for counselor growth and skill development (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). The absence of supervision is a significant predictor for overall burnout due to counselors feeling incompetent or frustrated with their role (Moyer, 2011). Often, school counselor supervision ends after graduate school (Baggerly & Osborn, 2006). Additionally, school counselors who perform 10 or more hours per week on non-counseling tasks report feeling more exhausted and less empathetic towards students, thus exhibiting higher levels of burnout (Moyer, 2011). Mullen and Guiterrez (2016), in a survey

from 926 school counselors, explained that there is a negative and significant correlation between counselor burnout and frequency of direct counseling and curriculum student services. They concluded that counselors who are burned out spend less time with students. School counselors perception of stress did not impact their direct student services but did correlate with burnout (Mullen & Guiterrez, 2016).

Lawson and Myers (2011) measured three factors in counselor performance, in a survey of 506 school counselors, including how counselors remain vital, how well they are, and their professional quality of life. Counselors in private practice scored higher on wellness factors than those in school or community agencies. Caseload variables affected professional quality of life, as counselors with higher amounts of clients with traumatic factors or high-risk clients were at a higher risk for burnout and were less satisfied with work. Career-sustaining behaviors that helped reduce burnout and increase longevity included maintaining self-awareness, reflecting on positive experiences, engaging in leisure activities, and trying to maintain objectivity about clients. By focusing on holistic wellness, counselors can retain high satisfaction in their work and avoid burnout and fatigue (Lawson & Myers, 2011).

CACREP has embedded a wellness model into its standards for training counselors, which may be a protective factor for counselors (Smith et al., 2007). Smith el al. (2007) found a statistically significant negative relationship between level of wellness and psychological stress in 204 master's level counseling students. However, a large number of counseling students indicated psychological distress similar to those found in clinical settings. This distress was exhibited through anxiety, depression, somatic problems, stress, interpersonal difficulties, and social role struggles (Smith et al., 2007). These factors, in addition to burnout, can impact job

satisfaction (Smith et al., 2007). Therefore, it is important for counselors to understand their protective factors (Lambie, 2002), engage in wellness activities to help alleviate burnout (Lawson & Myers, 2011; Smith et al., 2007), and increase positive relationships, leadership, and communication in the school with administrators and teachers (Pyne, 2011).

In summary, the research on school counselor job satisfaction reveals the different layers of the roles, responsibilities, and inconsistencies with the job. The majority of the research focuses on quantitative measures with large sample sizes; thus the findings are directly derived from the questions asked by the researchers and are less influenced by the nuances and specific experiences of school counselors that can be discovered through conversations. However, there is consistent data on the negative effects of burnout, role ambiguity, lack of supervision, high caseloads, federal laws, and the presence of non-counseling duties on school counselor job satisfaction. Protective factors in job satisfaction are a comprehensive school counseling program, positive relationships with administrators, leadership in the school, wellness, and direct services to students. However, there is no research on school counseling directors specifically, so while they may or may not be included in the previous mentioned samples of school counselors, we do not know their specific experiences or how their thoughts may differ from the counselors they supervise.

Cultivating Satisfied School Counselors through Leadership

While the limited information on the role of school counseling directors showcases that directors need to be capable supervisors and collaborators, the exact nature of how to be a good leader and advocate is left to interpretation. Much of the research findings about factors that negatively affect job satisfaction, like role ambiguity (Cervoni & DeLucia-Waack, 2011; Falls

and Nitcher, 2007), burnout (Lambie, 2009; Moyer, 2011; Wilkerson & Bellini, 2006), and support for the counseling program (Pyne, 2011; Rayle, 2006) can be impacted by a good department leader and advocate. Therefore, it is important to firmly establish leadership styles, models, and training practices that school counseling directors can utilize to promote job satisfaction.

Davis (2015) argues that the leadership qualities of a successful school counselor and school counseling director must be flexible, adaptable, and evolving. Since school counselors vary on their leadership practices and comfort level, specifically with older counselors self-reporting themselves higher on leadership scales than younger or less experienced counselors (Mason & McMahon, 2009), there are discrepancies in leadership style. Despite the recent changes in the ASCA National Model and more leadership training in graduate school, the development of leadership as a school counselor takes job experience (Mason & McMahon, 2009). This is important to note when discussing school counselor director job satisfaction and leadership training, as the years a director was a school counselor before becoming a director may have larger implications for their comfort as a leader in the role than other factors (Mason & McMahon, 2009).

Dollarhide (2003) outlines ways in which school counselors serve as leaders through a variety of leadership contexts. These include structural leadership (leadership in the building of viable organizations), human resource leadership (leadership through the empowerment of follower), political leadership (leadership in the use of interpersonal and organizational power), and symbolic leadership (leadership via the interpretation of the meaning of change). Counselors can utilize all these leadership aspects to build a foundation for school counseling program

(structural), communicate well (human recourse), build links and communicate with stakeholders (political), and frame the experience in a meaningful way for followers (symbolic; Dollarhide, 2003). Leadership practices are positively related to the implementation of a comprehensive school counseling foundation, and following through on commitments has a positive aspect on establishing leadership (Davis, 2015).

School counselors, and in turn, school counseling directors, who have clear and focused goals, self-define their role, have supportive colleagues, and grow from resistance have the qualities of being effective and successful leaders (Dollarhide et al., 2008). There are many models that encompass these leadership qualities, yet as ASCA does not promote a specific model, directors are left to find and embrace their individual leadership style (ASCA, 2012). This has implications for studying school counseling directors, since leadership method or style may be the biggest factor in their job satisfaction as it impacts all parts of their job: collaboration, advocacy, leadership, and programming.

Leadership and Job Satisfaction

The foundation for studying school counseling director career experiences and satisfaction in this study is framed by the transformational leadership model (Bass, 1991; Bayler, 2012; Berkovich, 2016) and the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2012). Both models complement each other on the leadership characteristics of a school counselor who enacts change, motivates followers, and advocates in schools. Finally, Locke's Range of Affect Theory (Locke, 1976) provides a framework for viewing career experiences and job satisfaction with regard to how counselors view their work and derive satisfaction from their roles.

Leadership Models in School Counseling

ASCA highlights and values school counselors as leaders (ASCA, 2012). The model cites "visionary thinking, challenging inequities, shared decision making, collaborative processing, modeling excellence and a courageous stance" (p.11) as the effective qualities of a school counseling leader. To become successful leaders, school counselors need to be educated in leadership skills and given opportunities to explore their own leadership style (Stone & Clark, 2001). As schools transition to different behavioral programs, such as positive behavior intervention and supports (PBIS) and response to intervention (RTI), school counselors are given the unique opportunities to establish leadership in schools (Ryan, Kaffenberger, & Carroll, 2011). By taking leadership in programs that impact school-wide structure, counselors can build relationships with all stakeholders and implement leadership models. There is a positive relationship between leadership and school counseling program implementation (Mason, 2010). Successful leaders take responsibility and empower themselves and their followers to embrace change, much like the transformational models suggest as important qualities in schools (Bass, 1991; Bayler, 2012; Berkovich, 2016).

Transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is a popular leadership model for working in schools (Bass, 1991; Bayler, 2012; Berkovich, 2016). It is defined as "a leadership approach that causes change in individuals and social systems. In its ideal form, it creates valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of developing followers into leaders" (Langston University, 2016, p. 1). The leader shapes their environment by inspiring and motivating the followers to embrace change (Smith & Bell, 2011). It is a "key for conceptualizing school leadership" (Berkovich, 2016, p. 609) and is more related to how leaders transform their followers as opposed to the directions they influence in their followers (Bush,

2014). This theory of leadership is important to use when discussing job satisfaction since much of how a person feels about their job is related to their training and leadership style.

Effects of transformational leadership. A transformational leader is charismatic, meets the emotional needs of the followers, and intellectually stimulates them to change (Bass, 1991). These leaders are satisfying to the followers and effective in their style because of the personal attention, coaching, and advising they receive, which motivates change in followers. The main components of this leadership style are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985; Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003). Teachers respond positively to principals with this leadership style in terms of motivation, stimulation, and outlook on the job roles (Bayler, 2012). Yang (2016) found that job satisfaction is promoted through effective leadership, leadership trust, and a change commitment. Using transformational leadership to focus more directly on instructional management in schools can also enhance the leader's effect on achievement and student emotional engagement (Boberg & Bourgeois, 2016).

Research further showing the impact of transformational leadership is Parco-Tropicales and de Guzman's (2014) study which found that "principals who have transformational, visionary and ethical leadership orientation have a higher capability for wise leadership" (p. 554). Wise leadership is a combination of transformational, charismatic, ethical, and visionary leadership styles. They also found that high charisma is needed for leadership and wisdom development (Parco-Tropicales & de Guzman, 2014). There is a positive relationship between leaders who exhibit a transformational leadership style and the job satisfaction of their followers (Medley & Larochelle, 1995). An effective leader is one in which provides clarity, support, and

stimulation but that the makeup of the individual is an important factor in how they view job satisfaction (Fuller et al., 1999; Health & Heath, 2010). There are also gender differences in how workers respond to leadership styles, with males and females preferring different facets and leadership styles as important to their job satisfaction (Collins, Burrus, & Meyer, 2014).

Counselors as transformational leaders. Counselors can enact strong transformational leadership in a variety of ways. First, with the ASCA National Model, a strong counselor leader is someone who has a mission statement, is data-driven, promotes core values, motivates through commitment, and shares their leadership (Davis, 2015). Influential leaders must lead through organization, problem solving, dedication, trustworthiness, compassion, addressing resistance, and initiative (Davis, 2015). Counselors who follow through on promises, set an example, are respectful, and develop a relationship with others have stronger leadership and report higher on comprehensive program implementation (Mason, 2010). This is important to note within the transformational model, because school counselors need to model change, flexibility, and a caring leadership style to be effective in their roles. School counseling leadership teams (SCLT), which exist to respond to local, regional, and state-level counseling issues, close the achievement gap, and ensure that schools are addressing the social/emotional, academic, and career needs of students (Kaffenberger, Murphy, & Bemak, 2006). This leadership team is essential for giving each school counselor increased awareness of the importance of school counseling leadership and has been effective in the state of Virginia's creating new leaders in the field (Kaffenberger et al., 2006). Transformational leadership, the ASCA National Model, experience level, and personal characteristics all frame a good leader and school counseling director.

Locke's Range of Affect Theory

The complicated nature of job satisfaction and effective leadership is apparent. Many theories have been established to break down why some types of jobs give people greater satisfaction than others; from Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg, 1959) to Locke's Range of Affect Theory (Locke, 1976), there have been many theoretical ways to best describe and measure job satisfaction.

Locke (1976) described job satisfaction as a discrepancy between what an employee values and what a job provides, and proposed that job satisfaction is determined by two factors: the have-want discrepancy in a job facet and the importance of that facet (McFarlin, Coster, Rice, & Cooper, 1995). The have-want discrepancy relates to what a person expects or wants in a job. The facet refers to how important a specific factor is in a person's personal values or needs. Locke's range of affect hypothesis states that the discrepancies between what we expect and want versus what we actually get determine how satisfied we are in a job. When a facet's importance is high, a person will experience a great range in how satisfied he or she is depending on possession of that facet. If a facet importance is low, then a person won't experience as much of a range in satisfaction. For example, if a person expects or wants a job that will provide a great deal of social interaction with people and then she is isolated in a cubicle with limited social contact, that lack of interaction would be the discrepancy and result in lower job satisfaction. If a school counselor expects that she will not be responsible for testing and rates that facet as one that would contribute to lower job satisfaction and then is in charge of Advanced Placement (AP) tests, she will have lower job satisfaction because that facet is present and the discrepancy between what she wants and has is high. Therefore, job satisfaction can be predicted based on how a person rates certain factors of importance and if those factors are met

with the workers expectations. Facet satisfaction is highest when important facets are met and facet dissatisfaction is high when important facets are not met. Employees will not be as highly affected by facets that are not important to them (McFarlin et al., 1995).

Facet importance and its relation to job satisfaction has been studied, but not often in schools (Jackson & Corr, 2002; Johnson & Holdaway, 1994; McFarlin et al., 1995; Rice, Gentile & McFarlin, 1991). Jackson and Corr (2002) found that global job satisfaction measures were predicted by facet description, while Rice et al. (1991) corroborated Locke's theory that facet importance does influence job satisfaction depending on how individuals rank their importance. They found that this theory holds true outside of the United States, as South African workers demonstrated in another study that facet importance is a key part of satisfaction, and facets that are deemed more important elicit greater reactions than those that are less important (McFarlin et al., 1995). In the realm of education, Johnson and Holdaway (1994) found that while principals had overall high job satisfaction, facet importance in principals did not highly correlate with job satisfaction. However, the important job facets remained consistent, with principals at all levels ranking relationships with teachers and students the most important facet and conflict, bureaucratic procedures, powerlessness, funding, and workload as the least important or satisfying facets.

A major instrument utilizing facet theory is the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS; Spector, 1994), which serves as a framework for measuring job satisfaction in a variety of realms according to nine different facets. These facets include pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, nature of work, and communication. The results of this survey are from the combined score of the different facets on

a Likert scale with associated points from low satisfaction to high satisfaction. This survey is reliable and used in a variety of disciplines, and provides a good basis for how to use the facet theory and a quantitative lens for a qualitative study (Spector, 1994). Further studies have added new facets to the job satisfaction lens, including time spent in meetings (Rogelberg, Allen, Shanock, Scott, & Shuffler, 2010), which impacts job satisfaction. Especially when meeting demands are high and frequent, facets are important.

It is also valuable to regard higher level supervisors as an important facet of job satisfaction, especially with the implications of school counseling directors serving as leaders in their building (Dalal, Bashshur, & Credé, 2011). Management above the immediate level of an employee, which for school counseling directors would be district level supervisors, is an important part of job satisfaction that is not studied in depth. School counseling directors are in the middle of the supervision chain in their schools, with school counselors below them and administrators or district-level supervisors above them. They are also dealing with the policies of the school district and state. This has important implications for job satisfaction, as the higher level supervisors impose programs and tasks for the school counseling directors and their team (Dalal, et al., 2012).

Leadership theories and the facet theory have implications for determining the job satisfaction experience of school counseling directors because of the unique nature of director's job serving as a leader in the school while being a counselor (Dalal et al., 2012) and the expectations that directors have for what their job will be like and how it will differ from traditional school counseling (Locke, 1976). The current literature on school counselor job satisfaction does not address the experiences of school counseling directors (Baggerly &

Osborne, 2006; Bryant & Constantine, 2006; Boon et al., 2015; Curry & Bickmore, 2012; Falls & Nitcher, 2007; Gabe & Hoydek, 1993; Kolodinsky et al., 2009; McCarthy et al., 2010; Pyne, 2011; Rayle, 2006; Wilkerson, 2009) and this is a unique set of counselors to study due to their roles as leaders in the building. Therefore, this study seeks to better understand the experiences of school counseling directors in relation to job satisfaction and how they can be better prepared for their role as leaders in the school and for counselors.

Summary

Due to the development of the school counseling field and the changing standards and roles that come with this job, the experiences and, thus, the job satisfaction of school counselors varies. The current literature has evidence and discussion on how school counseling has evolved over the past century and how the roles and responsibilities have changed, yet there are differences in the findings for the current realities of the job, the job satisfaction of counselors, and how leadership impacts the roles and responsibilities of school counseling directors. Furthermore, there have been no studies on the experiences of a unique part of school counseling; the directors that head a department and a school's counseling program. This current study explored the experiences of these school counseling directors in relation to their job satisfaction and leadership. Chapter Three describes the methodology used for this study.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Chapter Two provided an overview of the role and experiences of school counselors as well as the theoretical model used for this study. It showcased that due to the development of the school counseling field and the changing standards and roles that come with the job, the role experiences, job satisfaction, and leadership experiences of school counselors varies. There have also been no studies on the specific experiences of school counseling directors in relation to their leadership and job satisfaction, which is the topic and research question of this study. This chapter presents the methodology and design procedures used for this study.

Since little to no research exists on school counseling director experiences, qualitative methodology is best used to explore their experiences (Hays & Singh, 2012; Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). Qualitative research allows the researcher to gather data from a theoretical lens or framework to understand an experience (Hays & Singh, 2012; Merriam & Tisdale, 2016), and "discover facts or principles that are generally true" (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016, p. 9). The studies are more open and subjective than standardized or structured research, and words are used as data (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). Accordingly, the concepts, themes and theories must be inducted, with data driving the theory from the interviews (Hays & Singh, 2012; Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). This research is "richly descriptive" (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016, p. 17), which

requires a researcher's commitment for extensive time in the field and descriptive analysis of data (Creswell & Poth, 2017). However, the findings can strengthen the knowledge base of a profession and increase effectiveness when working with clients or professionals in settings being studied (Tutty, Rothery & Grinnell, Jr., 1996). Context of the participants gives meaning to the experiences and, thus, is important in interpreting and generalizing findings (Hays & Singh, 2012).

Specifically, this study followed a hermeneutic phenomenological approach, which is a type of qualitative research in which the lived experience of each participant is interpreted through description and interpretation from the researcher (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Kafle, 2013; Merriman & Tisdale, 2016; Van Manen, 1997). In this inquiry, the researcher "is an author who writes from the midst of life experience where meanings resonate and reverberate with reflective being" (Van Manen, 1997, p. 368). Thus, the researcher cannot separate biases, and the researcher's interpretation is essential to the description of the findings or problem (Kafle, 2013), which are often referred to as *stories* (Crowther et al., 2017; Van Manen, 1997). While this type of research is not generalizable (Merriman & Tisdale, 2016; Tutty, et al., 1996), it can uncover a problem or experience and inform additional research in the field.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher is the key component and instrument of data collection and analysis in phenomenological research (Hays & Singh, 2012; Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). When conducting this type of research, "qualitative researchers do not remain indifferent to the lives of the people they talk with, and such personal involvement is welcomed and not distrusted" (Tutty et al., 1996, p. 9). However, the researcher must be aware of biases and monitor them within her

theoretical framework (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). My role as researcher in this study was unique as I interviewed participants who were matched with my own role as a school counseling director, which I have held for the past four years. Because of my role, I have opinions on factors related to job satisfaction and the leadership training of school counselors as well how policies in education impact both these areas. Therefore, it is important to understand the lens from which I operate, which is discussed further in Chapter Five, while still hearing the voices of the participants.

I was not only the data instrument, but I also interpreted the data. Therefore, I naturally influenced the findings through my own experiences as I attempted to uncover the participants' stories (Crowther et al., 2017; Van Manen, 1997). For the hermeneutic approach, there are many ways to work and interpret data (Crowther et al., 2017), so it was important for me to be flexible and reflexive throughout the process (Hays & Singh, 2012). Reflexivity included positioning myself in my writing and in my role as a counseling director by disclosing my own biases, values, and experiences that contributed to the study (Creswell & Poth, 2017). I also completed a reflexive journal. However, while open and flexible to how the process unfolds, I aimed to engage in horizontalization, which helped me place equal weight with all concepts and ideas that emerge through the interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Merriman & Tisdale, 2016).

Research Question

With the lack of literature and studies surrounding school counseling directors, it is pertinent to focus on this group of counselors to understand their job experiences. As detailed in the literature review, the current literature on school counselor job satisfaction does not address the experiences of school counseling directors (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006; Bryant &

Constantine, 2006; Boon et al., 2015; Curry & Bickmore, 2012; Falls & Nitcher, 2007; Gabe & Hoydek, 1993; Kolodinsky et al., 2009; McCarthy et al., 2010; Pyne, 2011; Rayle, 2006; Wilkerson, 2009), and this is a unique set of counselors due to their roles as leaders in the building. Therefore, this study sought to better understand the experiences of school counseling directors as it relates to job satisfaction and how they can be better prepared for their role as leaders in the school. The research question I asked was: What are the experiences of school counseling directors in relation to job satisfaction and leadership?

Participants

The participants in this study were part of a purposeful and snowball sample of school counseling directors in Virginia. Phenomenological studies have a narrow sampling strategy due to all participants needing to experience the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Purposeful sampling is a technique to select participants due to the "amount of detail they can provide about a phenomenon" (Singh & Hayes, 2012, p. 8) and how they can best inform the researcher about the experience (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Snowball sampling, which is when participants are recruited through other participants (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Singh & Hayes, 2012), also occurred. However, recruiting the participants through purposeful and snowball sampling created a sample in which participants shared similar factors, such as working in school systems with similar state requirements for school counseling, yet also one with demographic and district differences, which provided variability.

The eligibility criteria for participation in the study included school counseling directors who worked in a middle or a high school, served as director of a team with two or more counselors, and had been a director for at least two full school years. I contacted potential

participants through an email to local county directors of school counseling and asked that they share the study information with the directors at the middle and high schools (see Appendix A). In addition, I looked up the contact information for school counseling directors in 11 Virginia counties and emailed them asking to participate and share the information with other eligible directors. Also, two local universities forwarded the information to recent graduates through alumni listservs. Some school counselors also heard about the study through other school counselors and contacted me. Through these types of sampling, purposeful and snowball, I was able to obtain a diverse sample of middle and high schools directors in terms of school demographics and participant experience and training.

Once I was contacted by the directors that were interested in participating, I emailed them a demographic survey (see Appendix B) that was included in a link to a password-protected Google form. This data enabled me to compile a diverse sample with additional background information on years of experience, educational information that may impact a director's work experience, and school demographic details. Once the demographic data was compiled, I contacted each selected participant to schedule a phone interview. Participant consent was verbally given in the interview (see Appendix C).

Ten participants are recommended for a phenomenological study to reach saturation (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016), which is when no new information in the data is identified because the themes have already been drawn out from previous participants. Van Manen (1997) does not require 10 participants with the hermeneutic approach, however the goal of this study was to achieve 10 participants for saturation, which is when I stopped the data collection.

Design Procedures

A semi-structured interview process was utilized in this study, which left room for me as the researcher to ask pre-determined questions but also use follow-up questions for clarification purposes (Hays & Singh, 2012; Merriam & Tisdale, 2012). The questions were designed from the information in the literature review, as well as aspects of the Range of Effect Theory (Locke, 1976), components of the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2012), previous quantitative research on job satisfaction (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006; Bryant & Constantine, 2006; Curry & Bickmore, 2012; Gabe & Hoydek, 1993; Kolodinsky et al., 2009; McCarthy et al., 2010; Pyne, 2011; Rayle, 2006; Wilkerson, 2009), and my own experience as a school counseling director.

I piloted this study with two former school counseling directors to confirm the research question and formulate interview questions that would enable me to uncover the essence of the school counseling director's experience. I selected these two school counselors because of their years of school counseling experience and their varying life experiences and background in and outside of work. As a result of the piloting questions, I reformatted a few of the questions to ask additional information and eliminated those that felt repetitive (see Appendix D).

Data Collection and Analysis

As previously stated, the data was collected through recorded interviews via telephone (www.freeconferencecall.com). The goal of data collection is to gather the participants' experiences as school counseling directors in their own words and through their own stories. The interviews were recorded through the website that was kept secured through a password-protected account and, when downloaded, on my password-protected computer.

After each interview was recorded, I transcribed it verbatim. Filler words, such as "umm" or "you know" were taken out of the transcription to help clarity but did not alter the meaning or

content of any statements. Once I finalized the transcriptions, I removed any identifying information, such as name, school, or county affiliation, from each transcript. I assigned pseudonyms to participants on the transcripts and added that pseudonym to the headings on each page. I was the only person who had access to the original files without the pseudonyms, which were locked in a password-protected file on my password-protected computer.

These transcripts were then sent to my coding team. This team consisted of one other counselor education and supervision doctoral student, who has over ten years of experiences as school counselor, and a former school counselor, who is now an assistant professor of counselor education. Both of these team members have taken coursework in qualitative research, and the assistant professor has also conducted her own qualitative dissertation and is currently working on a mixed methods study. Before the coding began, I held a team meeting to discuss the research study, research questions, and the coding process. The members coded all transcripts individually before meeting as a team. The coding team met after the first interview was transcribed to discuss the first codes and establish a preliminary codebook. Following this, the team met to code three transcripts at a time, immediately following the interviews with those three participants, to ensure a continuous coding and interview process in case any questions need to be adjusted. The codebook was updated after each coding meeting, for a total of four times, until final codes were established. The coding team agreed on the final themes following the data collection and analysis.

For qualitative studies, data analysis is done from an inductive, or top down, approach (Hays & Singh, 2012: Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). For this study, I followed the outline by Hays and Singh (2016) for the three main steps of data collection a) Initial data collection, which

includes organizing, summarizing and coding, b) Secondary data analysis, which includes identifying themes and patterns and synthesizing with theory and c) Verification, which includes triangulation, consulting, and comparison. This was a constant process done simultaneously with the data collection, so that I was be able to verify and follow up on questions or comments participants had in previous interviews.

Trustworthiness

Research is only valuable if the manner in which it is conducted is ethical, valid, reliable, and, therefore, trustworthy (Creswell & Poth, 2017: Hays & Singh, 2012; Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). The results must be trusted in the field so that other researchers will use them or adapt them for further research (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). Though qualitative research cannot use specific numbers or statistics to showcase reliability and validity, there are measures that can occur to increase trustworthiness in the study. In order to establish trustworthiness, I outline below different ways in which I established credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability in my study.

Credibility. Credibility determines "how research findings match reality" (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016, p. 242) or "the likelihood that there is a causal relationship between two variables" (Hays & Singh, 2012, p. 192). It can be argued that there are multiple perspectives or interpretations to findings, so qualitative research needs to showcase how findings emerged. However, it must also be argued that by doing qualitative research, *any* finding is worthy due to the multidimensional nature of reality that different individuals, and thus the research, provide. Since I am examining how people understand the world, then the findings are reliable because they get to the individual's experience and, thus, their truth (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016).

Still, two ways to increase credibility are through triangulation and sampling adequacy (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). Each member of my coding team individually read each of the transcripts before we met. They only knew the general background of the study and the research question, and both come from different levels of experience as a school counselor. Through our coding, each identifiable theme was required have at least three forms of evidence to support the findings (Hays & Singh, 2016), with the majority having much more. As stated previously, the codebook was created between the team with preliminary codes after the first interview was coded, and then additional code revisions occurred as needed through the process with the research team comparing coding across multiple transcripts and coders (Creswell & Poth, 2017). To ensure the establishment of the themes, I had a sample that reached saturation but also brought in differing experiences (Hays & Singh, 2016). I simultaneously interviewed and coded to ensure that I was asking the right questions, exploring answers in enough depth, and establishing sampling adequacy (Hays & Singh, 2016). Finally, I engaged in member checking and sought participant feedback for the interview transcriptions (Creswell & Poth, 2017) to ensure that they agreed with the way they answered questions, though this is not mandatory in hermeneutic phenomenology research (Crowther et al., 2017).

Confirmability. I, the head researcher, transcribed the interviews. Participant content was not altered in any way during the transition from audio to transcript and transcript to code book other than the removal of the pausing phrases or words in order to increase confirmability. I also did not alter the meaning of words or phrases in the creation of themes or insert quotes out of context. Again, I consulted with participants through member checking to confirm the responses (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Hays & Singh, 2016). I also used my dissertation chair as a

peer de-briefer. She is experienced in qualitative methodology and was not involved in the data analysis process.

Transferability. As previously stated, generalizability of qualitative research is contested (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016; Tutty et al., 1996). However, by establishing a rich, thick description of an experience, I established transferability to a particular, specific setting. Also, the people who read the study can decide for themselves how much they feel the findings can be generalized. This study also utilized a sample that varies in participant and school demographics to provide a wider range of transferability. I also established saturation with the data, thus there was adequate engagement in data collection (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). Though transferability is not the goal of qualitative research (Hays & Singh, 2012), the data provided can be used and applied in the context of the individuals reading the study.

Dependability. In addition to the methods described above, reliability was further enhanced by having an audit trail showcasing exactly what steps were taken with the research and why and how they occurred. I also engaged in reflection of my thoughts in a journal following the interviews, data analysis, and meeting with the coding team to account for the decisions made during the study. This trail helped formalized my write up and clarified the thought process at different points during the study (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). Reflexivity also included positioning myself in my writing and in my role as a counseling director, by disclosing my own biases, values, and experiences that contribute to the study (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Engaging in reflexivity and self-disclosure increases dependability because my goal was to be open, honest, and transparent in my interpretations (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Through the

varying forms taken to establish trustworthiness, the research team confirmed the data is in line with similar studies and can transfer across settings and people (Hays & Singh, 2012).

Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodology and reasons for the approach of this study. Since little to no research exists on school counseling director job satisfaction and how that relates to leadership training, this inquiry follows the purpose of qualitative research to use this methodology to explore potential themes, determine if more research needs to occur, and determine how the findings impact counselor preparations for these positions. In addition to the purpose, the role of the researcher, participant recruitment, data collection, instrumentation, and trustworthiness were all discussed. Chapter Four explores the results and themes of the study.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this research study was to investigate the experiences of school counseling directors in relation to job satisfaction and leadership. In this chapter, the results of the interviews of the 10 participants are presented through themes and subthemes. During the interviews, four major themes emerged: Intentionality, Leadership Training and Knowledge, Overload of Responsibilities Assigned to Role, and Sacrifice. Additionally, six subthemes emerged from these major themes in the data analysis process. Within the theme of Leadership Training and Knowledge, the four subthemes include limited counselor-specific preparation, limited recognition of identifiable style, collaboration, and influence of administration. Within the theme of Sacrifice, the subthemes include time to complete duties and gender-related influence on role acquisition. This chapter provides a description of the participants and is followed by evidence of the themes and subthemes.

Description of Participants

An email invitation to participate in this study was sent to over 50 school counseling middle and high school directors across the state of Virginia. This email contained information about the study with my contact information for interested participants. I received emails from 14 interested participants, all of whom met the screening requirements, who were then given the

link to complete the demographic questionnaire through a Google form. Twelve of the 14 interested participants completed the demographic questionnaire. One potential participant dropped out of the study before the interview due to time constraints and another participant was not interviewed due to saturation being reached. The remaining 10 participants were interviewed. Of the 10 participants, six counties in Virginia are represented, with six participants from a comprehensive high school, two from a comprehensive middle school, one from an alternative high school, and one from a high school vocational center. There were eight female participants and two male participants. All participants were Caucasian and worked at an accredited school. Participants were identified by a pseudonym assigned by the researcher to maintain anonymity.

School demographics were varied among participants and counties (VDOE, 2018). Sarah worked in the most racial diverse school (37.8% White, 26.3% African American, 23.8% Hispanic) and Daisy worked in the least racially diverse school (85.2% Caucasian, 7.1% African American). Students eligible for free and reduced lunch varied from 4.8% at Joseph's school to 43.1% at Sarah's school. Students identified with disabilities ranged from 8.5% at Katherine's school to 16.9% at Ruth's school. English Language Learners (ELLs) were under 10% for all schools except Sarah and Ruth, which stood at 10.6% and 13.2% respectively (VDOE, 2018).

Table 1 includes a description of the participants' years of experience as a counselor, years of experience as a director, approximate caseload numbers, number of school counselors in their department, approximate current total school enrollment, and the type of school. All 10 of the school counseling coordinators are licensed school counselors and hold a master's degree as it is a minimum degree requirement for licensure in Virginia.

Table 1. Participant Demographics

Name	School Counseling Experience	Director Experience	Caseload	School Counselors in Department	School Enrollment	School Tyle
Sarah	4 years	3 years	450 students	2 counselors	800 students	Middle
Abbie	17 years	5 years	135 students	7 counselors	2000 students	High
Margaret	19 years	2 years	115 students	2 counselors	240 students	Alternative High
Sally	20 years	5 years	Varies by year	4 counselors	1250 students	Middle
Ruth	15 years	11 years	0 students	11 counselors	2800 students	High
Joseph	3 years	16 years	0 students	7 counselors	1600 students	High
Elizabeth	5.5 years	2 years	275 students	4 counselors	1200 students	High
Brian	5 years	8 years	750 students	3 counselors	1200 students	Vocational High
Daisy	10 years	4 years	280 students	5 counselors	1700 students	High
Katherine	33.5 years	3.5 years	300 students	5 counselors	1500 students	High

Analysis of Research Findings

The results of this study include the experiences of school counseling directors in relation to job satisfaction and leadership through major themes and subthemes. I transcribed the

interviews verbatim. To establish preliminary codes, each member of the research team individually read and coded the first transcript and then met with the coding team to determine if additional questions needed to be added to the questioning route before conducting the remaining interviews. The initial coding confirmed that the questioning protocol was sound. After I interviewed the remaining participants, I sent the coding team three transcriptions at a time to code. Each member coded individually before meeting to discuss the codes and themes. The coding team met four times to code the interviews, coding three transcripts at a time after the first coding meeting. Therefore, the coding process and interview process was done simultaneously to ensure the questions and themes were constantly being confirmed and elaborated on in the interviews. The codebook was updated after each meeting. Once all interviews were coded and discussed, the coding team came to a consensus for the final codes and themes (Table 2). The coding process was done using Microsoft Word in order to add line numbers and code in a way that was comfortable with all members of the coding team. When the final coding was finished, I compiled quotes and codes from all transcripts into a common document in Microsoft Word for each theme to allow for organization of the codes in a way that would ease data analysis.

Table 2. Major Themes and Subthemes

Themes	Subthemes
1. Intentionality	
2. Leadership Training and Knowledge	a). Limited counselor-specific preparation b). Limited recognition of leadership style c). Collaboration d). Influence of administration
3. Overload of Responsibilities Assigned to Role	
4. Sacrifice	a). Time to complete duties b). Gender-related influence on role acquisition

When creating the subthemes, it is important to note that some of the subthemes could be listed under different major themes. For example, the subtheme of time to complete duties could be included under Overload of Responsibilities Assigned to Role. However, the research team noted that the participants expressed the impact of the amount of work that they were assigned as more of a struggle for balance in terms of work and family life, which fits better under the theme of Sacrifice. Also, influence of administration could also be considered under Overload of Responsibilities Assigned to Role. In this case, the research team reported that the participants expressed this subtheme more in line with Leadership Training and Knowledge due to the impact that influence of administration has on their leadership style and how they run their department.

Description of the Role

Before discussing the themes that emerged from the interviews, it is important to establish a definition for what a school counseling director does due to the lack of research on the topic, besides what is recommended through ASCA (2017b). Participants were asked directly what the role of the director is in their school or district. Generally, participants felt their role as a director was as a "leader" and as "part of the administrative team." Keywords, such as "liaison," "setting goals," "managing," and "supervising" were also common responses. Margaret stated that:

> I would say a school counseling director...oversees school counselors in the department, and oversees, I guess, on a broad spectrum, the programs that come along with that and all the duties, and is also a liaison between administration and the school counseling and the teachers and the parents. I sort of see us as that link between all of those areas and overseeing the duties that come along with school counselors.

Director responsibilities occurred in two distinct areas: direct and indirect service to students, families, and the community. Common tasks for the directors included testing, programming, supervising, attending meetings, scheduling, and even grading. The participants also commented on the time associated with hiring and sitting interview panels, serving as AP or college program coordinators, creating the master schedule, coordinating dual enrollment and mentoring programs, and even managing grades. Directors are a major resource for their team, from being supervisors, completing school counselor evaluations, assisting with suicide screenings, and attending evening and school-wide events. As Joseph shared, "my favorite is probably the programming. You know, whether it's the career stuff or we're coordinating the going into the classrooms...so I guess it's the stuff that I can really see helping kids and

impacting kids." Ruth talked about "college application workshops every Monday after school," or running sessions on essay writing and college applications.

Some participants felt it was their duty to do more of the behind the scenes tasks so that their counselors could spend more time with students. Brian stated that "I always looked at my job as a coordinator was to try to take the paper pushing, take as much off my counselors plate as I could to allow them to have more time with students." He went on further, "I mean, ultimately I see our responsibility as one, making sure our department is running well and taking care of personnel issues, and ultimately…we have to be the face of the counseling department to the whole school." Sally viewed her role in the non-direct service tasks as an important part of her job:

> Me, personally, see I have a lesser caseload, because I do so many other things. And I credit my department members for allowing that because it wasn't always that way when I became the director here. So they realized how overwhelmed I am with testing responsibilities and surveys and gifted testing and so forth, that they have allowed me to reduce my caseload so that I am able to do everything else that has to get done and keep this department running.

Joseph likens his duties to being a "puppet master, " and "being the one behind it who is managing all the projects." As Ruth so honestly stated, "What don't we do?"

Intentionality

The first major theme described by the participants was the intentionality in their career path. This intentionality to become a counselor and then a director was present from a variety of career and life experiences with a desire to work with and positively impact students. Of the 10

participants, four were teachers before they went back to school to becoming school counselors, while the other six participants became school counselors after a few years of full-time work or directly from undergraduate education. Elizabeth talked about the sentiments of being drawn to the individual work with students coming from a teaching background:

> I was a high school English teacher for 10 years here at my high school. And then I, probably my 8th or 9th year, I just kinda noticed, I was tired of grading papers, I was tired of lesson planning, but I really loved the kids, and I still wanted to work with teenagers. And I had found that a lot of the students would come to talk to me about their personal issues or asked for advice, and it could have been my age, I don't know what it was, or they felt comfortable talking with me, but I actually talked with a counselor here at that time and asked them about, 'Ok, what does a counselor do?'

This desire to work with students individually was widespread in the interviews, with many former teachers wanting to work more one-on-one with students and also connect with them in a "more personal way." Elizabeth had a big career-changing moment for her when a student passed away from suicide. She explained that:

> The kids didn't want to go to their counselor. They wanted to talk to me. And that resonated with me, and I was like, 'This is it. I'm done teaching. I feel like I would make more of a difference as a counselor.'

Participants who had not been teachers felt similarly about working directly with students. Ruth described that she "enjoyed school as a kid myself so that was also a draw. I had done some considering to teaching but it wasn't quite...I couldn't find the subject I wanted to teach." She continued that counseling "seemed like the perfect marriage."

Participants noted how their own experiences influenced their desire to help students. Daisy said, “the school counselor really drew to me because I personally had an awful experience going through middle school and then in high school.” She went on in more detail, “middle school I was bullied really bad, so I wanted to reach out to kids in that area, and then in high school I never knew who my counselors was and that was a burden for me to make connections to kids and be a resource.” Ruth had experience coaching and “realized they didn’t really seek out their parents for advice.” Similarly, Brian noted that “idealistically, I wanted to help kids with their problems,” and Daisy said she got “exposure to working in a mental health setting and decided I might rather works with kids, because I think I could have a greater impact on kids.” While Joseph came from working in a juvenile detention center, he was drawn to counseling by visiting high schools and how counselors “always seemed happy and very positive compared to what I was doing then.” Sally noted how while teaching students she “really connected well with them in a personal way, so I thought school counseling would be a perfect fit for me because of the way the kids responded to me.” She noticed that “they liked me; they enjoyed talking to me; they always pulled me aside to tell me their personal business.”

While the pathway to becoming a school counselor served a strong desire in participants to work with students, the reasons for becoming a director also came from an area of intentionality in professional engagement, growth, and leadership desires. Many participants took extra coursework or completed leadership training in anticipation of job opportunities. Daisy earned a post-master’s certificate in administration and supervision while working as a middle school counselor. Ruth received a certificate in educational leadership in school counseling at a local university near where she worked as a school counselor. Katherine sought

out extra counseling coursework in rehab counseling to fill gaps in her training, “because way back in the 80's when I was trained we didn't get multicultural counseling, we didn't get addiction counseling, and things like that.” She wanted to be better prepared for her role as a counselor and as a leader of counselors.

Many participants had so much experience and modeling from other counselors that a leadership position was a next step. Sally wanted to become a director from early on saying, “I had always dreamed of that. I don't ever want to shortchange myself. I always set goals for myself...well into my counseling career I knew I wanted to be a director.” She also mentioned having leadership qualities and desires. For example, Margaret talked about how “having been a school counselor for a number of years, I felt like there were some things that were being done great and then there were some things that I felt like I could do differently and maybe even better….” She continued, “I think when you're doing something for a number of years, it's time. I needed a change.” Katherine also discussed the influence of role models:

> I think an advantage for me was I had just been a counselor for so long so I had worked with many principals...and several counseling directors...having that perspective of working with people with a lot of different styles was really helpful to me.”

Sarah and Joseph found themselves in a position to take the director role as more inexperienced counselors, but their intentionality in wanting to be a leader was evident early. Sarah was a young counselor when an opening occurred at her school and she was very intentional in seeking out the role:

> I met with my principal and looked at him and said, ‘This might be crazy but I would give 150% into this. If I don't know the answer to something I find out. Take a chance on

> me.' And so he did, and I think it was definitely something that I reached high for and didn't know what was going to happen, but he took a chance on me.

Joseph stated that he was at a school "and the director there chose to step down, and so I was kinda there, and I knew from almost the beginning I wanted to be a director." He admits that he was always thinking ahead and intentional about approaching his next step:

> I don't really know why, but I remember even like after my first year, I would keep a monthly log because I found it fascinating, and maybe confusing, but fascinating that how what we do changes through the year. Like, you know, what you're doing in September is not what we're doing in December and we're doing something else in May. So I remember I would keep a log of those things because I wanted to know what was coming up next year. So I kinda had my eye on it early on.

This intentionality greatly impacted not only when counselors became directors in their careers but also the training that they sought out ahead of their role in preparation of being a leader in the school. The second theme explores the differences in levels of training and knowledge of leadership styles, which impact the school counseling director's role and job satisfaction.

Leadership Training and Knowledge

Participants were asked directly about their leadership preparation, current training, and how they would categorize their style. Through these questions, the theme of leadership training and knowledge was highlighted with subthemes in four areas: a) limited counselor-specific preparation, b) limited identifiable style, c) collaboration, and d) influence of administration.

Limited counselor-specific preparation. The participants either received no leadership training before coming into their role or received more administrative-type trainings. When

asked about any training, Katherine replied, “I guess not specifically related to being director.” Daisy experienced the same thing and said, “our county does a program...like if you're interested in leadership, there is a class, so to speak, that you can do that kinda goes over some leadership style but also talks just about our county,” but that there is “no formal training.” Brian mentioned that while he received no training, and expressed the importance of training to his county leader:

> I was very vocal about how it's certainly not their fault, but that was one of the things I helped them understand that...for people coming into a director's position, I was, and maybe part of it was my own fault for not preparing enough, but I was very blindsided...from my recollection there was no heads up, and ‘Here are some things you can do,’ It was learn as you go.

Joseph also did not go through a leadership training program, but “there is leadership available for prospective directors now. I did not participate in it.” Elizabeth also did not have any training leading up to her role, but when asked if she would like to, she exclaimed, “Oh my gosh, yes. Help! I would need help.” Sally elaborated, ”Yes, we have these leadership trainings now that I am a director, and I've often thought, ‘Wouldn't this have been great for me to participate in as a counselor when I knew my ultimate goal was to be a coordinator?’”

Other districts have leadership training programs, but they focus on administrative leadership. Ruth was “part of a cohort in ed leadership, but now they're doing marketed advertised workshops” and not any specific training models. Margaret also participated in a program for all school leaders:

> It was for anyone interested in taking on leadership roles, whether it would be through administration, even department chairs, or directors. So I went through that, and I learned

> a lot of information about the kind of leader I think I probably would be. And how that works with different types of counselors I would work with...and the program was very valuable. I mean I learned quite a bit about leadership styles and working with others who aren't similar to you as well as those who are.

Abbie also "did the leadership program," and mentioned how "it was with all...the people that wanted to be administrators. So I thought it was so interesting because none of it was geared towards counselors...and then I learned a lot about me, which I thought was very valuable." Elizabeth also did not have any sort of leadership training, but explained her "former coordinator, we're still working together, so she has helped me tremendously and another counselor in our department, he was the lead, too, years ago," so she had mentorship available to her in her building despite limited formal training.

Limited recognition of leadership style. When the participants were asked if they would be able to identify their leadership style, most did not have a formal name for what they do, but rather listed the qualities they embody as a leader. This limited recognition of their style could have to do with the amount and type of leadership training they received, and also from what they learned on the job, or as Daisy put it, "trial and error." Katherine mentioned that she is "very, very collaborative and team-oriented," which Elizabeth echoed about how she is "a cheerleader for everybody" and "organized." Sarah mentioned "flexibility," while Brian talked about being an "advocate." Abbie reiterated the importance of letting counselors take ownership over the tasks and extra duties by asking them if "they were moving towards being a director or coordinator" when designating counseling tasks. Margaret explained her leadership style:

> And the biggest, I think communication, integrity, obviously your work ethic, but trusting. First of all, if you have a chance to select your staff, making really good choices about that and then trust in them to do their job with a certain level of, you know, periodic check-ups, but not overseeing every step they make.

The quality of trust ran through most of the interviews. Sarah said that "I feel like I respect my department members. I trust them. I know that they're well equipped to handle their duties and responsibilities, so I am definitely not a micromanager." She went on to say that "I really truly try to be empathetic and try to see where they're coming from. I feel like I have really good respect from my teachers, my admin, and my other counselors."

Some participants sought out their own professional development to embrace their leadership style. Joseph mentioned that "when I became a director I really embraced a lot of business books. So I really always came from a manager or business point of view." Ruth also did "a lot of reading. So I've done a lot of reading of different books and, again, I did one thing: I hired an executive coach after my first year as a director." When asked to identify her style Ruth said:

> I'm very macro, 'cause I've done a ton of work. I make decisions quickly, but I'm not afraid. I don't take credit for anyone's work. I also give credit in whether it's an idea or quote or success...I always deflect it back to who it was from. But I would say strategic and macro, but my people run with the micro. I'm good at, I'm an idea person, and I can start to hone that and then I can drop it in front of them and see who wants to, who digs it, and wants to run with it.

Daisy said that her style ”depends.” She goes on to say that, “with the people that I work with in counseling, my coworkers, I have to be different with each one of them. Their personalities are so different that ”I have to be so much more facilitative.” Ruth also mentioned, “I think a big thing as a director is a lot of directors try to just manage and then there's those that grow. I never believe we're good enough.”

Collaboration. A large part of the responsibility of the school counseling director as a leader includes collaboration with the counseling team, teachers, administrators, parents, and the community. Margaret commented that her staff, not just counselors but also her secretary and social worker, are her “support group.” Sarah also reiterated the importance of collaboration and teamwork in the school by saying, “as a building we're like a body and you need everything to be working and might have to take on something that is not necessarily my job, but, you know, we need to all do this so that we can work together.” Brian reflected on this as well, “I try to make sure there isn't an ‘us versus them’ mentality in the sense of, you know, there's the counselors and then there's the teachers.” He went on, “I tried to build relationships with the teachers so our department and our counselors could work a little bit better with them than maybe we had been doing.” Along the lines of collaboration, Abbie stated that she views the counselors as:

> Kind of like all these spokes and we're in the center. That's how I envision it. So we've got the teachers off the spoke, the parents off the spoke, admin off the spoke, and the kid, and we're in the middle trying to keep all the communication and the wheel moving...to me we are there to serve. We're servants.

Many of the participants commented on their teachers and the impact of what the counseling staff is doing to help teachers in the building. For example, Sarah said about teachers,

“I think they're seeing improvements in behaviors, and, you know, they're seeing little things that we're doing, and so I do feel like I have strong support.” She went on to say, “so we're all in this together as a family and we just work our butts off.” Teacher input is important to directors as well, as Katherine said, “... it's those relationships with students, and not just them, but my staff and parents and folks on my advisory council.” The support and collaboration from the teachers and administrators towards the counseling department can make a big difference in the role of the school counseling director, but also in how the director feels about her ability as a leader. Elizabeth mentioned that she does “get a lot of positive feedback from parents, from administrators, from students, so that helps” when she is not feeling as good about her performance.

Influence of administration. Much of the role of the school counseling director and leadership style is impacted by leaders above the director, including the administrative team and division-level school counseling leaders. Principals were found to have a great influence on how the directors run their department and feel about their role. Abbie mentioned how her role has changed depending on her school-level leadership and how with her former principal she “couldn’t go by his vision,” but now “I have an amazing principal, so my vision can align with hers because I believe in her.” Sally also stated the importance of a supportive principal:

> I think you've got to have a super supportive principal to make your life happy as well. Like, I feel really good here at my school because I'm very supported, not just by my principal but by the whole administrative team, and I feel like they respect my ideas about different things...I have their backing and I have their support, and if I didn't have that from the administrative team I think it would make my job a lot more difficult.

Katherine also has a great relationship with her principal, “Our principal is awesome. He is so wonderful. He's a very hands-on principal...so he pretty much is in tune with whatever we're doing.” She went on to say that “he pretty much says ‘yes’ to anything I ask of him. So that feels very, very good.” Joseph commented that “he has a lot of autonomy” with his principal and has “no complaints” about his administrative team.

When a counseling director does not have a principal whose vision aligns with the counseling departments, it can have negative impacts. For example, Margaret said that “we have a very invested principal who oversees all that we do in the counseling department so a great deal of our model is the direction that he feels we should be taking...I definitely feel like it is his program.” Elizabeth also mentioned that her vision for her role and what is expected by her principal are different:

> Especially this year, we have a new principal this year and she very much sees my role as an administrative role. I mean there is a reason I did not go to school to be an administrator. I don't want to do that. I don't want to do paperwork all day long. And that's what I have to do sometimes.

She also expressed that her principal “is very supportive of us, but I also feel like there's times when she doesn't always know what we do.” This lack of alignment between what the director wants and what the administrator expects can be “frustrating.”

When speaking about the influence of division-level leaders, administrators, or supervisors, counselors were generally happy with who was supporting them. Katherine came from a county without a school counseling division-level supervisor before she took her current role as director:

> So I think coming here, one of the greatest things has been having my county director: Part of it is just who she is personally, but having someone in that role to advocate and provide a lot of professional development opportunities and just give us support, because I can call her anytime of the day...so having that resource person is really wonderful.

Ruth commented against this sentiment and said that "the leadership in this county doesn't even know what we do. Only people in our jobs know what we do. And it's a tough thing because we deserve more pay because we work harder. And that's a bone of contention."

Whether or not a counseling team is implementing the ASCA national model also aligns with leadership from administrators. Abbie acknowledged that "the ASCA model is a big, important model for the county. I would be lying if I said we followed that to a T. There are definitely certain things that we try to implement and follow in that direction," but that her model is based "on my principal's goals and my philosophy." Daisy also expressed feeling the pressure from leadership above to apply for RAMP:

> I know that our counseling coordinator (for the county) wants us to have it, so I feel, I feel a little bit of pressure to get it, but I also think we want to show that we're a credible department and so that would be a way to show the county and our stakeholders that, but it's hard. You can't do it by yourself.

Brian commented that he has "a lot of autonomy" about the model for his program with his principal and doesn't feel pressure to follow ASCA, and Joseph agreed that his administration "let me do whatever I want", so he doesn't feel the pressure to become a RAMP school. He goes on to say that "my own school administration couldn't even tell you what it is. Now just recently

our school system is pushing it with our new supervisor." He thereby shows how his current program may be impacted by a new administrative influence.

The theme of Leadership Training and Skill touched on the many different facets that affect a director's leadership ability, including limited counselor-specific training, limited recognition of leadership style, collaboration, and influence of administration. Each of these subthemes had positive and negative influences on participants. The next theme goes into details about how participants feel about their responsibilities.

Overload of Responsibilities Assigned to Role

While the overall reported job satisfaction of the participants was high, there was a common thread among them about the number of duties assigned to their role. This overload of responsibilities is evident by the many times the participants spoke in regard to duties directors are responsible for, the limited time available for direct services, limited resources, and inequitable financial benefits. Most participants commented that student interaction is what they find as most rewarding in the school counselor role, but as a director that is not always their main duty, which can be a struggle. Katherine summarized her feelings:

> I can honestly say throughout my years as a school counselor, over 30 years, very, very few days, and I probably can't even remember one of them, have I ever gotten up and dreaded going to work. So I get up ready to go, excited to see my students, and ready to see the people that I work with, so I get a lot of satisfaction out of it even given the stress and the long hours.

Abbie mentioned that "I mean I'm very happy. I love my job. But I haven't been doing it as long as others." Margaret also rated her satisfaction as high, saying "I mean, overall, broad, I would

say if we we're going to scale it, a six or a seven. I love the kids...then we would look at a two as far as dealing with a level of management that goes on and time that I feel like is wasted." Even with fewer students on her caseload, Sally said:

> I really, really love what I do. Yes, there are times when I miss that direct counseling service, because the other duties are not quite as much fun. But at the same time I feel like still making a difference behind the scenes.

Elizabeth expressed that all the director duties are is the least satisfying: "I love my students. I absolutely love them...I love my teachers. I love my department. I love all of them, but the lead stuff is, it can go away...I'm so stressed out and overworked and very tired." Many participants felt that the extra duties placed on the director are inequitable, as Joseph explained:

> One of the things that has been a big topic amongst my peers and my county is the responsibility that we have assigned to us as compared to our assistant principals. We don't feel it's equitable at all. And so that is a little frustrating...Every other director will tell you that the list of responsibilities compared to them it's not even comparable.

Daisy reiterated that the extra duties negatively impact her satisfaction, "I think there are days where I am like, 'What have I done?'" She elaborated, "Because truthfully between being a regular school counselor and then a high school director at the same time there is a huge difference in the amount of work, the amount of accountability involved, and so sometimes that bothers me…"

Depending on where a director works and what level they work at greatly impacts their role. Abbie has huge demands placed on her at the middle school level, including a large caseload and testing responsibilities, and mentioned the limited resources:

> You are the testing coordinator. You have a caseload because there is no way you can't have a caseload, because your resources are so few. And that age group is so needy you have kids in your office all day. Like the teachers rely on you a lot more for behavior. And I was trying to figure out if it was just my school or...it's all of them. I ask director after director because I was friends with them, and I was like, 'Do you have a caseload?' and they were like, 'Ya, we have to have a caseload because there is no way we can dump 500 kids on our two counselors each.'

Other participants echoed this sentiment about testing. Sally explained, "I'd prefer to have a testing coordinator at the middle school level so that I could focus my duties on programming." Sarah also focused on how testing responsibilities greatly impact her role:

> What I am looking for is reaching out to other counties for help on advocacy because in my county right now the counseling director not only splits the caseloads with the whole school, so right now I am right around 450 students, but I am also the testing coordinator.

The changing expectations are a concern for many of the participants in terms of their duties. Elizabeth explained that she has "to run attendance meetings, and I was never trained to how to do that. I was never trained to do a master schedule as nobody is in a counseling program. So there just is...things that I wasn't expecting." Joseph commented on the differences between his roles when he was hired versus what it is like now in relation to all the duties of a director and said, "...what we do now is so much more sophisticated with the protocol...and, again, that's a good change, but everything is just like two or three steps deeper than it used to be is probably the biggest difference now." Katherine mentioned the economic crisis in the late 2000s and how

that impacted the role, giving greater responsibility to the directors, “but I think the amount of responsibility is just really great where I am, because I have a caseload of about 300 including the IB students.” She continued “and then I have full director responsibilities as well as part of the admin team...I guess responsibility and the demands of the role but I think that it's just challenging at times because of all that.” Joseph also stated:

> And I've talked with my supervisor about this and we've talked about it at directors meetings, where I do think the diversity of our tasks has gotten to the point where they need to dial it back, at least in my county. Because it's just too many balls in the air...It's kinda a wonder we don't make a lot more mistakes.

Daisy commented that “the only downside is sometimes it's like, ‘Is this worth it?’ Because you're working so much, you're not compensated, and sometimes you don't even see the rewards through your kids either.” She went on to say, “I feel constantly that there are some more put on us and it might take us away sometimes from that proactive counseling because it's more paperwork or more duty-nature.”

Many participants mentioned the salary in their district was not comparable to their responsibilities. The variation in pay is not related to the amount of duties of the director, and even higher paid participants still felt they are not paid enough for what they do or in relation to what their administrators make. Many participants commented that they feel they are not adequately compensated for the role. As Daisy shared:

> So like my workload is huge, and I don't feel that I'm compensated for it, so it becomes a matter of: this is a job out of service. Sometimes I, truthfully, personally, I struggle with

> that, because I work really hard so it would be nice to have a little bit more extrinsic motivation.

Daisy and Katherine both received a stipend of around $50 per paycheck, which is more in line with being a department leader than the full pay scale adjustment that the other participants received. Even participants who do get paid more, mentioned that they will never be able to catch up to the pay of assistant principals due to the pay adjustments. Regardless of the amount of pay, though, participants felt it was not enough for what they do. As Ruth said:

> I've never done this job anywhere else, but I would never do this job anywhere else and not get paid what I get paid. So I don't know what they do in other counties, but I would never do this somewhere else for less pay. I still think we don't get paid enough to do what we do.

Many other participants commented that while they did get a pay bump in their role, which included Brian, Abbie, and Margaret, because of that, despite their feelings about their job as a director versus a school counselor, they would never go back to being a regular counselor, as Ruth said, "because of the price difference."

Sacrifice

Throughout the interview questions about job duties, the reality versus the expectation of the job, and the attempt to strive for wellness, participants described many ways in which they have to make sacrifices to get their work done or within their work as a director. Two subthemes emerged in this area in terms of sacrifice related to a) time to complete duties and b) gender-related influence on the role acquisition.

Time to complete duties. Participants noted the limited time during the school day to accomplish all their tasks and duties in relation to direct service to students, programming, and testing. Eight of the 10 participants still had individual caseloads, so direct service was a priority and takes up a majority of the school day. Margaret said that "I would say 60% of our day is with direct services, but maybe even more than that honestly...it's mostly individual…" Katherine said that direct services "always come out to at least 80%." Elizabeth echoed that direct service is her priority, "I try very hard to see my kids first. That's why I did this." Abbie shared in this sentiment that "I like to see kids. That's the part of the job I love." Joseph expressed similar feelings:

> Oh, the students definitely come first. One of the things sometimes I remind the counselors when we're, when we have an idea or are doing something, I remind them the goal is not to make this easy for us. The goal is to help the students. This came up a couple times, like now that we have a full-time social worker and psychologist, I talk to the counselors, they're not here to make our job easier, they're here to help kids…

Time management to see students is important for participants. Daisy said that her "ideal day is, I try to do three of the four blocks with kids, whether that's individual appointments, 504 meetings, me going into classrooms, or like program planning. " Katherine also shared that because she values seeing her students during the day, she does her other tasks after school. Ruth also commented on the importance of being accessible to students outside the school day:

> But one thing we started last year that's hugely successful were these college completion application workshops every Monday after school. Well this year they go until

> December. We had 50 to 60 kids sign up. The kids have needs. You can either ignore it or do it. That means we stayed after school.

Daisy said that she's "always here at least an hour before school starts, if not an hour and a half...I would say an average of two hours after extra after school every day whether it's staying here in the building or me doing things at home." Abbie shared that while working at the middle school "I worked until 6 o'clock almost every night, which was insane." Elizabeth mentioned that the amount of work was hard at the beginning but she has "been much better than I was last year. Last year I was working until 10 o'clock every night." Sally expressed that incoming coordinators need to understand the time commitments to the role:

> Because the hours are long. You know, my contract might say 7:30-3:30, but I'm working a couple of hours into the night every night to be able to keep caught up. I have weekend work to do, you know, I have all summer. So it's the time commitment more than anything that people need to realize is something that you have to take into consideration. It's not an 8 hour job, and you do bring work home with you.

While Sally would love to become a RAMP school, she expressed that "I feel so busy and so overwhelmed all of the time with the amount of work I have to do that I don't know that I'm going to apply to be a RAMP school." Elizabeth also mentioned that time constraints impact going for RAMP. She said of applying: "That's the goal. And we're working on it. We really are, but it's tough when you get pulled into meeting after meeting after meeting." Katherine mentioned that the nature of the work dictates being available all the time, despite what is going on at home:

> This year's been a lot with mental health, a lot of suicide issues this year, and so you know there have been times I'm on my phone trying to figure out a situation for the next day and it's 9 or 10 o'clock at night. But that's the nature of the job, too, I guess? I don't know...there is the recognition that people do have their families, but at the same time there is still a job to get done.

Many participants discussed the time associated with being on the administrative team and how that impacts their other duties. Elizabeth lamented the negatives of meetings when she said, "I get called into an admin team meeting and I'm there for three hours, like I was on Tuesday, the first day of the semester. I miss out on seeing the 20 kids who needed to see me that day because I was in a meeting for three hours." Because of this, she commented about how she can't run as many groups or go into classrooms as much as she would like. Margaret disclosed that meetings have "been a pretty big eye opener with how time consuming some of those administrative type duties are, and I think, especially, and that may vary from building to building, but the amount of time that I spend sitting in admin meetings is far more than I ever planned." Elizabeth mentioned feeling the pull from her administration, "I mean it's crazy…a lot of time I'm checking my email until 10 o'clock at night...I work on the weekends. There are times, and this is awful, but there are times that I can't see my students."

Gender-related influence on role acquisition. While the majority of participants were women, a common subtheme in the realm of sacrifice was the influence that family had on women and men taking the role of director. Many participants noted that they did not seek out becoming a director until their children were older. As Sally revealed, "I was waiting for my children to get old enough to be independent and not need me to be home all the time."

Katherine said similarly," So my children were both like early 20's, I guess, when I became a director, and one of the reasons I waited a long time was because my daughter has disabilities, and she is an adult with disabilities and she lives at home."

Sally made the decision to wait until her children were grown before becoming a director due to the time constraints of being a director and working year-round:

> Because my children are grown, I don't feel like I have that pressure on me to have to get home at a certain time to do things with my kids, so if I have to work in the evening to catch up on things, at least I know I've left work at a decent hour to take care of myself and then I can refocus at the task at hand. So I don't feel the pressure, I guess, that a lot of people do who have younger children that are in this position, and that's why I knew I needed to wait.

Sarah doesn't have kids and feels that that impacts her ability to do her job. She expressed, "Because I do not have a family yet, so I don't have children to go home to, so I do sometimes put my job over everything else." She also admitted, however, that "when I add a family I don't know how successful I will be." Ruth shared that she took the job at a good point in her life saying, "I was young. I was on my own. It's not like I had kids to take care of."

Participants with children experience a hard pull with balancing family and work. Elizabeth explained that "It is super stressful. I have twins, so balancing work and personal life has been very challenging. I have to be on top of my email at all times." Elizabeth was also more ambivalent about taking the job due to her children:

> The previous lead counselor kinda prepared me for what it was. She did not want me to take it only because I had babies. When I took it my twins were two-years-old. They were

> little. They're still little, so I have to be home at a certain time, and I don't always have time to do work in the afternoon. She could stay later. Her child is grown. She's in college so she has the ability to do that, whereas I don't.

Due to the expectations in the job and her role as a mother, Elizabeth is stepping down from her position for the next school year. She said, "My kids are going to kindergarten. I want to be a mom. I want to be able to go to their class plays. I feel like I don't ever get to do those things." Daisy also admitted that "I do feel like work drives my life more than my family does and that's unfortunate."

Some participants took the director position to help their own family in a financial sense. Brian stated that "it was very important to me and my wife that my wife be able to stay home with the kids. Both of us, she also had that desire, and that was one of the ways to help do that." Joseph had similar thoughts about why he took the job and how that impacted his family life:

> She became a stay at home mom, so that was part of the plan. Like I'm gonna make some extra money so she can stay at home so it helped out a lot. She was in a career where she worked a lot, it was hotel industry, so there's no way she would've been able to do it, I mean she could of, it just wouldn't have been healthy.

So while the women discussed waiting to take the job until their children were older or taking the job before they had children, the men interviewed specifically took the job to be able to support their family with the increased pay and upward mobility of the job.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research study was to investigate the experiences of school counseling directors in relation to job satisfaction and leadership. In this chapter, the results of

the interviews of the 10 participants were presented through the themes and subthemes. During the interviews, four major themes of Intentionality, Leadership Training and Knowledge, Overload of Responsibilities Assigned to Role and Sacrifice were identified in the interviews. Additionally, six subthemes emerged from these major themes in the data analysis process. These subthemes included, within the Leadership Training and Knowledge theme, limited counselor-specific preparation, limited recognition of identifiable style, collaboration , and influence of administration, and within the theme of Sacrifice, time to complete duties and gender-related influence on role acquisition within the theme of Sacrifice. This chapter has provided a description of the participants and evidence of the themes and subthemes. The next chapter includes a discussion about these results as well as implications and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of school counseling directors in relation to job satisfaction and leadership. This chapter provides a discussion of the themes presented previously of Intentionality, Leadership Training and Knowledge, Overload of Responsibilities Assigned to Role, and Sacrifice along with the six subthemes identified. It also presents the limitations of the study, implications of the findings, and recommendations for future research.

Overview of the Study

The development of the school counseling field has resulted in the changing standards and roles for school counselors. The current literature includes evidence and discussion on how school counseling has evolved over the past century and how the roles and responsibilities have changed. However, there are differences in the findings for the current realities of the job, the job satisfaction of counselors, and how leadership impacts the roles and responsibilities of school counselors. Furthermore, there have been no studies on the experiences of a unique segment of school counseling, which includes the directors that head a department and a school counseling program.

This study sought to explore the experiences of these school counseling directors in relation to their job satisfaction and leadership through a hermeneutic phenomenological approach, which is a type of qualitative research in which the lived experience of each participant is interpreted through description and interpretation from the researcher (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Kafle, 2013; Merriman & Tisdale, 2016; Van Manen, 1997). The researcher collected data through 10 interviews, selected through purposeful and snowball sampling. The participants met the criteria of serving as a school counseling director of a middle or high school, supervising a department of at least two counselors, and working in the role for at least two years. Data analysis showcased the different expectation in the role of the school counseling director, the overall high level of job satisfaction in school counseling directors, and the varying levels of leadership training, models, and styles that the directors use in their role.

Four major themes emerged from the interviews, which include: Intentionality, Leadership Training and Knowledge, Overload of Responsibilities Assigned to Role, and Sacrifice. The subthemes for Leadership Training and Knowledge include limited counselor-specific preparation, limited recognition of leadership style, collaboration, and influence of administrators. The subthemes of Sacrifice include time to complete duties and gender-related influence on role acquisition. Before discussing the themes, though, the role of the school counseling director is discussed as identified by the participants due to lack of information on the position in counseling.

Role of the School Counseling Director

Due to the limited research on the role of a school counseling director at a middle school or high school, participants discussed the role of the school counseling director at their school.

ASCA (2012, 2017d) recommends that school counseling programs have directors or coordinators to oversee a variety of functions within the school counseling department. These tasks should include advocating for students, eliminating barriers for equitable educational access, running and advocating for a comprehensive school counseling program, providing leadership, hiring, supervising, and working with stakeholders to ensure student success (ASCA, 2017d). In line with the ASCA recommendations, participants described their role as being a leader, liaison, manager, and supervisor. They discussed the importance of programming, supervising, and hiring. Common tasks for the directors included testing, attending meetings, administrative team meetings, and scheduling, which differ from what ASCA suggests. The participants also commented on the time associated with serving as AP or college program coordinators, creating the master schedule, coordinating dual enrollment programs, and even managing grades. These tasks are considered indirect duties, and while essential for a school to run, they do not necessarily need to be director responsibilities.

Directors are a resource for their school and shape the effectiveness and quality of the counseling department. Ideally, their tasks include some major tasks that the participants disclosed, including supervising, completing evaluations, assisting with student issues, programming for the counseling department, and even being present at evening and school-wide events. However, the increased workload and duties outside of direct counseling tasks are concerning due to their negative influence on job satisfaction (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006; Rhodes, Nevill, & Allan, 2004). Also, in terms of leadership and advocacy outside of the building, which is emphasized in the ASCA recommendations (2012, 2017d), there was a lack of consistency among the directors about their participation in those components of the job. Only

one of the participants mentioned serving on a professional organization's board and the other participants did not speak about advocacy outside of their building. This, along with the different duties associated with being a director, are discussed further under the themes of Overload of Responsibilities Assigned to Role, but is important to note that the participants reported that the role of the school counseling director is greatly impacted by district, school, caseload numbers, and duties assigned, so many directors were unable to run programs or serve as a leader in the way that ASCA recommends (2012, 2017d).

Discussion of the Themes

Since this is hermeneutic phenomenology, it is important for me to establish my positionality and thoughts on the themes and research process before discussing the results. I have been a school counseling director for four years. My main reason for studying school counseling directors is because of feedback I have encountered from other directors during county meetings, consultation, and collaborative programming. This research process was unique in that I interviewed participants in districts similar and also very dissimilar to the one in which I work. This influenced the questions I asked as well as the comfort the participants felt talking with me, because I could speak to the specific state policies, county differences, and school nuances. I felt my knowledge of how my county works impacted the questions I asked, which enabled me to get more details from participants.

In regards to the themes, I felt the codes lead themselves to themes that I both relate and do not relate to in my experience as a director. While I have not experienced extreme frustration about the role, I know many directors who do experience frustration with the amount of responsibility they are given and lack of time to complete duties. I also know many directors

who delayed becoming a director in favor of summers off and more time to spend with their families during the school year. I even personally know two directors who stepped down from their role to spend more time with their young children. Thus, I was not surprised to hear the themes of Sacrifice and Overload of Responsibilities Assigned to Role emerge during the interviews. Similarly, the Intentionality theme is something I experienced in my early desire to be a director, but it was interesting to hear from participants since I was not aware of other directors' experiences. It was refreshing to hear that director job satisfaction seems to be relatively high, which I was not expecting. I felt being in a doctoral program and having received administrative leadership training before becoming a director influenced how I asked the leadership questions during the interviews, which influenced the coding and identifying of subthemes in the Leadership Training and Knowledge theme. However, I feel that my perspective on the work, while it helped identify these themes, in no way changed or altered the participants' own experiences. Instead I believe my connection to the work enhanced the data analysis process and the implications of the results.

The current study is significant in filling a gap in the literature about school counseling directors' career experiences; specifically leadership experiences and how satisfied they are in their role. While research exists in examining school counselor job satisfaction, there are no studies on the experiences of school counseling directors in relation to leadership or job satisfaction. This section will include a discussion of each theme and subtheme from the data analysis and how it relates to existing literature.

Intentionality

The first major theme that emerged from the interviews is intentionality in the participants' career paths. They described their intention to first become a school counselor and then a leader in counseling. The participants highlighted the value they had in working with students, regardless of the background they came from before counseling. The desire to work with students individually and make an impact was resounding, which is supported by research that working with individual clients has a strong impact on counselors' perceptions of their job (Moss et al., 2014). This work with clients also has implications for a counselor's professional identity and can have lasting professional effects (Moss et al., 2014), which the participants supported in their feelings of wanting to make a difference and the impact they felt working with students on a personal level. Supporting the Range of Affect Theory (Locke, 1976), participants who valued working with students and were able to have caseloads experienced satisfaction in their work, despite some of the negatives they associated with the role. The participants who did not have a caseload, while they expressed missing working with students, also mentioned how they impact students in a broader way. This was through programming, consultation, or large school events, thus showcasing how they had job expectations in line with where they derived satisfaction. The individual work with students was a driving force in not only their job satisfaction but as a consistent reinforcement for their career path. This intentionality in direct service and in their accurate tasks as a director has implications for their views on their job responsibilities, which will be discussed later.

The theme of intentionality also showcases an important part of research on cultivating school counselors as leaders (Moss et al., 2014). The participants arrived to their position in a variety of scenarios, including working for decades before making the switch, advocating to their

principal when a situation presented itself, or being encouraged by those around them to take a leadership role. However, their passion for leadership, their experience, modeling from other directors, and a desire for a challenge were pervasive in all the interviews. Moss et al. (2014) discuss the importance of continuous education, experience, and mentoring as part of shaping a counselor's identity, which falls in line with the intentionality that the directors experienced in their career path and how they derive satisfaction in their role. School counseling leaders also take responsibility, empower themselves, and portray determination and resolve (Dollarhide et al., 2008). Being intentional in their career choices highlights the need for school counselors to engage in continuous education and leadership preparation. Intentionality and determination in leadership is also important when thinking of how to become a lifelong leader.

The need for purposeful leadership training and skill development (Kubicek, 2012) is supported by the participants who sought out specific training programs to develop their leadership skills. This concept of intentional leadership can be cultivated in small ways, such as being intentional with time, improving levels of leadership through training, employees knowing their personal strengths and tendencies, and personal growth. To become successful leaders, school counselors need to be educated in leadership skills and given opportunities to explore their own leadership style (Stone & Clark, 2001), which many of the directors did through their intentionality to take the next step in their career. Ruth, Katherine, Margaret, and Abbie all sought out county training programs to develop their skills before taking on the role.

The development of leadership as a school counselor takes time and experience (Mason & McMahon, 2009), but the intentionality in a counselor's career path towards a leadership role showcases the needs for training programs specifically targeted for school counselor leaders. The

need for leadership training programs and the qualities of school counselors as leaders are discussed more in the next section.

Leadership Training and Knowledge

Participants were asked directly about their leadership preparation, current training, and how they would categorize their style. Through these questions the theme of Leadership Training and Knowledge was highlighted with subthemes in four areas: a) limited counselor-specific preparation, b) limited recognition of identifiable style, c) collaboration, and d) influence of administration.

Limited counselor-specific preparation. The participants interviewed in this study described many variations of leadership training. Ruth earned her endorsement in administrative leadership, Abbie and Margaret participated in a county program for future leaders that was not related specifically to counselors, and Katherine took additional classes in counseling but not leadership. Joseph, Brian, Daisy, Sarah, Elizabeth and Sally received no formal leadership or director training, though mentors in the field and their own experience provided some help in the adjustment from school counselor to director. A lack of training opportunities provides a unique challenge for school counseling directors to establish themselves as leaders and effective advocates of the ASCA model or their schools expectations. ASCA highlights and values all school counselors as leaders (ASCA, 2012), regardless of being a director or not, citing "visionary thinking, challenging inequities, shared decision making, collaborative processing, modeling excellence and a courageous stance" (p.11) as the effective qualities of a school counseling leader. Yet there is no recommended training for this role or a standard in which to prepare school counselors to be leaders in the field as directors. Thus, similar to what was found

in this study, directors are coming into the role with a variety of types of leadership training or a complete lack thereof.

The need for leadership training programs is supported by research. Lacerenza, Reyes, Marlow, Joseph, and Salas (2017) found that leadership training programs are effective; specifically that feedback is an effective way for training programs to transfer knowledge to their role. This is important when discussing counselor-specific programs since those trainings would be able to intentionally help counselors transfer specific skills and tasks unique to their role. A counselor-specific training program gives school counselors specific leadership skills while also addressing the ASCA National Model (Briggs, Staton, & Gilligan, 2009). In addition, these trainings can provide counselors with specific counseling leadership skills, such as learning about how to work through complex problems, teamwork, utilizing counseling skills in leadership, modeling with students and staff, and effective communication with parents (Briggs et al., 2009). Dollarhide et al. (2008) highlight the importance of formal training in leadership specifically related to school counseling as a way to define and determine the counselor's role and effectiveness. Young and Bryan (2015) illustrate the need for specific counselor leadership dimensions that address areas of problem solving, systemic collaboration, interpersonal influence, social justice advocacy, and professional efficacy. These qualities are reflected by the ASCA National Model as well as other researched areas of leadership that relate specifically to how counselors work in a school in regards to relationships with stakeholders, collaboration, self-efficacy, and equality among students (Young & Bryan, 2015). The research behind the transformational leadership model aligns with ASCA and specifically of counselors working as leaders in the schools (Bass, 1991; Bayler, 2012; Berkovich, 2016).

The limited counselor-specific training also contributed to frustration regarding the expectations of the role. Elizabeth, Daisy, and Brian all mentioned that they were not fully aware of what the job would entail or how to handle specific situations, thus showcasing the need for this type of training. As stated in the theme of Intentionality, Locke (1976) highlights the importance of reality and expectations in job satisfaction, but also the importance of employees understanding what they value in a job when making career decisions, which has direct implications for school counselors understanding what they will be doing and how to lead before taking a director job. Mentoring programs, induction programs, adequate administrative support, and increased job satisfaction can help retain satisfied educators (Vittek, 2015) or promote more satisfaction in the job. A specific training program for counseling leaders provides them with a better understanding of the job and if it is in line with what is satisfying to them, thus having great implications for job satisfaction (Locke, 1976).

Limited recognition of identifiable style. The participants were less able to name their specific leadership style as they were the leadership qualities they embody. They mentioned valuing teamwork, trust, flexibility, and advocacy. While the leadership style of school counseling directors varies, if school counselors are intentionally seeking out leadership positions and training, they should be able to identify and justify their style to better establish an effective comprehensive school counseling program (Davis, 2015; Dollarhide et al., 2008).

There are many models that encompass these leadership qualities (Bass, 1991; Bayler, 2012; Berkovich, 2016; Dollarhide et al., 2008). Since ASCA does not promote a specific model (ASCA, 2012), directors are left to find and embrace their individual leadership style, which is where leadership training is important. Dollarhide (2003) outlines ways in which school

counselors serve as leaders through a variety of leadership contexts. The transformational leadership model is also proven effective in schools (Bass, 1991; Bayler, 2012; Berkovich, 2016), and illustrates that leaders who are charismatic, emotionally available, and intellectually stimulating motivate their team to embrace change. These leaders are satisfying to the followers and effective in their style because of the personal attention and coaching and advising they receive. This in turn motivates change, which is a value many participants mentioned as how they approach their own leadership (Bass, 1991). While some of the participants, like Ruth, Joseph and Daisy mentioned leadership styles related to management, similar to human resource management (Dollarhide et al., 2008), they were not able to comfortably identify a style.

Regardless of leadership style, the participants' expressed qualities are in line with what it takes to be a good leader. Qualities such as trust, empowerment, autonomy, and flexibility follow what Pink (2011) suggests for employees to stay motivated in their jobs. Participants, specifically Ruth, Katherine, and Abbie, discussed how they praise and highlight goals for their team, which showcases their support and autonomy (Pink, 2011). These leadership qualities are supported by the fact that school counselors, and in turn, school counseling directors, who have clear and focused goals, self-define their role, and have supportive colleagues are equipped to be effective and successful leaders (Dollarhide et al., 2008).

Collaboration. The participants' comments demonstrate that a large part of the responsibility of the school counseling director as a leader includes facilitating collaboration with the counseling team, teachers, administrators, parents, and the community. Participants mentioned the importance of teamwork, staff support, work with other directors across the district, and how working with faculty members impacts their job. This is related to what Pyne

(2011) found in terms of administrative support and staff communication being highly correlated with job satisfaction. Collaboration also has implications from the importance of working with students and families through direct service, which was mentioned in relation to job satisfaction previously under the theme of Intentionality. Many participants commented on the importance of their relationships with their counseling staff, school community, and particularly the importance of working with teachers in terms of their impact within the building.

The collaborative piece of leadership is important in models for school counseling leaders in terms of advocacy, teamwork, social justice, and efficacy (Young & Bryan, 2015). Positive professional relationships are related to lower burnout in school counselors (McCarthy et al., 2010). A sense of community is also positively related to self-efficacy (Lee et al., 1991). Mattering and self-efficacy are manifested through interactions with administrators, positive student relationships and successes, and collaborating with the school and community (Curry & Bickmore, 2012). Lack of interaction with administrators can reduce the feelings of mattering (Curry & Buckmore, 2012). Collaboration is also a large piece of the leadership styles discussed earlier, particularly transformational leadership (Bass, 1991; Bayler, 2012; Berkovich, 2016), the leadership models showcased by Dollarhide (2003), and research showing the importance of having clear goals and supportive colleagues (Dollarhide et al., 2008).

Influence of administration. The impact of principals and district-level supervisors had implications for the participants' views on their role but also the way in which they run their counseling programs. This is consistent with research that the presence of a comprehensive school counseling program is also affected by the relationship between principals and school counselors (Dahir et al., 2010). Often, it is the school counselors and school counseling leaders

who must be the advocates to principals and district level personnel for counselor accessibility and smaller caseloads (Hudley et al., 2009; Johnson, 2010), thereby showing the importance of the administrative relationship with directors (Clemens et al., 2009). Participants mentioned their degree of following ASCA was due, in part, by their leadership in the school and district. While research shows that principals may have limited knowledge of the ASCA model (Leuwerke et al.,2009), the way they view time allocation recommendations is in line with the ACSA model, supporting the notion that administrators value the school counselor role in terms of direct service. Research also shows that school level affects the school counselor's role and the relationship between the principal and counselor in that role (Dahir et al., 2010), which was not corroborated in this study, although only two participants came from a middle school.

Overall, the participants mentioned that they have great autonomy in how they run their program as long as it aligns with their principal's vision. This was positive in all cases except Margaret who felt that her principal's vision and her own did not align. The majority of the participants statements support the research that school counselors who advocate for their role to principals, teachers, and stakeholders create positive perceptions in their building (Kirchner & Setchfield, 2005; Shimoni & Greenberger, 2014). They also impact the perceptions about what school counselor duties are appropriate and not appropriate (Ginter & Others, 1990; Kirchnew & Setchfield, 2005; Reiner et al., 2009), but there is variability in this fact. However, the participants' views do confirm that the stronger school counselors perceive their relationship to be with their principal, in terms of vision and support for the counseling program, the smaller gap there is between actual versus ideal program implementation (Clemens et al., 2009).

Many participants also mentioned the relationships they have with their district level supervisors. Higher level supervisors are an important facet of job satisfaction, especially with the implications of school counseling directors serving as leaders in their building and their work being impacted by those above them in the district (Dalal et al., 2011). School counseling directors are in the middle of the supervision chain in their schools, with school counselors below them and administrators as equals or above them, and they are also dealing with the policies of the school district and state. This has important implications for job satisfaction, as the higher level supervisors impose programs and tasks for school counseling directors and their teams (Dalal et al., 2012).

The theme of Leadership Training and Knowledge revealed unique information about how directors are prepared for their role, the leadership qualities they value, the importance of relationships as a leader, and the influence of supervisors above them on their role and leadership style. Though more research needs to occur, the findings suggest that more specific leadership training should exist specifically related to preparing school counselors as leaders and the importance of a more unified expectation to what a school counseling director does. It also should be noted that the influence of principals or district-level supervisors has an effect on the role of the director, thus also creating further need for principals to be educated on the role of the school counselor and ensuring that supervisors at the district level have been school counselors and are specifically assigned for school counselors. The next section will further discuss how the expectations of the role affect directors' experiences.

Overload of Responsibilities Assigned to Role

The participants spoke about the wide range of expectations related to their jobs. Specifically, they mentioned the demands of their work and how they do not have enough resources or support to ensure that all duties are done efficiently and effectively. Findings from the earliest study of school counselor job satisfaction by Dietz (1972) supports the fact that non-counseling duties take up a large amount of time and are not priorities in the ASCA standards, which may decrease job satisfaction due to confusing roles and expectations (Locke, 1976). Workload also has a large role in job dissatisfaction (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006; Rhodes et al., 2004). Counselors who attend to appropriate duties as defined by the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2012), which include individual counseling, core curriculum lessons, and group counseling, are more satisfied than those whose duties are deemed inappropriate, such as testing or scheduling (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006).

School counselors have higher levels of self-efficacy with appropriate duties compared to inappropriate duties (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006). Participants discussed how they have to perform tasks they were never trained to, such as participating in attendance meetings, testing, and grading. This is troublesome as research has shown that the greatest area of job dissatisfaction occurred from being overwhelmed by duties (Kolodinsky et al., 2009) and that paperwork, high caseloads, and daily disruptions are the most demanding aspects of a counseling job (McCarthy et al., 2010). Higher levels of dissatisfaction occur with those who respond to crises or the involvement in non-counseling activities that take counselors away from working with students (Kolodinsky et al., 2009). Students say that they want school counselors who are more accessible with smaller caseloads (Johnson, 2010), and research shows students who had strong relationships with counselors also did better with social and academic adjustment

following high school (Hudley et al., 2009), thus indicating the need for directors with small caseloads or a different allocation of duties for those with larger caseloads.

Inequity of duties was described frequently. Testing was a task participants felt overwhelmed from and something they should not be responsible for. Mainly, middle school directors spoke of the time that testing takes from their other duties, while high school directors have less involvement in testing. This reflects research that counselors do not feel as prepared for "other" job activities, such as scheduling or testing (Goodman-Scott, 2015). Research has also found that counselors reported not feeling prepared for the realistic roles of school counselors (Falls & Nitcher, 2007).

In addition to the increased demands for testing and remediation, job satisfaction is greatly influenced by incentives such as salary (Lee, 2006; Rhodes et al., 2004; Vittek, 2015), which many participants noted. Many directors felt that they were not adequately compensated for the job. They mentioned the amount of duties they have, specifically related to what the assistant principals earn, and participants felt the pay was not comparable. The role of the director and the duties associated with the job in this study did not directly relate to the pay. This could have implications in how compensation relates to burnout.

While participants did not specifically describe feeling burned out, they did discuss how stressed, exhausted, and overwhelmed they feel due to their job expectations. This is similar to what Wilkerson and Bellini (2006) described about burnout, and how it can be measured by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lowered personal accomplishment. School counselors experience high levels of stress because of role demands, ambiguity, caseload size, and lack of supervision (Lambie, 2002). This can lead to a deterioration of services (Lambie,

2009) and can affect almost half of mental health counselors (Lambie, 2007). It is essential for counselor educators to teach prospective counselors about burnout and coping strategies (Lambie, 2002), which also affect school counselor retention, job satisfaction, and fulfillment of job responsibilities (Moyer, 2011). It could also be argued that leadership training programs would be a good place to teach their coping strategies. Lack of supervision, high student-to-counselor ratios (ACSA, 2012), and the expectation of performing non-counseling activities (Gybers & Henderson, 2006) are correlated with burnout (Moyer, 2011).

The overload of responsibilities has implications for the future of the job of a school counseling director and how their roles and responsibilities are changing. The amount of stress and feelings associated with having too many tasks and duties is troublesome due to the nature of burnout. It is important for not only ASCA but also school districts to unify on what is deemed appropriate and not appropriate in the role, and to push for adequate compensation for what is expected in the role, which is discussed in the next section.

Sacrifice

Throughout the interview questions about job duties, the reality versus the expectation of the job, and the attempt to strive for wellness, participants described many ways in which they have to make sacrifices to get their work done or within their work as a director. Two subthemes emerged in this area in terms of sacrifice related to a) time to complete duties and b) gender-related influence on the role acquisition.

Time to complete duties. Related to the lack of support and resources, participants expressed the sacrifice they must make to complete all their duties, such a working late, not being able to see students as frequently or quickly, and the reactive nature they feel they are

working in. Most directors with caseloads aimed to work within the ASCA National Model standards with 80% of their time devoted to direct service (ASCA, 2012), though the actual amount varied due to other responsibilities, which is consistent with research about the time allocations of school counselors (Agresta, 2004; Burnham & Jackson, 2000; Dahir et al., 2010; Evans & Payne, 2008; Partin, 1993). The interviews also showcased the increase in school counselors engaging in non-counseling duties, such as testing and scheduling, which are recommended to be carried out via other school personnel (ASCA, 2012; Burnham & Jackson, 2000).

Though school counselors have acquired the attitudes and skills needed to successfully implement school counseling programs with the ACSA standards (ASCA, 2012), consistent with research, they base their counseling programming on their own priorities, school needs, and program management standards (Dahir et al., 2010). Participants mentioned how much time being a part of the administrative team affected their ability to do counseling tasks, including being in on meetings, responding to emails, and planning school-wide initiatives, often without them having much say in how meetings and administrative tasks are run. The administrative duties also affected whether or not they felt they could apply for RAMP. In addition, as Katherine mentioned, part of the nature of the job is being available all the time, such as with suicides and other school crisis, which have greatly impacted the school counseling profession (Evans & Payne, 2008). Therefore, often the time spent on tasks is not at the mercy of the director but is in response to important issues that must take priority.

With the changing standards of school counselors (Hursh, 2008). It is important for district-level supervisors and state lawmakers to continue to work towards the recommended

ratio from ASCA so that school counselors and leaders can keep up with the demands. As stated previously, the demands of time and, thus, the increased risk of burnout also impact job satisfaction and can greatly influence the amount of time a counseling director will stay in the role and their effectiveness (Gybers & Henderson, 2006; Moyer, 2011). The demands of the job and the expectations of the job after hours have implications for who is applying for the director jobs since not all employees can be expected to do evening and weekend work.

Gender-related influence on role acquisition. Many of the participants discussed the impact that having children and families have on their decision to become a director. This influence was greatly prevalent in the female participants who waited to become directors once their children were older and the influence of how not having children enabled some participants to feel more ready to deal with the demands of the role. This observation matches the research on mothers in the workforce (Hewlett & Luce, 2006; Hochschild, 1989; Williams & Segal, 2003), and the societal expectations influencing working mothers (Gillespie & Temple, 2011; Slaughter, 2015). In addition, nine of the 10 participants were required to work a 12-month contract in contrast to the shorter contract for school counselors, which impacts mothers of young children who then need to find childcare in the summers and creates a larger work sacrifice for them during the summer months when they would otherwise be off work. Working mothers can experience challenges in managing work and life responsibilities with having to work increased hours over the summer (Hewlett & Luce, 2006; Slaughter, 2015). Research also shows that women complete caregiving and household activities when they return home from work (Cleveland et al., 2005; Hermann, Ziomek-Daigle, & Dockery, 2014; Kossek, Su, & Wu, 2017; Hochschild, 1989; Stinchfield & Trepal, 2010). With participants feeling that they have an

overload of responsibilities, this has strong implications for why women are waiting to take the job later in life or for the stress level of directors with children.

Work-life balance also impacts job satisfaction among women (Bruck, Allen, & Spector, 2002; Guest, 2002; Hämmig & Bauer, 2009). Much of the research attributes a work-life imbalance to negative consequences for well-being, working, and functioning effectively (Guest, 2002). A high workload and young children can negatively impact work-life balance (Hämmig, & Bauer, 2009). Relatedly, balancing work and home life predicts job satisfaction (Bruck et al., 2002). Multiple life roles, such as being a mother and a full-time employee, are a source of fulfillment and strain in life and balancing relationships (Haddock & Rattenborg, 2003). It was common for the participants to mention the lack of wellness that working and being a parent has had on their life, with very few discussing positive wellness activities. Rather, the majority mentioned that they have a hard time leaving work at work and being able to completely get away at home or on weekends.

The male participants did not discuss the stress of being a parent and their role as director or how they had to wait to take the role when their children were older. However, the male participants did mention how taking the director position was a conscious decision on their part to allow their wives to stay home with their children. Therefore, their gender was impacted on making the decision to take the role but in a different way than the women in this study. Brian commented that he took the job primarily so that his wife could stay at home with their children, which was something they both valued. This is in line with the research on how women's experiences are impacted by their experiences at home, including caregiving and household responsibilities (Cleveland et al., 2005; Kossek et al., 2017).

Each of the identified themes and subthemes represent the common thoughts and feelings of school counseling directors in this study. These themes showcase the different roles of the school counseling director, but also the impacts of varying forms of leadership training and preparation as well as the facets of job satisfaction. Many of these experiences have been identified in the existing literature, however new areas are illuminated where more research is needed. While this study sought to uncover the experiences of school counseling directors in relation to job satisfaction and leadership, it does include limitations, which are discussed in the next section.

Limitations

In qualitative research, the researcher is the key component and instrument of data collection and analysis (Hays & Singh, 2012; Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). When conducting this type of research, "qualitative researchers do not remain indifferent to the lives of the people they talk with, and such personal involvement is welcomed and not distrusted" (Tutty et al., 1996, p. 9). However, I must be aware of biases and monitor them within my theoretical framework (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). My role as researcher in this study is unique as I interviewed participants who are matched with my own role as a school counseling director, which I have held for the past four years. Because of my own role, I have my own opinions on factors related to job satisfaction and the leadership training of school counselors as well as the factors in education that impact both these areas, which I discussed previously. Therefore, it is important to understand the lens from which I operate but also that bias is inherent. I was also not only the data instrument, but I interpreted the data. Therefore, I naturally influenced the findings through my own experiences and in an attempt to uncover the participants' stories (Crowther et al., 2017;

Van Manen, 1997). However, it was important for me to eliminate as much bias as possible by writing in a reflexive journal throughout the data collection and coding process, and engaging in horizontalization (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Merriman & Tisdale, 2016). The data was also coded with two individuals outside the study for triangulation and to bring in different perspectives to the codes and themes.

Additional limitations include the sample size, sampling method, and interview method. While the size of the sample was large enough for saturation in qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016), the sample of these 10 participants does not necessarily translate to all school counseling directors across the state of Virginia or even the United States. It is possible that some of the thoughts and themes would differ in different school systems and states since there are different licensure requirements for school counselors as well as different roles for the counseling director. In addition, the purposeful and snowball sample was generated from emails to local school counseling directors in Virginia, school counseling directors found on school websites, as well as those from university listservs. It is also possible that the experiences and thoughts differ for directors who are not graduates from specific universities or who do not work in the districts that were contacted. The interviews were all done by phone, which may be another limitation. Due to not meeting in person, I was not able to gather observational data of the participant's office, school, or their mannerisms and expressions while answering the interview questions.

The demographic background of the participants and schools is another limitation. While the school demographics where each participant worked were varied, there were fewer participants working in schools who were heavily skewed towards a low socioeconomic and high

minority population. In addition, all of the participants were Caucasian and identified as the gender matching their sex. The majority were also women. A richer sample would have been one where the schools were more heavily skewed to minorities, where the participants came from minority backgrounds, and those who identified as a different gender than their sex.

The data collection process entailed that quotes and excerpts from each participants were coded and then complied into broader themes. Also, while the participants were given a chance to read the transcription of their interview for accuracy, they were not privy to the final themes of the coding team. It is possible that they would categorize their thoughts and feelings into different types of codes or themes. While the coding team provided triangulation, it is possible that they misidentified what the participants meant or how the participants were feeling.

Though the data collection process was structured for trustworthiness, there are still areas that could be improved to strengthen the study. While no study is without limitations, these are important to note in regard to the implications from the study as they may have had an effect on some of the data analysis.

Implications

The themes that emerged in this study have great implications for the development and job satisfaction of school counseling directors. Specifically, the implications relate to the school counseling director's role, gender, leadership training and preparation, and wellness stood out during the interviews. This section will discuss these implications. While these are not the only implications of the study, they have been identified as the main tenets by the research team.

Streamlined Job Expectations

The first major implication is the need for more streamlined expectations of the role of the school counseling director at a middle or high school. The ASCA model position statement on the job is vague and does not provide enough detail for districts or schools to model what the job entails (ASCA, 2012; 2017d). While ASCA is a framework and not mandated by all schools or districts, a more comprehensive view of what director responsibilities should entail would help unify the roles across schools, districts, and states and be a resource for other school counseling program models. ASCA also has position statements and checklists on the role of the school counselor, with details specifically on what they do and do not do, which would be beneficial for the director role as well (ASCA, 2017b).

While the overall job satisfaction expressed by the directors was high, the frustration in regards to the amount of duties, lack of compensation, and workload was alarming. Workload has a large role in job dissatisfaction (Baggerly & Osborne, 2006; Rhodes et al., 2004). This is also an additional area to advocate for why the caseloads of counselors should be the recommended ratio of 250:1 (ASCA, 2012). It is unclear how each participant's district factors directors into the recommended ratios, because some participants had to have a full caseload while others did not, but there were discrepancies on how large of a caseload the director had in the building. This, again, is where a consistent role would help districts decide how directors impact the ratios and the important responsibilities in their job.

Policies to Alleviate Gender Impact on Role Acquisition

Streamlined job expectations would also help ensure that gender does not influence when or why school counselors are seeking out a director position. While the findings of this study support research on working mothers (Hochschild, 1989; Hewlett & Luce, 2006; Williams &

Segal, 2003), this is still an area that needs advocacy and standards to ensure that women are taking on the role. For instance, by having a standard and clear definition of the role, school counselors would have a better idea of what their work-life balance would look like after taking the job.

In addition, school systems need to support working families and specifically mothers. With streamlined duties and lower caseloads, flexible hours could also enable more women to seek out leadership positions while they still have young children. Many companies are working towards comp time or other types of alternatives to the 40 hour work week, so this would be a great way to get effective leaders into the role of the director without the negative consequences of having to work all summer or having too many responsibilities. State and district-level leadership need to create better policies to enable women to support their families but also take on roles that they are qualified for. School counseling leadership teams (Kaffenberger et al., 2006) are a way to advocate for new policies in this area.

Understanding and Implementing an Identifiable Leadership Style

Counselors should be taught to identify their leadership style beginning in graduate school and consistently revisit their style as they gain more experience as a school counselor. University training programs should focus on leadership development as either a specific course or embedded in the specialty counseling courses. While leadership development is a part of CACREP (2016) and ASCA (2012) standards, it should be at the forefront of a counselors training, especially with the data towards intentionality in leadership, and should be revisited frequently during graduate school. While there are a variety of leadership styles (Dollarhide et al., 2008), it is important for directors to strategically understand and identify their personal style

for effectiveness. While having specific leadership qualities is important, a well-thought out leadership style with a focus towards a counseling department goals would be more purposeful and enable the director to have better management of the counseling team. While many participants mentioned the challenge of managing their staff and dealing with interpersonal conflict, specific leadership model training would help them have the tough conversations that impact their team.

There also should be consistent professional development opportunities throughout a director's tenure where they are receiving updates in management techniques and their leadership style as the role changes and schools adapt to different standards and practices. These can be sponsored through the director's school district or even through online modules. Leadership practices are positively related to the implementation of a comprehensive school counseling foundation, and following through on commitments has a positive aspect on establishing leadership (Davis, 2015). A solid leadership model has implications for impacting the job satisfaction experience of school counseling directors (Dalal et al., 2012), thus supporting the importance for leadership knowledge and awareness.

Counselor-Specific Leadership Training Programs

A leadership training program for school counselors is also important. Many of the participants received either no leadership training or were in programs with administrators, thus coming into the role with different levels of leadership awareness and skill sets. While administrators and counselors could learn similar leadership styles in their training programs, the counselor-specific duties, expectations, and leadership styles are important for directors to understand and implement as leaders in the building. Counselor-specific training programs

should be mandated for all school counselors interested in becoming directors, because it would give school counselors specific leadership skills while also addressing the ASCA National Model (Briggs et al., 2009). In addition, these trainings can provide counselors with specific counseling leadership skills such as learning about how to work through complex problems, teamwork, utilizing counseling skills in leadership, modeling with students and staff, and effective communication with parents (Briggs et al., 2009). Dollarhide et al. (2008) highlight the importance of formal training in leadership specifically related to school counseling to define and determine their role and effectiveness.

It would be beneficial for local universities, where available, to be part of the leadership training for school counseling directors (House & Sears, 2002). Particularly for school districts that may not have the money or supports to establish a training program, these partnerships would ensure that the proper training is occurring and is supported by research. This type of training is offered in certain districts around Virginia as discussed by the participants, but should be more widespread and consistent among counseling leaders. Partnering with local universities with counselor education programs would also save districts money and give the graduate programs the ability to outreach to local districts for training and internship opportunities. In turn, this would help develop school counseling directors into potential district-level directors, which would also help provide additional support to school counselors. This partnership would also help reinforce leadership standards within counseling programs before counseling graduate students are working in the field, because universities and school districts would be uniting on the current trends and qualities in leadership.

Continual Need for Wellness Training

Finally, as is often evident in research with school counselors, the importance of wellness was emphasized throughout many of the interview questions and themes. The concept of burnout (Lambie, 2007, 2002; Moyer, 2011; Wilkerson & Bellini, 2006) was present in the interviews from the multitude of directions that the participants felt pulled in and the increase demands on their roles. Specifically looking at the participants who were young mothers, the stress of managing work and home was high. It is recommended that all school counselors and school counseling directors have wellness practices that protect them from the demands of their role, such as spending time with family, religion, exercise, or other activities (CACREP, 2016). This would also be a protective factor for job satisfaction and retention (Moyer, 2011)

CACREP standards incorporate wellness into training standard for school counselors (CACREP, 2016; Smith et al., 2007), but districts need to continue with this training and provide support for counselors and counseling directors more consistently. Especially with the increased mental health demands in the role (Evans & Payne, 2008), directors need support with the variety of emotional tasks they are involved with in a daily basis as part of their role. Therefore, it is essential for counselor education programs to teach prospective counselors about coping strategies (Lambie, 2002), which also impact school counselor retention, job satisfaction, and fulfillment of job responsibilities (Moyer, 2011). The school districts should be building off this training once counselors are employed as well. Wellness and self-care would be important to include in the aforementioned leadership trainings as well as supports within the school systems to ensure that they have the supports in place to be effective and happy. This is another area where partnering with a local university could provide support to districts.

These recommended implications need to be advocated for by school counselors and counselor educators through stakeholders at the school, district, and state level. Directors can advocate through their annual agreements, as recommended by ASCA (2012), and data from programming with their principals and district-level supervisors. School counselor advocates and leadership teams (SCLT) can make impacts through state-level counseling professional organizations and ASCA with presentations at professional organizations and additional research.

Recommendations for Future Research

In this study, I sought to understand the experiences of school counseling directors in relation to leadership and job satisfaction. A hermeneutic phenomenological approach, which is a type of qualitative research in which the lived experience of each participant is interpreted through description and interpretation from the researcher, was used (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Kafle, 2013; Merriman & Tisdale, 2016; Van Manen, 1997). The first recommendation would be to study this topic with different research designs, such as a mixed-methods study. It would be beneficial to conduct focus groups, observe school counseling directors at work, examine job postings to compare the responsibilities across districts, and sample school counselors in survey form from across the state to get a better understanding of how the experiences differ in other parts of Virginia.

Using a similar methodology to this study, the findings could also be expanded by interviewing directors across the United States with a similar interview protocol. The researcher(s) could partner with universities across different areas of the United States to achieve another purposeful sample. Through this study, the researcher could also look at position

statements on the role in those districts as well as job postings, benefits, and pay for the director position. In order for ASCA to create a better recommended role for the school counseling director, the literature needs to show what the expectations are in as many areas as possible, which future studies could elaborate on.

Due to the influence of principals and district-level directors, it would be beneficial to study the different qualifications of district-level counseling supervisors and what they oversee in their areas. Often, it is the school counselors and school counseling leaders who must be the advocates to principals and district level personnel for counselor accessibility and smaller caseloads (Hudley et al., 2009; Johnson, 2010), thereby showing the importance of the administrative relationship with directors (Clemens et al., 2009). This is an area where many participants mentioned great support but also that they did not always have a former school counselor as their district-level supervisor. Research shows that school counselors who advocate for their role impact the perceptions about what school counselor duties are appropriate and not appropriate (Ginter & Others, 1990; Kirchnew & Setchfield, 2005; Reiner et al., 2009), and it would be beneficial to see how the district-level supervisors impact their role. This has great implications for advocacy within districts but also the influence of the position on the school counseling directors' roles.

Research also shows that school level affects the school counselor's role and the relationship between the principal and counselor in that role (Dahir et al., 2010). Though this was not corroborated in this study, only two participants came from a middle school, so the sample size for comparison was small. Therefore, this would be an additional area to examine in future research; specifically looking at how counseling programming is affected by the principal

counselor relationship at elementary, middle, and high schools and how this impacts job satisfaction. The researcher could also compare how that relationship is impacted by school demographics as well as district-level counseling supervisors.

Leadership training, or lack thereof, was a large issue in this study. It would be beneficial to do a longitudinal, qualitative study on leadership styles, perceptions, and awareness with school counseling students at the start of their graduate coursework and then as they develop their leadership qualities throughout their career and how that impacts their career paths. The study could follow-up with the school counselors 1 year, 5 years, and then 10 years later. This also could be structured as a cross-modal study, similar to Moss et al.'s (2014) identity development study, by focusing on different school counselors at certain points in their careers. The researchers could also factor in their graduate training programs and the standards they were meeting in order to develop their graduates leadership skills.

Finally, in schools where there is not a school counseling director, due to structure or budgeting, it would be beneficial to look at how the duties that are typically associated with the director are shared among the counselors or the other staff members in the building. Elementary schools do not typically have directors, and elementary school counselors often have larger caseloads. Therefore, the director duties are spread among other staff members. Many middle schools do not have directors either. Comparing the results from schools with directors to those without them would encourage the dialogue on how better to delegate duties within the schools related to counseling, because there would be data on how those duties are adjusted and how they can be carried out more efficiently or within a different position, allowing counselors to

focus on *counseling*. This would also have great implications for the recommended caseloads and the impact that increase mental health needs have in the schools.

Conclusion

This study sought to explore the experiences of these school counseling directors in relation to their job satisfaction and leadership through a hermeneutic phenomenological approach (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Kafle, 2013; Merriman & Tisdale, 2016; Van Manen, 1997). I collected data through 10 interviews. Participants were selected through purposeful and snowball sampling. The participants met the criteria of serving as a school counseling director of a middle or high school, supervising a department of at least two counselors, and working in the role for at least two years. Data analysis showcased the different expectation in the role of the school counseling director, the overall high level of job satisfaction in school counseling directors, and the varying levels of leadership training, models, and styles that the directors use in their role.

Along with some data about the role of the school counseling director, four major themes emerged from the interviews: Intentionality, Leadership Training and Knowledge, Overload of Responsibilities Assigned to Role, and Sacrifice. The subthemes for Leadership Training and Knowledge include limited counselor-specific preparation, limited recognition of leadership style, collaboration, and influence of administrators. The subthemes of Sacrifice include time to complete duties and gender-related influence on role acquisition. These themes were discussed in relation to current research as well as in regards to implications about the role, leadership training standards and programs, and wellness for school counseling directors. Recommendations for further research about school counseling directors, district-level supervisors, and leadership training were also discussed.

References

Adams, S. A. (2006). Does CACREP accreditation make a difference? A look at NCE results and answers. *Journal of Professional Counseling, Practice, Theory, and Research*, *34*(1/2), 60-76.

Adelman, H. S., & Taylor, L. (2000). Shaping the future of mental health in schools. *Psychology in the Schools, 37*, 49-60.

Agresta, J. (2004). Professional role perceptions of school social workers, psychologists, and counselors. *Children and Schools, 26*(3), 151-163.

Aldridge, J. M., & Fraser, B. J. (2016). Teachers' views of their school climate and its relationship with teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction. *Learning Environments Research, 19*(2), 291- 307. doi: 10.1007/s10984-015-9198-x

American Counseling Association. (2014). *ACA code of ethics*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

American School Counselor Association. (2012). *ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs* (3rd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.

American School Counselor Association. (2017a). *Recognized ASCA model program (RAMP).* Retrieved from https://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors/recognized-asca-model-program-(ramp)

American School Counselor Association. (2017b). *Role of the school counselor.* Retrieved from https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/home/RoleStatement.pdf

American School Counselor Association. (2017c). *State certification requirements.* Retrieved from https://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors-members/careers-roles/state-certification-requirements

American School Counselor Association. (2017d). *Why school counseling directors/coordinators?* Retrieved from https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Careers-Roles/WhyDirectorCoord.pdf

Baggerly, J., & Osborn, D. (2006). School counselors' career satisfaction and commitment: Correlates and predictors. *Professional School Counseling, 9*(3), 197-205.

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations.* New York, NY: Free Press.

Bass, B. M. (1991). From transactional to transformational leadership: Learning to share the vision. *Organizational Dynamics, 18*(3), 19-31.

Bass, B. M., Avolio, B. J., Jung, D. I., & Berson, Y. (2003). Predicting unit performance by assessing transformational and transactional leadership. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88*(2), 207-218.

Balyer, A. (2012). Transformational leadership behaviors of school principals: A qualitative research based on teachers' perceptions. *International Online Journal of Educational Sciences, 4*(3), 581-591.

Beesley, D., & Frey, L. L. (2006). Principals' perceptions of school counselor roles and satisfaction with school counseling services. *Journal of School Counseling, 4(*14), 1-27.

Bentley, S. T. (2014). *An examination between the relationship between RAMP (Recognized ASCA Model Programs) and job satisfaction among school counselors* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertation Publishing. (3621734).

Berkovich, I. (2016). School leaders and transformational leadership theory: Time to part ways?. *Journal of Educational Administration, 54*(5), 609-622.

Bernard, J. M., & Goodyear, R. K. (2014). *Fundamentals of clinical supervision* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & B Bacon.

Bloomfield, M. (1915). *Reading in vocational guidance*. Boston: Athenaeum Press.

Boberg, J. E., & Bourgeois, S. J. (2016). The effects of integrated transformational leadership on achievement. *Journal of Educational Administration, 54*(3), 357-374.

Boon, O. P., Jaafar, W. M. W., & Baba, M. (2015). Factors contributing to job satisfaction among school counselors. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 211*, 803-810.

Briggs, M., Staton, A., & Gilligan, T. (2009). The girls' leadership experience camp: A parallel process of leadership skill development for school counselors-in-training. *Professional School Counseling, 13*(2), 125-134.

Bruck, C. S., Allen, T. D., & Spector, P. E. (2002). The relation between work–family conflict and job satisfaction: A finer-grained analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 60*(3), 336-353.

Bryant, R. M., & Constantine, M. G. (2006). Multiple role balance, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction in women school counselors. *Professional School Counseling, 9*(4), 265-271.

Burnham, J. J., & Jackson, C. M. (2000). School counselor roles: Discrepancies between actual practice and existing models. *Professional School Counseling, 41*, 41-50.

Bush, T. (2014). Instructional and transformational leadership: Alternative and complementary Models? *Educational Management Administration and Leadership, 42*(4), 443-444.

Butler, S. K., & Constantine, M. G. (2005). Collective self-esteem and burnout in professional school counselors. *Professional School Counseling, 9*(1), 55-62.

Capuzzi, D., & Gross, D. (2008). *Introduction to the counseling profession* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Allen & Bacon.

Cervoni, A., & DeLucia-Waack, J. (2011). Role conflict and ambiguity as predictors of job satisfaction in high school counselors. *Journal of School Counseling, 9*(1), 1-30.

Chesterfield County Public Schools [Position Description: School Counseling Coordinator]. (2013, November). Chesterfield, VA.

Clemens, E. V., Milsom, A., & Cashwell, C. S. (2009). Using leader-member exchange theory to examine principal- school counselor relationships, school counselors' roles, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. *Professional School Counseling, 13*(2), 75-85.

Cleveland, J. N., Vescio, T. K., & Barnes-Farrell, J. L. (2005). In R. L. Dipboye & A. Colella (Eds.) *Discrimination at work: The psychological and organizational bases* (pp. 82-93). Mahwah, NJ: Psychology Press.

Collins, B. J., Burrus, C. J., & Meyer, R. D. (2014). Gender differences in the impact of leadership styles on subordinate embeddedness and job satisfaction. *The Leadership Quarterly, 25*(4), 660-671.

Corey, G. (2009). *Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy* (8th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (2018). *CACREP*. Retrieved from http://cacrep.org/directory/

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. (2016). *2016 standards*. Retrieved from http://www.cacrep.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2016-CACREP-Standards.pdf

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (4th ed)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage publications.

Crowther, S., Ironside, P., Spence, D., & Smythe, L. (2017). Crafting stories in hermeneutic phenomenology research: A methodological device. *Qualitative Health Research, 27*(6), 826-835.

Curry, J. R., & Bickmore, D. (2012). School counselor induction and the importance of mattering. *Professional School Counseling, 15*(3), 110-122.

Dahir, C. A., Burnham, J. J., Stone, C. B., & Cobb, N. (2010). Principals as partners: Counselors as collaborators. *NASSP Bulletin,* 4, 286-305.

Davis, J. B. (1914). *Vocational and moral guidance*. Boston, MA: Glen.

Davis, T. E. (2015). *Exploring school counseling (2nd ed.)*. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

Dewa, C. S., Dermer, S. W., Chau, N., Lowrey, S., Mawson, S., & Bell, J. (2009). Examination of factors associated with the mental health status of principals. *Work-a Journal of Prevention Assessment & Rehabilitation, 33*, 439-448.

Dietz, S. C. (1972). Counselor role, function, and job satisfaction. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 12* (2), 150-155.

Dollarhide, C. (2003). School counselors as program leaders: Applying leadership contexts to school counseling. *Professional School Counseling, 6*(5), 304-308.

Dollarhide, C. T., Gibson, D. M., & Moss, J. M. (2013). Professional identity development of counselor education doctoral students. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 52*(2), 137-150.

Dollarhide, C., Gibson, D., & Saginak, K. (2008). New counselors' leadership efforts in school counseling: Themes from a year-long qualitative study. *Professional School Counseling, 11(*4), 262-271.

Eckenrod-Green, W., & Culbreth, J. R. (2008). Latino high school students' perceptions and preferred characteristics of high school counselors. *Journal of School Counseling, 6*(17), 1-25.

Evans, Y. A., & Payne, M. A. (2008). Support and self-care: Professional reflections of six New Zealand high school counsellors. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 36*(3), 317-330.

Falls, L., & Nichter, M. (2007). The voices of high school counselors: Lived experience of job stress. *Journal of School Counseling, 5*(13). Retrieved from http://jsc.montana.edu/articles/v5n13.pdf

Fuller, J. B., Morrison, R., Jones, L., Bridger, D., & Brown, V. (1999). The effects of psychological empowerment on transformational leadership and job satisfaction. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 139*(3), 389-391. doi: 10.1080/00224549909598396

Gade, E. M., & Houdek, B. (1993). Job satisfaction and functions of counselor in split school assignments. *School Counselor, 41*(2), 86-89.

Ghavifekr, S., & Pillai, N. S. (2016). The relationship between school's organizational climate and teacher's job satisfaction: Malaysian experience. *Asia Pacific Education Review, 17*, 87-106

Ginter, E. J., & Others, A. (1990). The elementary school counselor's role: Perceptions of teachers. *School Counselor, 38*(1), 19-23.

Gillespie, B. B., & Temple, H. S. (2011). *Good enough is the new perfect: Finding happiness and success in modern motherhood.* Ontario, Canada: Harlequin.

Goodman-Scott, E. (2015). School counselors' perceptions of their academic preparedness and job activities. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, *54*(1), 57-67.

Guest, D. E. (2002). Perspectives on the study of work-life balance. *Social Science Information, 41*(2), 255-279.

Gysbers, N. C. (2010). *Remembering the past, shaping the future: A history of school counseling.* Alexandria, VA: American School Counselor Association.

Gysbers, N. C., & Henderson, P. (2001). Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs: A rich history and a bright future. *Professional School Counseling, 4*(4), 246-256.

Haddock, S. A., & Rattenborg, K. (2003). Benefits and challenges of dual-earning: Perspectives of successful couples. *The American Journal of Family Therapy, 31*(5), 325-344.

Hämmig, O., & Bauer, G. (2009). Work-life imbalance and mental health among male and female employees in Switzerland. *International Journal of Public Health, 54*(2), 88-95.

Hays, D. G., & Singh, A. A. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry in clinical and educational settings*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Heath, C., & Heath, D. (2010). *Switch: How to change when change is hard*. New York, NY: Broadway Books.

Hermann, M. A., Ziomek-Daigle, J., & Dockery, D. J. (2014). Motherhood and counselor education: Experiences with work/life balance. *Adultspan, 13*, 109-119. doi: 10.1002/j.2161-0029.2014.00030.x

Herzberg, F. (1959). *The Motivation to Work.* New York, NY: Wiley.

Hewlett, S. A. (2002). Executive women and the myth of having it all. *Harvard Business Review, 80*, 66-73.

Hewlett, S. A., & Luce, C. B. (2006). Extreme jobs: The dangerous allure of the 70-hour workweek. *Harvard Business Review*, *84*(12), 49-59.

Hochschild, A. (1989). *The second shift: Working families and the revolution at home.* New York, NY: Penguin Books.

House, R. M., & Sears, S. J. (2002). Preparing school counselors to be leaders and advocates: A critical need in the new millennium. *Theory into Practice, 41*(3), 154-162.

Hudley, C., Moschetti, R., Gonzalez, A., Cho, S., Barry, L., & Kelly, M. (2009). College freshmen's perceptions of their high school experiences. *Journal of Advanced Academics, 20*(3), 438-471.

Hughes, G. D. (2012). Teacher retention: Teacher characteristics, school characteristics, organizational characteristics, and teacher efficacy. *The Journal of Educational Research*, *105*(4), 245-255.

Hursh, D. (2005). The growth of high-stakes testing in the USA: accountability, markets and the decline in educational equality. *British Educational Research Journal, 31*(5), 605-622.

Jackson, C. J., & Corr, P. J. (2002). Global job satisfaction and facet description: The moderating role of facet importance. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment, 18*(1), 1-8.

Johnson, J. (2010). Why guidance counseling needs to change. *Educational Leadership*, 67, 74-79.

Johnson, N. A., & Holdaway, E. A. (1994). Facet importance and the job satisfaction of school principals. *British Educational Research Journal, 20*(1), 17-33.

Kaffenberger, C., Murphy, S., & Bemak, F. (2006). School counseling leadership team: A statewide collaborative model to transform school counseling. *Professional School Counseling, 9(*4), 288-294.

Kafle, N. P. (2013). Hermeneutic phenomenological research method simplified. *Bodhi: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, *5*(1), 181-200.

Kirchner, G. L., & Setchfield, M. S. (2005). School counselors' and school principals' perceptions of the school counselor's role. *Education, 126*(1), 10-16.

Kolodinsky, P., Draves, P., Schroder, V., Lindsey, C., & Zlatev, M. (2009). Reported levels of satisfaction and frustration by Arizona school counselors: A desire for connections with students in a data-driven era. *Professional School Counseling, 12*(3), 193-199.

Kossek, E. E., Su, R., & Wu, L. (2017). "Opting Out" or "Pushed Out"? Integrating perspectives on women's career equality for gender inclusion and interventions. *Journal of Management, 43*(1), 228-254.

Koustelios, A. D. (2001). Personal characteristics and job satisfaction of Greek teachers. *International Journal of Educational Management*, *15*(7), 354-358.

Kubicek, J. (2012). Intentional leadership. *Leader to Leader*, *2012*(64), 38-43.

Lacerenza, C. N., Reyes, D. L., Marlow, S. L., Joseph, D. L., & Salas, E. (2017). Leadership training design, delivery, and implementation: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *102*(12), 1686-1781.

Langston University (2015). *Transformational leadership*. Retrieved from http://www.langston.edu/sites/default/files/basic-content-files/Transformational Leadership.pdf

Lambie, G. W. (2002). *The contribution of ego development level to degree of burnout in school counselors* (Doctoral dissertation). *Dissertation Abstracts International, 63*, 508.

Lambie, G. W. (2007). The contribution of ego development level to burnout in school counselors: Implications for professional school counseling. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 85*(1), 82-88.

Lawson, G., & Myers, J. E. (2011). Wellness, professional quality of life, and career-sustaining behaviors: What keeps us well?. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, *89*(2), 163-171

Lee, M. (2006). What makes a difference between two schools? Teacher job satisfaction and educational outcomes. *International Education Journal, 7*(5), 642-650.

Lee, V. E., Dedrick, R. F., & Smith, J. B. (1991). The effect of the social organization of schools on teachers' efficacy and satisfaction. *Sociology of Education, 64*(3), 190-208.

Leuwerke, W., Walker, J., & Shi, Q. (2009). Informing principals: The impact of different types of information on principals' perceptions of professional school counselors. *Professional School Counseling, 12*(4), 263-271.

Liu, X. S., & Ramsey, J. (2008). Teachers' job satisfaction: Analyses of the teacher follow-up survey in the United States for 2000–2001. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *24*(5), 1173-1184.

Locke, E. A. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. In Dunnette, M. (Ed.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (pp. 1297- 1349). Chicago, IL: Rand, McNally.

Lowry, P. E. (2004). *Job satisfaction of directors of special education.* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

Martinez, I. L., Frick, K. D., Kim, K. S., & Fried, L. P. (2010). Older adults and retired teachers address teacher retention in urban schools. *Educational Gerontology*, *36*(4), 263-280.

Mason, E. (2010). Leadership practices of school counselors and counseling program implementation. *NASSP Bulletin, 94*(4), 274-285.

Mason, E., & McMahon, H. (2009). Leadership practices of school counselors. *Professional School Counseling, 13*(2), 107-115.

McCarthy, C., Kerne, V. V. H., Calfa, N. A., Lambert, R. G., & Guzmán, M. (2010). An exploration of school counselors' demands and resources: Relationship to stress, biographic, and caseload characteristics. *Professional School Counseling, 13*(3), 146-158.

McFarlin, D. B., Coster, E. A., Rice, R. W., & Cooper, A. T. (1995). Facet importance and job satisfaction: Another look at the range-of-affect hypothesis. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 16*(4), 489-502.

Medley, F., & Larochelle, D. R. (1995). Transformational leadership and job satisfaction. *Nursing management, 26*(9), 64JJ- 64NN.

Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation (4th Ed.).* San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.

Moss, J. M., Gibson, D. M., & Dollarhide, C. T. (2014). Professional identity development: A grounded theory of transformational tasks of counselors. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 92*(1), 3-12.

Moyer, M. (2011). Effects of non-guidance activities, supervision, and student-to-counselor ratios on school counselor burnout. *Journal of School Counseling, 9*(5). Retrieved from http://jsc.montana.edu/articles/v9n5.pdf

Mukhtar, F. (2012). *Work life balance and job satisfaction among faculty at Iowa State University* (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from Iowa State University Graduate Thesis and Dissertations. (12791)

Mullen, P. R., & Gutierrez, D. (2016). Burnout, stress and direct student services among school counselors. *The Professional Counselor, 6*(4), 344-359.

Parco-Tropicales, M., & de Guzman, A. B. (2014). A structural equation model (SEM) of the impact of transformational, visionary, charismatic and ethical leadership styles on the development of wise leadership among Filipino private secondary school principals. A*sia Pacific Education Review, 15*(4), 547-559.

Parsons, F. (1909). *Choosing a vocation*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Partin, R. L. (1993). School counselors' time: Where does it go? *The School Counselor, 40*, 274-281.

Perrachione, B. A., Rosser, V. J., & Petersen, G. J. (2008). Why do they stay? Elementary teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and retention. *Professional Educator*, *32*(2), 25-41.

Pines, A. M., & Aronson, E. (1988). *Career burnout: Causes and cures* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Free Press.

Pink, D. H. (2011). *Drive: The surprising truth about what motivates us*. New York, NY: Penguin.

Pyne, J. R. (2011). Comprehensive school counseling programs, job satisfaction, and the ASCA national model. *Professional School Counseling,15*(2), 88-97.

Radin, N., & Welsh, B. L. (1984). Social work, psychology, and counseling in the schools. *Social Work, 29*(1), 28-33.

Rayle, A. D. (2006). Do school counselors matter? Mattering as a moderator between job stress and job satisfaction. *Professional School Counseling*, *9*(3), 206-215.

Reiner, S. M., Colbert, R. D., & Pérusse, R. (2009). Teacher perceptions of the professional school counselor role: A national study. *Professional School Counseling, 12*(5), 324-332.

Remley, T. P., & Herlihy, B. (2007). *Ethical, legal, and professional issues in counseling*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Rhodes, C., Nevill, A., & Allan, J. (2004). Valuing and supporting teachers: A survey of teacher satisfaction, dissatisfaction, morale and retention in an English local education authority. *Research in Education, 71*(1), 67-80.

Rice, R. W., Gentile, D. A., & McFarlin, D. B. (1991). Facet importance and job satisfaction. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 76*(1), 31-39.

Rogelberg, S. G., Allen, J. A., Shanock, L., Scott, C., & Shuffler, M. (2010). Employee satisfaction with meetings: A contemporary facet of job satisfaction. *Human Resource Management, 49*(2), 149-172.

Ryan, T., Kaffenberger, C., & Carroll, A. (2011). Response to intervention: An opportunity for school counselor leadership. *Professional School Counseling, 14*(3), 211-221.

Saiti, A., & Papadopoulos, Y. (2015). School teachers' job satisfaction and personal characteristics: A quantitative research study in Greece. *International Journal of Educational Management, 29*(1), 73-97.

Sass, D. A., Seal, A. K., & Martin, N. K. (2011). Predicting teacher retention using stress and support variables. *Journal of Educational Administration, 49*(2), 200-215.

Schools. (n.d.). *Chesterfield County Public Schools*. Retrieved September 27, 2017 from http://mychesterfieldschools.com/schools/

Shimoni, A., & Greenberger, L. (2014). School counselors deliver information about school counseling and their work: What professional message is conveyed?. *Professional School Counseling, 18*(1), 15-27.

Slaughter, A. M. (2015). *Unfinished business*. New York, NY: Random House.

Slaughter, R. A. (2015). *Job satisfaction among high school counselors in RAMP-designated schools* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Capella University.

Smith, H. L., Robinson, E. H., & Young, M. E. (2007). The relationship among wellness, psychological distress, and social desirability of entering master's-level counselor trainees. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, *47*(2), 96-109.

Smith, P., & Bell, L. (2011). Transactional and transformational leadership in schools in challenging circumstances: A policy paradox. *Management in Education*, *25*(2), 58-61.

Spector, P. E. (1986). Assessing employee job satisfaction with the job satisfaction survey. *Mental Retardation Systems*, *3*, 5-13.

Spector, P. E. (1997). *Job satisfaction: Application, assessment, causes, and consequences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stone, C. B., & Clark, M. (2001). School counselors and principals: Partners in support of academic achievement. *NASSP Bulletin*, *85*(624), 46-53.

Turgut, K., & İbrahim, K. (2006). The effect of teachers' expectations on job satisfaction and motivation in private and public schools. *Journal of Theory and Practice in Education, 2*(1), 3-14.

Tutty, L. M., Grinnell, R. M., & Rothery, M. (1996). *Qualitative research for social workers: Phases, steps, and tasks*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

U.S. Department of Education. (2008). *Structure of the U.S. Education System: Standardized Tests*. Retrieved from https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ous/international/usnei/us/tests.doc

Van Manen, M. V. (1997). From meaning to method. *Qualitative Health Research, 7*(3), 345-369.

Vittek, J. E. (2015). Promoting special educator teacher retention: A critical review of the literature. *SAGE Open, 5*(2) 1-6. doi: 2158244015589994.

Williams, J. C., & Segal, N. (2003). Beyond the maternal wall: Relief for family caregivers who are discriminated against on the job. *Harvard Women's Law Journal, 26,* 77-162.

Wilkerson, K. (2009). An examination of burnout among school counselors guided by stress-strain-coping theory. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 87*(4), 428-437.

Wilkerson, K., & Bellini, J. (2006). Intrapersonal and organizational factors associated with burnout among school counselors. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 84*(4), 440-450.

Yeşilyaprak, B., & Boysan, M. (2015). Latent class analysis of job and life satisfaction among school counselors: A national survey. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 16*(1), 1-15.

Yang, Y. F. (2016). Examining competing models of transformational leadership, leadership trust, change commitment, and job satisfaction. *Psychological Reports, 119*(1), 154-173.

Zalaquett, C. P., & Chatters, S. J. (2012). Middle school principals' perceptions of middle school counselors' roles and functions. *American Secondary Education,* (2), 89-103.

Appendix A

Invitation to Participate

Dear Participant,

My name is Robyn Walsh and I am a doctoral student in the Counseling and Special Education Department at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia. I am conducting a research study for my dissertation about the experiences of school counseling directors in relation to job satisfaction and leadership. Completion of this study will fulfill part of my requirements for a Ph.D. in Education.

Eligibility criteria for participation in this study include:

1. Working as a school counseling director in a middle or high school
2. Serving as director of a team with two or more counselors
3. Serving as a director for at least two full school years

Should you meet the criteria above and choose to participate, you will first complete a short demographic survey. I will then conduct a phone interview with you regarding your experiences as a school counseling director. Participation will take approximately one hour. All interviews will be recorded and transcribed for accuracy but will be kept confidential and secure. Your name will not be attached to any data and any identifying information revealed in the interview will be deleted or concealed before data analysis. Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time or decline to answer any questions I may ask.

Currently, there are studies about the job satisfaction experiences of school counselors but none about the experience of directors, so your participation could have impacts for the training and responsibilities of this role while creating a new set of literature.

Thank you for your time and consideration in both assisting me with my professional endeavors and providing the counseling field with this useful information. If you are willing to participate or have additional questions, please contact me via email at walshrl@vcu.edu. Additionally, my dissertation chair, Dr. Donna Gibson, can be reached at dgibson7@vcu.edu.

Thank you in advance for your consideration,
Robyn Walsh, M. Ed.
Doctoral Candidate
Virginia Commonwealth University

Appendix B

Demographic Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions below:

1. Birth Date: Month/Year
2. School Name
3. Gender Identity
4. Race
    a. White
    b. Black or African American
    c. American Indian or Alaska Native
    d. Asian
    e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
5. Graduate Degree University and Year
6. How many full-time school counselors are in your department?
7. If you have a caseload, please state how large.
8. Is your program a Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP)?
9. How long have you been a school counselor? A director?
10. Do you have a division level school counseling director/supervisor?

Appendix C

Informed Consent

Study Title: The Experiences of School Counseling Directors in Relation to Job Satisfaction and Leadership. Researcher: Robyn Walsh

- I understand that the researcher is conducting a research study about the experiences of school counseling directors in relation to job satisfaction and leadership.

- I understand that the researcher is a doctoral student at Virginia Commonwealth University and she is completing this research study as a partial fulfillment of earning a Ph.D. in Education with a concentration in Counselor Education and Supervision.

- I understand that the researcher will conduct an interview on the telephone. I understand that my interview will be recorded, but I will have the opportunity to review my interview transcript once it is transcribed. I understand that identifying information including my name and place of work will be kept confidential. I understand that participation in this study will take approximately one hour.

- I understand that there are both benefits and risks with my involvement in this study. Benefits of participation include assisting with understanding the experiences of school counseling directors. Recommendations from my responses will relate to school counselors, counseling training programs, and leadership development. Risks of this study may include an imposition on my personal time and potential discomfort with some of the interview questions.

- I understand that participation in this study is completely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without penalty. I further understand that I may refuse to answer any questions asked in the interview.

  Please check the box below, sign, and date.

  ____ Yes, I consent to participate in this research study.
  ____ No, I will not participate in this research study.

  _____ _____
  Participant Date

Appendix D

Questioning Route

1. Talk about your career path up until your current role and why you chose to be a school counselor? A director?

2. Define what a school counseling director is in your school or district?

3. Do you have a model for your school counseling program?

4. Tell me about how much time you devote to work specific to direct counseling duties?

5. How much time do you devote to non-counseling or administrative duties?

6. Tell me about your level of satisfaction related to your job as a school counseling director?

7. What are the main differences between what you expected in the job and the reality of the job?

8. Describe any type of leadership training you have receiving formally and informally.

9. Can you identify your leadership style?

10. Talk about how leadership training and/or experiences impact your job satisfaction?

11. Do you feel you need more leadership training to be more effective and/or satisfied in your role? If so, in what areas specifically?

12. What do you like the most and the least in your job?

13. What strategies do you use to balance your personal life and your work life?

14. What advice would you give to new counseling directors entering the field?

Vita

Robyn Lynn Walsh was born on June 10, 1986 in Columbus, Ohio and moved to Richmond, Virginia in 1993. She graduated from Monacan High School in North Chesterfield, Virginia in 2004. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Virginia in 2008 and a Master of Education degree in counselor education from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2010. She has worked as a high school counselor in Chesterfield County since 2010 and now serves as a school counseling coordinator at her alma mater, Monacan High School. She has been an adjunct faculty member at Virginia Commonwealth University since January 2016 in the counselor education program. She has presented at regional and national conferences and was lead author in an article published in the Journal for Specialists in Group Work.