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The Relationship between Professional Identity and Collective Self- esteem in School Counselors

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The Relationship between Professional Identity and Collective
Self- esteem in School Counselors

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Counselor Education

by

Susan J. Foster

B.A., Southeastern Louisiana University, 2003
M.Ed., Southeastern Louisiana University, 2006

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my father, James Foster

who taught me to what it means to have

strength and persevere

and

to my husband James Ebbs and my children David Bridges and Will Bridges

who have walked next to me

with unwavering love, support, and understanding.

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ABSTRACT

All bona fide professions have affiliated professional organizations, ethical standards or a code of ethics, and an accrediting and sanctioning body that deals with preparation, credentialing, and licensure, and pride in one's profession (Gale & Austin, 2003; Remley & Herlihy, 2010). As school counseling continues to evolve, school counselors have struggled to define and maintain their role. This may be due, in part, to the social desirability an individual has to belong to dominant group in the school setting (Tajfel, 1986). School counselors may draw esteem from their professional membership. This concept, called collective self-esteem, denotes those aspects of identity that are related to membership in social groups and the respective value that one places on one's membership (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between collective self-esteem and professional identity.

The findings of this study indicated that collective self-esteem was relatively stable and remained moderately high across several demographic variables related to professional identity. Collective self-esteem remained relatively consistent across level of practice, professional background, years of total experience and years of experience at the current school, and area of practice. Further, collective self-esteem remained moderately high for those who were affiliated with a counseling organization and those who were not. Results also suggested that collective self-esteem is constant regardless of variations in credentialing, chosen code of ethics, role definition (educator first or counselor first), and professional pride.

 Results indicated that collective self-esteem remained moderately high across several demographic areas and variables related to professional identity. Further, a significant positive correlation was found between pride in the profession and collective self-esteem was shown.

Additionally, a small, significant negative correlation was garnered between those participants who viewed themselves as a counselor first and held an LPC or equivalent. Further, a significant relationship was found between those participants who defined their role as a counselor first and chose the NBCC *Code of Ethics* as their primary code of ethics and those participants who held the counselor first position and chose the ASCA *Ethical Code* as their primary code of ethics.

KEYWORDS: school counseling, professional identity, social identity, collective self-esteem, role definition, affiliation, pride, credentialing and ethical code.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether a relationship existed between professional identity of the school counselor and collective self-esteem. The first chapter provides an overview of the study and defines the purpose of examining the relationship between social identity and professional identity of school counselors. Chapter Two provides a detailed review of relevant literature related to the study. The third chapter includes the methodology employed in this study. The fourth chapter contains the data analysis for the study. Chapter Five contains the interpretation of the results garnered in the study.

Professional Identity

Identity is a multidimensional, indefinite, and reflexive concept (Stets & Burke, 2000; Wong, 2002). Because identity is such an amorphous construct, many competing theories and terms have emerged in an attempt to explain and categorize it, often making research difficult. One type of identity that is particularly salient to school counselors is their professional identity. Like identity in general, professional identity is a nebulous concept, but Remley and Herlihy (2010) have asserted that it is nevertheless vital to the success of a profession.

All professions, including counseling, are identified and reinforced by certain criteria. Affiliated professional organizations, ethical standards or a code of ethics, an accrediting and sanctioning body that deals with preparation, credentialing, licensure, and pride in one's profession are necessary to be considered a bona fide profession (Gale & Austin, 2003; Remley & Herlihy, 2010). The strength of professional identity largely depends on commitment to and advocacy of these constructs. It would appear that school counseling meets these criteria and

that school counselors should have a strong professional identity. However, the criteria have not been applied to the profession of school counseling in a cohesive or uniform way, and as a result the profession of school counseling has a fractured professional identity (Agresta, 2004; Amatea, & Clark, 2005).

Professional organizations, specifically the American Counseling Association (ACA) and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), define the role of the school counselor in very different terms. ACA takes the position that the primary role of the school counselor is to function as a mental health practitioner (Paisley, Ziomek-Daigle, Getch, & Bailey, 2007). By contrast, ASCA views the role of the school counselor as primarily that of an educator (ASCA, 2001). Further, school counselors may face some confusion with regard to the ethical standards with which they are charged to adhere. In particular, codes have been promulgated by ACA and ASCA (ACA, 2005; ASCA, 2001). School counselors can find specific guidance on ethical issues pertinent to their practice in the ethical standards set forth by ASCA. However, these standards are advisory only (ASCA, 2001). School counselors who are members of ACA are required to abide by the ACA Code of Ethics (ACA, 2005), although its ACA code is not specific to school counselors.

Accreditation and sanctioning of school counseling also have considerable variability on both the state and national levels. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2009) sets forth pragmatic guidelines for skill and knowledge attainment in counselor training programs, yet the delivery may vary across university settings (Gale & Austin, 2003) and not all school counselor training programs are accredited by CACREP. At the national level, school counselors may be credentialed by two boards with opposing viewpoints. The National Board of Certified School Counselors views the school

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counselor as a mental health practitioner first, whereas the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards views the role of the school counselor as primarily that of educator (NBCC, 2009; NBPTS, 2009; Webber & Mascari, 2006). According to ASCA (2001), all 50 states have differing requirements for certification, licensure, and practice.

The final criterion to be a bona fide profession is pride in being a member of that profession. Remley and Herlihy (2010) noted that counselors who have a strong professional identity "feel a significant pride in being a member of their profession and can communicate this special sense of belonging to those with whom they interact" (p. 25). School counselors, perhaps more than counselors, who work in other settings, may find it difficult to derive a sense of belonging in their work environment. Counselors, particularly those who are the only counselor in their building, have no clearly defined peer group: they are not teachers, administrators, nor staff. As such, school counselors may tend to derive identity by referencing other professional categories or groups, as is asserted in social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978). Social identity theory states that individuals may view themselves as belonging to several groups to varying degrees with respect to the social environment, and that they draw identification from group membership (Dietz-Uhler & Murrell, 1998; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). According to Tajfel (1978), an individual's social or collective identity might include professional membership as well as religious affiliation, gender, or ethnic group membership. The purpose of this research study is to clarify and further our understanding of the relationship between school counselors' professional identity, as measured by pride, affiliation, credentialing, and primary ethics code, and collective/social identity, as measured by scores on the *Collective Self-esteem Scale.*

Background

Historically, there has been no consensus on a universal definition of school counseling; therefore, there has been a lack of consistency in the practice of school counseling. Since the genesis of school counseling, the profession has been plagued with ambiguity (Agresta, 2004; Amatea, & Clark, 2005). Several factors driven from the top down, such as lack of a centralized focus, opposing viewpoints from professional associations, lack of professional support, and inconsistency in individual and collective job performance are believed to perpetuate the lack of professional cohesiveness (ASCA, 2003; Brown & Kraus, 2003). School counselors who do not feel supported by the educational or counseling community may not feel connected to the profession and, therefore, may not have a strong sense of professional identity. Moreover, the identity of the school counselor has been influenced and shaped not only by the internal perceptions of the school counselor, but also by the constructed social reality and environment created and maintained by others (Lewis & Hatch, 2008).

School counseling has existed for over 100 years and has undergone many historical changes that have affected the professional identity of the school counselor. School counseling, as a profession, first emerged in 1889 when Jesse B. Davis, a high school principal, introduced a vocational guidance program to his English classes (Coy, 1999). The primary focus of school counseling in its early years was on vocational preparation, guidance, and placement to ensure that students were ready to enter the work world (Agresta, 2004; Beesley, 2004; Gyspers, 2001). The first school counselors were teachers who had not received any formal training in counseling (Baker, 2001).

In 1953, the profession of school counseling marked a major milestone: the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) was founded as a division of the American Personnel

and Guidance Association (currently the American Counseling Association). The influence of ASCA, while sometimes controversial, has been strong for over 50 years (Paisley & Borders, 1995). One of the primary missions of the association has been to delineate a clear focus of school counseling. Most recently, the purpose has been centered on improved academic achievement and professional accountability (ASCA, 2004).

Around the same time as ASCA was founded, the United States entered into the space race. With the Russian launch of Sputnik, the federal government began to feel increased pressure to keep up with other advanced nations and made school counseling a higher priority providing funding for the formalized training of counselors (Baker, 2001). School counselors during this time were found primarily at the junior and senior high school levels. Again, the purpose of school counseling was primarily guidance, dealing with academic and career issues of students to bolster educational achievement in the United States (Gyspers, 2001). Contemporary career counseling is rooted in this era.

Declining school enrollment in the 1970s began to affect how counselors operated in school settings. Fear of job attrition and program cuts motivated many school counselors to perform a host of non-counseling and administrative tasks. Many did clerical work to ensure sustained employment as well as their professional livelihood (Lambie & Williamson, 2004).

The late 1970s and 1980s brought more change to the profession resulting in a movement for more comprehensive, developmental guidance and counseling services (Gyspers, 2001). Baker (2001) suggested that this movement was prompted by the need for more accountability and program evaluation. In theory, school counselors were breaking away from administrative, academic, and career types of tasks and moving toward a clearer, more defined clinical role (Galassi & Akos, 2004). However, researchers such as Brott and Myers (1999) reported that

some school counselors still were performing non-counseling, administrative, and clerical duties similar to those of their professional predecessors.

The contemporary school counseling profession experiences continued ambiguity. Current controversies surrounding the defining cornerstone of school counseling fuel the ambiguity and splinter the profession from the top down. Two divergent identities have developed and perpetuate the historical inconsistency that has existed in the profession. School counselors tend to see themselves either as counselors working in a school setting or as educators using counseling skills (Paisley, Ziomek-Daigle, Getch, & Bailey, 2007). For example, Weber (2004) conducted a study with New Jersey school counselors and found that nearly three fourths of those surveyed viewed themselves as counselors working in a school setting, whereas almost 20% of the counselors viewed themselves primarily as educators. Perkins (2006) pointed out that the mental health counselor first position is gaining support in the education community. In her study Perkins (2006) found stakeholders, such as teachers and principals, placed high value on personal/social counseling, lending credence to the argument that school counselors are more than just educators.

Both positions have found support from professional counseling organizations. ASCA indicates that the role of the school counselor is that of an educator (ASCA, 2004). Conversely, ACA asserts that the profession of school counseling is a counseling specialty dealing with a specific population in a unique setting (Brown & Krause, 2003). Most counselor education programs have taken a position similar to that of ACA. Curriculum, instruction, and clinical experiences tend to be more in line with the mental health counseling model favored by ACA as opposed to a more educational role as prescribed by ASCA (ASCA, 2004; Brown & Krause, 2003).

Further, a considerable discrepancy seems to exist between what school counselors report doing and the best practices set forth in the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2003; Brott & Myers, 1999; Henderson, Cook, Libby, & Zambrano, 2007; Johnson, 2000). Theoretically, the model serves as a blueprint for comprehensive school counseling and guidance services (ASCA, 2003). It delineates an almost prescriptive approach to school counseling with a built-in system of checks and balances for increased accountability. According to DeMato and Curcio (2004), ASCA recommends that school counselors spend at least 70 % of their time delivering direct services to students, with a maximum ratio of 1 counselor per 250 students. Adherence to the model largely depends on its appeal and attractiveness at the state, district, or school level (House & Hayes, 2002). According to House and Martin (1998), local school communities are often individualistic and, thus, are largely responsible for what becomes acceptable practice by their school counselors. Moreover, Beesley (2004) pointed out that comprehensive guidance programs require a collaborative effort from school, district, and community stakeholders to be successful, and that many school counselors bear the responsibility alone.

Rationale for the Study

In a contemporary educational world motivated by accountability and an emphasis on increased academic achievement, a renewed need to understand the role of the school counselor has emerged. The school counselor's professional identity is a multifaceted, multilayered construct. Externally derived influences such as social identity and ecological relationships affect the practice of school counseling (Miller & Garran, 2008). For instance, how others (educators and counselors) perceive the profession of school counseling can affect how members of the profession feel about the profession (Yu, Lee & Lee, 2007). Theoretically, a school counselor may belong to several social groups within the social context of a school setting, as both

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educator and counselor. It can be reasonably assumed that social identity theory can be applied

in order to understand the professional identity of school counselors.

<center>**Conceptual Framework**</center>

People have the ability to interact in a variety of social environments. Because every

individual belongs to multiple social categories, it is conceivable that external social influences

and institutions may affect that individual's sense of self-identity (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995).

Bornewasser and Bober (1987) stated that an individual's identity is dependent on and

characterized by the person's social groupings. Social psychologists have researched this

phenomenon for decades and have developed several theories to explain the role of socialization

on self-identification.

Social identity theory provides a social and organizational framework to the theoretical

construct of self-definition and identification (Ashford & Mael, 1989; Cameron, 2004; Kalkoff &

Barnum, 2000; Tafjel, 1978). According to Tafjel, people tend to classify themselves and others

within the context of social categories. This might include professional or organizational

membership, religious affiliation, gender, or ethnic group membership (Abrams & Hogg, 1988;

Ashford & Mael, 1989; Brown & Capozza, 2000; Kalkoff & Barnum, 2000; Tafjel & Turner,

1986). From this perspective, individuals may view themselves as belonging to several groups to

varying degrees with respect to the social environment and draw positive distinctiveness from

such membership (Dietz-Uhler & Murrell, 1998; Tafjel & Turner, 1986). Thus, self-

identification is derived from that sense of self-inclusive belonging to specific social groups.

Social identity theory operates on the following three assumptions: (1) people attempt to promote

their personal esteem, (2) people's identity largely depends on their group memberships, and (3)

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groups of people attempt to maintain their identity by differentiating themselves from other

relevant groups (Van Dick, Wagner, Stellmacher, Christ, & Tissington, 2005).

According to social identity theory, self-identity can be divided into three distinct

components. Tajfel (1978) postulated that identity occurs as a result of cognitive centrality, in-

group affect, and in-group ties. The notion of cognitive centrality deals with the psychological

meaning an individual attaches to membership in a particular group (Cameron, 2004). This

concept seeks to explain the extent to which group membership is positively or negatively

salient. The positive or negative attributes an individual assigns depend on how desirable the

group is to the individual. In-group affect refers to the evaluative dimension of belongingness

(Stets & Burke, 2000). For example, a school counselor may assign specific emotions to

membership such as feeling "glad" or "unhappy" to be a part of the school counseling

profession. In-group ties are best described as the extent to which an individual feels aligned

with or accepted by the group (Cameron, 2004). Stets and Burke (2000) posited that an

individual's behavior is predicated and normed based on these basic interactional assumptions;

that is, an individual's overt actions become prototypical of the representative group. Individuals

perform self-perceived normative and non-normative actions in an attempt to conform to the

existing social system (Boen & Vanbeselaere, 2001). To some degree, behavior becomes

socially structured and ordered in an attempt to enhance the self (McDermott & Roth, 1978).

Central to the evaluation of one's social identity is the notion of collective self- esteem

(Cameron, 2004; Crocker & Luhtanen, 2003). Crocker and Luhtanen (1992) used the term

collective-self esteem much as Tajfel and Turner (1986) used the term social identity. Collective

self-esteem encompasses membership esteem, private collective self-esteem, public collective

self-esteem, and identity (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). Membership esteem refers to the

individual's perception that his or her group membership is worthy. Private collective self-esteem deals with the individual's subjective assessment of the group as a whole. Public self-esteem refers to an individual's perceptions about how others view the group. Identity refers to the level of importance to self concept that an individual places on a group.

School counselors must confront issues related to their identity and development within the social context in which they work. Schools are agents of socialization that often mirror what is occurring on a larger, macrocosmic level (Clark & Amatea, 2004; Harkins & Roth, 2007). Lambie and Williamson (2004) posited that the institution of school counseling is ordered, constructed, and maintained by social interactions and history. As such, it is conceivable that the identity of school counselors has been influenced by the social setting of the school and that social comparison and categorizations have influenced their behavior (Lewis & Hatch; Michener, De Lamater, & Schwartz, 1986; Van Dick et al., 2005). Individuals may seek to derive organization-based esteem and meaning, or may develop role conflict based on membership (Ashford & Mael, 1989; Chattopadhyay & George, 2001). For instance, an African American high school counselor may ascribe to multiple organizational groupings. She may view her identity in terms of her ethnic membership, gender, profession, and work setting.

Further, an identity status appears to have prototypical behaviors associated with the collective identity of the group (Brown, Vivian, & Hewstone, 1999, Stets & Burke, 2000). An individual may attach personal value to group membership (Dimmock, Grove, & Eklund, 2005). For school counselors, this might account for the trends and variability that exist in task selection. The American School Counselor Association has compiled a list of appropriate and inappropriate school counseling related tasks; yet, adherence to these tasks largely depends on administrative and faculty support, as well as the strength of the individual school counselor's

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identity (ASCA, 2003; House & Hayes, 2002). School counselors reported that they felt more connected to the profession when they were able to perform appropriate tasks, yet many find themselves performing tasks that are not within the scope of best practices (Burnham & Jackson, 2000; Henderson et al., 2007). Little research exists on how social identity affects the task selection of school counselors.

Social support and collegiality may influence the practice of school counseling (Scarborough & Culbreath, 2008). Traditional educational foundations and approaches of administrators and teachers are more prominent in the school setting than are counseling approaches. As stated by Clark and Amatea (2004), teacher and administrator support of school counseling programs is paramount to programs' success. Quite often, however, school counselors' expectations do not align with those of other school personnel. The self-concept of school counselors may become framed within the socially constructed reality present in the school environment and their professional belief systems may be violated (Amatea & Clark, 2005; Henderson et al., 2007; Lambie & Williamson, 2004). A lack of cohesiveness and belonging has been shown to negatively affect job satisfaction and professional identity (Henderson et al., 2007; Sutton & Fall, 1995). Johnson (2000) indicated that some teachers and administrators do not view the role of the school counselor as a critical one. Inability to work collaboratively within the school setting may negatively impact professional identity.

Depending on the setting, school counselors may experience varied levels of social support and commitment. For instance, in one study, elementary school counselors indicated that they were practicing as they preferred, as opposed to their high school counterparts who were not practicing as they preferred (Scarborough & Culbreath, 2008). One possible

explanation is that elementary school counseling is rooted in holistic development (Hardesty & Dilliard, 1994), whereas guidance counseling remains the overarching theme of most middle and high school counseling. Guidance counseling is rooted in the academic advising and scheduling seen in the genesis of school counseling (Gyspers, 2001).   Again, no uniformity exists in the practice of school counseling across settings. The extent to which belongingness and social identity on a school campus affect the professional identity of the school counselor is unknown.

Purpose of the Study

Although a large body of research exists on the identity of the school counselor, little research has been done on the influence of social/collective identity on the professional identity of the school counselor. From a social identity theory perspective, school counselors may attempt to use group membership to promote their personal esteem, shape their professional identity through their group membership, and maintain their identity by differentiating themselves from other relevant groups (Van Dick et al., 2005).

This study was aimed at determining the relationship between social/collective identity and the professional identity of the school counselor. Social/collective identity was measured using the *Collective Self-esteem Scale*, which is a 16-item Likert-type scale developed by Luhtanen and Crocker in 1992. The overall collective self-esteem battery consists of the following four subscales: membership esteem, private collective self-esteem, public collective self-esteem, and identity. Professional identity was assessed by participant responses to six questions designed to identify the level of participation in professional organizations and affiliations, assess how the participants view their role in the profession, measure pride in being a member of the profession, assess the primary ethics code utilized by the school counselor, and assess the credentialing of the school counselor. A researcher-constructed survey and the

Collective Self-esteem Scale were sent by mass email to randomly selected school counselors in five states which were selected to be representative of the five regions of the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES).

Research Questions

The general research question that was addressed in this study is: What is the relationship between social/collective identity and professional identity among school counselors?

Several specific research questions were derived from the general research question. Based on the assumptions of social identity theory and the definition of professional identity, the following research questions were explored:

1. Does collective self-esteem differ between school counselors who work at the elementary, middle, and high school levels?

2. Is there a correlation between collective self-esteem and pride in the profession?

3. Is there a difference in collective self esteem between school counselors with a teaching or those with a non-teaching background?

4. Does collective self-esteem differ between school counselors who are professionally affiliated and those who are not?

5. Is there a correlation between years of experience as a school counselor and collective self-esteem?

6. Does collective self-esteem differ by years of total experience and years of experience at the current school?

7. Does collective self-esteem differ among elementary, middle, and high school counselors who view themselves as counselors first and those who view themselves as educators first?

8. Does collective self-esteem differ in school counselors who work in urban, suburban, and rural settings?

9. Is there a correlation between role definition (counselor first or educator first) and the credentials held by school counselors?

10. Is there a relationship between role definition (counselor first or educator first) and the primary chosen code of ethics?

11. Is there a relationship between collective self-esteem and the primary chosen code of ethics?

Assumptions

Based on the theoretical foundation provided by social identity theory, it was assumed that social identity and its related constructs play a role in the individual professional identity of the school counselor. Further, it was assumed that participants would respond honestly and that the sample would be representative of all school counselors.

Definitions of Terms

Collective self-esteem: Collective self-esteem is synonymous with social identity. It encompasses membership esteem, identity, public collective self-esteem, and private collective self-esteem.

Current years of experience: Current years of experience referred to the number of years the participant has worked in the current school.

Elementary school counselor: Elementary school counselor referred to practicing school counselors working with pre-kindergarten through forth grade students.

Identity: Identity referred to the level of importance to self concept that an individual places on a group (Luhtanen &Crocker, 1992).

Membership esteem: Membership esteem referred to the individual's perception that his or her group membership is worthy (Luhtanen &Crocker, 1992).

Middle school counselor: Middle school counselor referred to practicing school counselors working with fifth through eighth grade students.

High school counselor: High school counselor referred to practicing school counselors working with ninth through twelfth grade students.

Pride: According to Remley and Herlihy (2010), pride an internally derived feeling that is an essential component of counseling professionalism marked by understanding and advocacy of the profession.

Primary background experience: Primary background experience referred to the capacity in which the school counselor has spent a majority of their time. Experience can be teaching, administrative, or school counseling.

Private collective self-esteem: Private self-esteem dealt with the individual's subjective assessment of the group as a whole.

Professional Affiliation: For the purpose of this study professional affiliation referred to whether or not participants belong to professional counseling associations.

Professional Identity: From the social identity perspective, professional identity referred to an individual's self-concept viewed in terms of professional or job-related membership (Miller & Garran, 2008). Pride in one's profession, affiliated professional organizations, an ethical standard or code, and an accrediting and sanctioning body that deals with preparation, credentialing, licensure are necessary to be considered a bona fide profession (Gale & Austin, 2003; Remley & Herlihy, 2010).

Public self-esteem Public self-esteem referred to an individual's perceptions about how others view the group.

School counselor: School counselor referred to a person who provides academic, career, personal or social support (or any combination thereof) to students in a school setting (ASCA, 2004; Brown & Krauss, 2003).

School setting: The school setting is the social environment in which school counselors operate.

Social identity: Social identity referred to an individual's sense of belonging with respect to the social environment, as well as the distinctiveness drawn from such membership (Dietz-Uhler & Murrell, 1998; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Social group: For the purpose of this study, the social group consisted of all faculty, staff, and administrators on a school campus.

Training program accreditation: Training program accreditation referred to accreditation by the Counsel for Accreditation of Counseling and related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2001). Gale and Austin (2003) indicated that sanctioning by an accrediting body is necessary to be a recognized profession.

Years of experience: Years of experience referred to the total number of years the participant has been a school counselor.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter, a review of the literature relevant to the study is provided. The first section provides a history of the profession of school counseling. Section two gives a general overview of the concept of identity. Professional identity is reviewed in section three. In section four, the disparities that exist in the professional identity of the school counselor are examined. This study was aimed at determining the relationship between social identity, as measured by the *Collective Self-esteem Scale*, and the professional identity of school counselors.

History of School Counseling

School counseling has been practiced for over a century. In that time, the profession has undergone many changes that continue to affect both the theory and practice of contemporary school counseling. Throughout the country, school systems, school counseling programs, counseling associations, and state boards of education all have different expectations of what constitutes school counseling (Monteiro-Leitner, Asner-Self, Milde, Leitner, & Skelton, 2006).

School counseling emerged in 1889 as an academic intervention. Jesse B. Davis, a high school principal, introduced school counseling as a vocational guidance program to his English classes (Coy, 1999). Early on, the focus of school counseling was primarily on vocational preparation, guidance, and placement to ensure that students were ready to enter the work world (Agresta, 2004; Beesley, 2004; Gyspers, 2001). The first school counselors were teachers who had not received any formal training in school counseling. For nearly 50 years, school counselors practiced with little direction and usually performed their counseling duties in addition to their regular teaching duties.

As the school counseling movement grew, more people began to practice. Frank Parsons, known as the "Father of Vocational Guidance," established the Bureau of Vocational Guidance to assist students in making the transition from school to work. In 1913, professionals from education, social work, government, and psychometrics aligned to form the National Vocational Guidance Association. The goal of the association was to promote the importance of career and vocational guidance in American high schools (Lambie & Williamson, 2004). The group later merged with the American Personnel and Guidance Association. In 1953, the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) was founded as a division of the American Personnel and Guidance Association (currently the American Counseling Association). While sometimes controversial, the influence of ASCA has been prevalent for over 50 years in the development and delivery of school counseling (Paisley & Borders, 1995). The primary mission of the association has been to provide a clear focus for the profession. Most recently, the purpose has been centered on improved student academic achievement and professional accountability (ASCA, 2004).

Around the same time as ASCA was founded, the United States entered into the space race. The Soviet Union launched Sputnik I, which had educational, military, and scientific implications. The federal government made school counseling a priority, The National Defense Education Act was passed, providing funding for the formalized training of school counselors (Baker, 2001). School counselors during this time were found primarily at the middle and senior high school level. Their purpose was to administer guidance and to deal with academic and career issues of students in order to bolster educational achievement in the United States (Gyspers, 2001). Contemporary career counseling is rooted in this era.

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School enrollment declined in the early 1970s, affecting how school counselors performed their duties. Fear of job attrition and federal program cuts motivated many school counselors to perform a host of non-counseling and administrative tasks. They performed disciplinary and recess duty, clerical work, and scheduling to ensure sustained employment as well as their professional livelihood (Lambie & Williamson, 2004). Slightly more than a decade ago, Brott and Myers (1999) found that some school counselors reported that they still performed administrative and clerical duties similar to those of their school counseling predecessors.

The late 1970s and 1980s brought about a movement for more comprehensive, developmental guidance and counseling services (Gyspers, 2001). Baker (2001) suggested that the push was prompted by the need for increased accountability and program evaluation. In theory, school counselors were breaking away from the administrative, academic, and career types of tasks for which they had previously been responsible. A new, more clinical role began to evolve (Galassi & Akos, 2004).

Professional Identity of the School Counselor

Controversies surrounding the defining cornerstone of school counseling continue to fuel the historical ambiguity and have splintered the profession from the top down. Schmidt and Ciechalski (2001) asserted that the lack of a distinct job description or focused professional organizations, a lack of uniform training standards, and varying levels of state and local support make it difficult to sustain a consistent professional identity. The question has become: Who are school counselors and what do they do? Two divergent identities have developed and have been maintained by the associations that support them. School counselors either view themselves as counselors working in the school setting or as educators using counseling skills (Paisley, Ziomek-Daigle, Getch, & Bailey, 2007). For example, Webber (2004) conducted a study with

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New Jersey school counselors and found that nearly three fourths of those surveyed viewed themselves as counselors working in a school setting, as opposed to 20% who viewed themselves as primarily educators.

Each of these school counselor identities is recognized and supported by professional counseling organizations. ASCA has taken the position that the role of the school counselor is that of an educator who uses counseling skills (ASCA, 2001). ASCA's stance is that education is often seen as a hallmark of later success and school counselors are in the unique position of affecting academic outcomes and career aspirations for most of the students with whom they work (Paisley, et. al, 2007). Further, Education Trust (2006) indicated that disadvantaged and minority students are often overlooked and go to under- funded states and districts making it difficult for them to succeed, and the Trust have called on school counselors to be the voice of advocacy, broadening the definition of their role.

Paisley, Ziomek-Daigle, Getch, and Bailey (2007) criticized the educator-first position, stating that school counselors are often the only access to mental health and other responsive services that some children have. Bauer, Ingersoll, and Burns (2004) cited the recent rises in school violence and psychopathology as reasons for school counselors to take a counselor-first position. Due to an increase in need and limited community resources, school counselors are charged with being skilled and accessible as clinicians (Bauer, Ingersoll, & Burns, 2004). ACA taken the position that the profession of school counseling is a specialty dealing with a specific population occurring in a unique setting (Brown & Krauss, 2003).

Most counselor training programs seem to have taken a position similar to that of ACA. Curriculum, instruction, and clinical experiences tend to be more in line with a mental health counseling model favored by ACA. Graduate programs that are accredited by the Counsel for

Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) have variability in course content, delivery personnel, and clinical training of school counselors (CACREP, 2009; Gale & Austin, 2003), and not every school counselor training program is CACREP-accredited. As such, no two programs train school counselors in the same way.   While current CACREP standards reflect the push for knowledge, skill, and practice competencies necessary for school counselors to be effective, universities control how education and training programs are implemented (CACREP, 2001; Wilkerson & Eschbach, 2009). Moreover, Bradley and Fiorini (1999) indicated that practicum and internship experiences for school counselors are not consistent, creating diverse experiences and making it difficult to ensure that all master's level school counselors have the same competencies.

School Counseling Credentials

Several issues that have arisen with regard to advanced credentialing have had an impact on the professional identity of the school counselor. The National Board of Certified School Counselors promotes the idea that school counselors are counselors first, whereas the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards views the role of the school counselor as primarily that of educator (NBCC, 2009; NBPTS, 2009; Webber & Mascari, 2006). Requirements to obtain the two certifications differ greatly. The NBCC (2009) requires a master's degree in counseling, supervised work experience in school counseling, and two distinct tests, one of which gauges the school counselor's knowledge of general core counseling information while the other assesses knowledge related to the specialty of school counseling. The NBPTS (2009) does not require that school counselors have a master's degree, but requires the completion of a lengthy portfolio that demonstrates the individual school counselor's proficiency as an educator.

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Further, each state also has its own requirements for certification or licensure as a school

counselor (ASCA, 2001).

The American School Counselor Association National Model

Further, several differences seem to exist between what school counselors report doing

and the best practices set forth in the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2003; Brott & Myers;

Henderson et. al, 2000). Theoretically, the model serves as a blueprint for comprehensive school

counseling and guidance services. It delineates an almost prescriptive approach to the delivery

of school counseling with a built-in system of checks and balances for increased accountability.

According to Sabella (2006), the intention was to allow school counselors to practice with

greater intention and increased clarity. Adherence to the model largely depends on its appeal and

attractiveness at the state, district, or school level (House & Hayes, 2002). As Beesley (2004)

pointed out, comprehensive guidance programs require a collaborative effort to be successful,

and many school counselors bear the responsibility alone.

ASCA compiled a list of appropriate and inappropriate school counseling related tasks,

yet compliance with these standards largely depends on administrative and school level support,

as well as the strength of the individual counselor's professional identity (ASCA, 2003; House &

Hayes, 2002). Henderson et al. (2007) reported that school counselors felt more connected to the

profession when they were able to work individually with students, perform appropriate tasks,

and participate in professional development and peer related activities. The more distant school

counselors become from traditional counseling roles, the more their role seems to become

blurred (Webber & Mascari, 2006). Webber (2004) also pointed out that they begin to mimic

school administrators and teachers by performing tasks that are not related to counseling such as

recess duty, testing, disciplinary measures, scheduling, and other clerical work.

School Counseling Requirements by State

According to ASCA (2009), requirements to practice school counseling vary by state. For the purpose of this study, only the requirements in Colorado, Florida, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Washington were considered. Colorado requires a bachelor's degree from an accepted institution and a master's degree or higher in school counseling and guidance from an accredited institution of higher education. Experience requirements include a minimum of 100 clock hours of practicum and a 600-clock hour internship, supervised by a licensed school counselor, in a school setting, and at the appropriate grade level(s) for the endorsement being sought. Further, the individual must pass the PLACE Examination: School Counseling and Guidance Specialty Assessment. Applicants from out of state must provide 3 years of documented full-time school counseling experience. All school counselors are required to pass a criminal background check (ASCA, 2009).

Florida has two options that lead to school counselor certification. The first option requires the individual to have a master's or higher degree with a graduate major in guidance and counseling or counselor education which includes three semester hours in a supervised counseling practicum in an elementary or secondary school. The second option requires a master's or higher degree with thirty (30) semester hours of graduate credit in guidance and counseling to include specific areas related to principles, philosophy, organization and administration of guidance, student appraisal, career development, human development, counseling theories and individual counseling techniques, group counseling and guidance techniques, consultation skills, legal and ethical issues, specialized counseling techniques for use with elementary or secondary level, and supervised counseling practicum in an elementary or secondary school. No experience is required with either option. School counselors must

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successfully pass the College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST); Subject Test in School Guidance and Counseling. Further, Florida has reciprocity with other states. All school counselors are required to pass a criminal background check (ASCA, 2009).

Minnesota also has two certification options. The first option requires that the school counselor hold a master's degree or the equivalent from a college or university that is regionally accredited and show verification of completing a Board of Teaching preparation program leading to the licensure of school counselors.   The second option requires that the school counselor complete a CACREP- accredited preparation program in school counseling. To be a school counselor, an individual must have completed a 400 hour practicum under the supervision of counselor educators from an approved college guidance and counseling program, but no qualifying examination is required.   The state does not offer reciprocity with other states. Further, school counselors must pass a national and state fingerprint check (ASCA, 2009).

The requirements in Pennsylvania are slightly different from those of other states. Much like Minnesota, the state requires completion of an approved program in school counseling. Further, the school counselor must complete a supervised practicum before completing the field experience and a minimum of an additional 300 clock hours of internship/supervised field experiences that includes a minimum of 70 hours to 75 hours of direct service with individual and group clients. School counselors must also pass the Praxis Mathematics, Praxis Reading, Praxis Writing, and Praxis II: School Guidance and Counseling. School counselors must successful pass a background check and be recommended for certification by the institution of record. Minnesota does not have reciprocity, but it does have agreements with other states (ASCA, 2009).

Washington requires that the school counselor complete all requirements for the master's degree with a major in counseling, but does not have experience prerequisites. Further, the state stipulates successful completion of a comprehensive examination that could include the departmental test of a regionally accredited institution of higher education, or the National Counselor Examination (NCE) of the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC). The state offers reciprocity with other states. As with most states, Washington requires that all school counselors pass a background check (ASCA, 2009).

School Counseling at the Elementary, Middle, and High School Levels

Research indicates that distinct differences exist between elementary, middle, and high school counselors and their roles. Some of the differences might be due, in part, to their professional origins. Since its inception, school counseling has been rooted in a vocational focus, which tends to be more in line with middle and high school counseling. Elementary school counseling, on the other hand, tends to be more developmental in nature (Hardesty & Dillard, 1994). High school counselors consistently perform more non-counseling related tasks and have less direct contact with students and their families than elementary school counselors (Nelson, Robles-Pina, & Nichter, 2007; Scarborough, 2005; Sink, 2005).

Administrative and Teacher Perceptions of School Counseling

Some writers have argued that school personnel view the role of the school counselor as ancillary, at best (e.g., Johnson, 2000). In the age of school accountability and increased performance pressures, many administrators ask school counselors to perform tasks that are driven by overall school success as opposed to an individual student's success. Many state legislatures have reduced or eliminated the budget for school counseling based on lack of documented practice effectiveness (Rhyne-Winkler & Wooten, 1996). Further underscoring this

trend, Whiston and Sexton (1998) stated that school counselors are charged with the task of becoming critical consumers of trend data in counseling. They must decipher what activities are supported by research and replicate success at their individual sites.

The scope of school counseling is largely dependent on the perceptions of stakeholders. At the school level, some teachers and administrators perceive the role of the school counselor as administrative in nature and believe that this enhances student achievement (Clark & Amatea, 2004). In contrast, Perkins (2006) pointed out that there is a trend in the educational community, including school counselors, to change the historical image of educators that school counselors have enjoyed. These perceptions may influence the way parents and students view the role of the school counselor. For example, Burnham and Jackson (2000) found that a large number of school counselors reported doing non-counseling related duties, such as scheduling and registration, as part of their expected job responsibilities. School counselors often conform to the expectations of the principal and the organizational culture of their school setting (Reiner, Colbert, & Pérusse, 2009; Scarborough & Culbreth, 2008). Zalaquett (2005) pointed out that the administrative support and direction a counselor receives at the school level ensures the overall success of development, application, and maintenance of the school counseling program.

Diverse Background of School Counselors

Some individuals who practice school counseling enter the profession having experience in teaching, school administration, or counseling outside of a school setting. Quite often, experiences are predicated by laws and policies in the area in which the school counselor practices. For instance, some states still have a teaching prerequisite to become a school counselor (Bringham & Lee, 2008; Peterson, Goodman, Keller, & McCauley, 2004; Quarto, 1999). The debate about whether or not school counselors should have teaching experience has

existed since the inception of the National Defense Education Act (Desmond, West, & Bubenzer, 2007). Though research indicates that the teacher-first position of school counseling is waning, proponents of teaching experience believe that having school-based experience enables the school counselor to better navigate the school climate (Bringham & Lee, 2008). Smith (2001) pointed out that some teachers and administrators believe that school counselors are more effective in delivering student and staff related activities when they have prior teaching experience.

Others believe the teacher-first position causes some dissonance in the school counselor. Counselors are required to alter their perspectives and adjust to unfamiliar work environments, which can prove to be challenging (Peterson, Goodman, Keller, & McCauley, 2004). According to Bringham and Lee (2008) and Smith (2001), some educators and a majority of counselor educators believe that prior teaching experience is not a necessary component to becoming an effective school counselor. Though beginning school counselors with no previous experience are not necessarily familiar with the politics and climate of their school, they report that they are eager to learn and they seemed to be an asset to their environments (Peterson et. al, 2004).

School Counseling in Urban, Suburban, and Rural Areas

School counselors who work in urban, suburban, and rural areas all face challenges. According to Hines (2002), there are substantial differences between rural school counselors and their urban and suburban school counselor counterparts. Quite often, rural school counselors have less access to financial and social capital. Further, they often assume sole responsibility for implementing guidance and support services to their students (Hines, 2002). As a result, the rural school counselor may feel a sense of isolation and ineffectiveness (Morrissette, 2000). While urban school counselors point to low parental and academic functioning as the biggest

barriers to school counseling, Holcomb-McCoy and Mitchell (2005) indicated that urban school counselors felt like they were generally effective and enjoyed their jobs.

School Counseling and Association Membership/Affiliation

Not all school counselors seek membership in professional organizations. The increased price of professional membership is one plausible reason (Bauman, 2008). However, the cost of non-membership can be quite high. Bauman (2008) asserted that active participation in professional organizations drives both policy and ethics codes through voting privileges. According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (2010), there were nearly 275,000 employed school counselors in 2008, yet only about 11% of school counselors were members of ASCA in 2005 (ASCA, 2009). It appears that the vast majority of school counselors may not be influencing the identity of the profession through professional membership.

Though Zalaquett (2005) posited that the role of the school counselor is predicated on responsibilities to the student population, the school administration, and society as a whole, little research exists on how individual work environments affect the professional identity of school counselors (Brott & Myers, 1999). Sutton and Fall (1995) indicated that there was a direct correlation between the school's organizational context and the overall success of the counseling program. Further, Beesley (2004) stated that school counseling has been directly impacted by fluctuating collective and societal changes. A better understanding of the identity of school counselors might be achieved if the relationship between the individual and the school community were explored. According to Brott and Myers (1999), identifying school counselors' sense of collective identity might provide insight into their attitudes and beliefs about their profession.

Identity

The concept of identity is fluid, at best (Stets & Burke, 2000; Wong, 2002). In the past few centuries, many philosophical, developmental, cultural, and social theories have been developed in an attempt to qualify what constitutes identity. Easthope (2009) postulated that the evolution of identity often is characterized by historical and global changes affecting not only the individual, but society as well. Some writers have postulated that individual identity and collective/social identity are somewhat mutually exclusive concepts (Potmes, Spears, Lee, & Novak, 2005). More recently, researchers have come to believe that identity is defined not only as the way people think about themselves, but also in terms of their value or place in their social environment (Easthope, 2005; Nario-Redmond, Biernat, Eidelman, & Palenske, 2004). Further, individuals are continuously redefining and constructing their identity and this process of examination and change often meets with struggle and resistance from others (Wong, 2002).

Identity, then, can be defined as heterogeneous in nature, possessing both personal and social/collective qualities. Wong (2002) suggested that individuals are positioned along many axes such as gender, class, race/ethnicity, sexuality, profession, socioeconomic status, and social hierarchies. Further, individuals experience intentionality in determining their identity which is linked to connections in the way they think, feel, and behave (Smith, Murphy, & Coats, 1999). Identity is derived from a multitude of competing constructs. As such, no consensus exists in research with regard to a definition of identity.

Professional Identity

Sweeney (1995) postulated that the professional identity of any discipline is marked by the title, role, and intention of the profession, and maintains stability by and of its unified membership. Further, Pistole and Roberts (2002) suggested that professional identity depends on

professionals having a deep understanding of the field in which they work, as well as an appreciation for its traditions. They stated that professional identity provides a stable frame of reference that allows for a development of a sense of belonging and uniqueness. According to these assumptions, the professional identity of counseling should be strong and stable, providing the foundation by which all counselors work. A review of the literature, however, suggests that the professional identity of the counselor has been difficult to achieve and maintain (ASCA, 2005; Brown & Krauss, 2003). By its very nature, counseling is a soft science, drawn from a vast body of theory and knowledge. According to Henderson, Cook, Libby, and Zambrano (2007), professional identity is a learned response, often judged and examined for personal fit. Counselors have different philosophies and tendencies, as well as different modes of service delivery (Pistole & Roberts, 2002). Also, counseling was for a long time closely related to or overlapping with other mental health disciplines (Myers, Sweeney, & White, 2002). The professional identity boundaries between counseling, social work, and psychology remain somewhat diffuse.

In general, however, all professions, including counseling, are identified and maintained by adherence to certain criteria. Gale and Austin (2003) indicated that bona fide professions all have affiliated professional organizations, ethical standards or a code of ethics, and an accrediting and sanctioning body that deals with preparation, credentialing, and licensure. Of equal importance is the notion of pride in one's profession. Remley and Herlihy (2010) stated that pride is an internally derived mechanism that inspires counselors to perform at their best and advocate for the profession. Though the strength of professional identity largely depends on commitment to and advocacy for these constructs, research suggests that differences in training

programs, opposing viewpoints of umbrella organizations, and specializations often are barriers to a unified identity (Yu, Lee, & Lee, 2002).

The nature and complexity of what counselors are charged with accomplishing is constantly evolving in response to societal changes (Yu, Lee, &Lee, 2007). To meet the call for change and increased competency, counselors may be asked to abandon the comfort of their assumed professional identity. Butler and Constantine (2005) indicated that the way in which counselors perceive their profession (their collective self-esteem) might influence the role ambiguity that counselors experience, cause professional conflict, and create incongruence in the delivery of services.

Myers, Sweeney, and White (2002) believe that the lack of professional identity in counseling is due, in part, to specialization. Counseling is considered a profession with many specialties. Research indicates that differences in how counselors are trained, conflicting codes of ethics, diffusion of professional organizations, specialization, and inability to distinguish the profession from other mental health fields have created a lack of identity within the counseling profession (Gale & Austin, 2003; Pistole & Roberts, 2002). Further, individual counseling specialties lack their own unified identities, complicating counseling professional identity in general (Myers, Sweeney, & White, 2002). School counseling is one such specialty. Because no unified sense of identity exists within the counseling profession as a whole, it is conceivable that some level of identity ambiguity might exist within the specialty of school counseling.

A review of the literature in the counseling discipline suggests that professional identity is important in promulgating the profession (Agresta, 2004; Brott & Myers, 1999; Calley & Hawley, 2008; Feit & Lloyd, 1990; Gale & Austin, 2003 Pistole & Roberts, 2002; Stets & Burke, 2000; Webber, 2004; Wong, 2002). Professional identity is necessary, as it serves as the

foundation and rationale by which a profession's members operate. Gale and Austin (2003) pointed out that counseling is defined and maintained by the same standards as any other profession. Counselors have failed, however, to distinguish themselves from other professions. Drury (1984) stated that counselors have allowed others to define their role and that they spend a great deal of their time doing tasks other than those they are trained to do. Some researchers have suggested that school counselors hold dissenting opinions on their roles, either viewing themselves as educators or mental health practitioners (Paisley et al., 2007; Webber, 2004).

Previous research rarely has taken into account the perspective of the school counselor regarding the concept of professional identity, nor have school counselors been effective in directing the course of the profession (Johnson, 2000; Webber & Mascari 2006). Further, Mascari (2005) pointed out that, despite tremendous strides in developing a unified identity, the focus of school counselors is largely dependent on the systems in which they find themselves. Paisley and Borders (1995) noted that proponents of counseling school reform and educational leaders rarely include school counselors in the process of deciding the fate of the profession.

School counselors are at the behest of those who delineate and fund their positions. As such, school counselors are acutely aware of the influence that others play in their success, and often perform in accordance with those external expectations (Zalaquett, 2005). Performance of non-counseling related tasks has been shown to significantly influence the professional commitment and sense of identity of school counselors (Baggerly & Osborn, 2005; Butler & Constantine, 2006). Results of a study by Amatea and Clark (2005) indicated that school counselors were not proactive in reshaping their role. Further, Webber (2004) noted that part of the struggle is that counselors must reconcile a multitude of expectations from a variety of stakeholders. To some extent, the inconsistency with respect to professional identity may have

developed because school counselors are practicing outside the scope of their training and competency (Drury, 1984).

Social Identity Theory

Humans are social beings by their very nature. People are born into a structured societal macrocosm (Abrams & Hogg, 1998). As such, a person's social interactions and social group have been shown to be extremely important (Bornewasser & Bober, 1987). Individuals tend to view themselves, in part, in terms of their social status (Dietz-Uhler & Murrell, 1998). Because individuals belong to multiple social categories, it is conceivable that external social influences may affect an individual's sense of self-identity (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995). Social psychologists have researched this phenomenon for decades and have developed several theories to explain the role of socialization on self-identification. One such theory is social identity theory (SIT). This theory was developed by Tajfel and Turner in 1979 and postulates that identity is, in part, derived from group membership (Ashford & Mael, 1989; Cameron, 2004; Kalkoff & Barnum, 2000; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992, Tafjel & Turner, 1978).

Social identity theory provides a social framework for the theoretical constructs of self-definition and identification (Ashford & Mael, 1989; Cameron, 2004; Kalkoff & Barnum, 2000; Tafjel, 1978). According to Tajfel (1978), people tend to classify themselves and others within the context of social categories and relational positions. A person identifies with attributes of a particular group and becomes emotionally, behaviorally, and cognitively involved (Chattopadhyay, Tluchowska, & George, 2004). These groups might include professional or organizational membership, religious affiliation, and gender or ethnic group membership (Abrams & Hogg, 1988; Ashford & Mael, 1989; Brown & Capozza, 2000; Kalkoff & Barnum, 2000; Tafjel & Turner, 1986).

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From this perspective, individuals may view themselves as belonging to several groups to varying degrees with respect to the social environment and may draw positive distinctiveness from such membership (Dietz-Uhler & Murrell, 1998; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Thus, self-identification is derived from that sense of self-inclusive belonging to specific social groups. Social identity theory operates on the following three assumptions: (1) people attempt to promote their personal esteem, (2) a person's identity largely depends on his or her group memberships, and (3) people attempt to maintain their identity by differentiating themselves from members of relevant groups (Van Dick, Wagner, Stellmacher, Christ, & Tissington, 2005).

Components of Social Identity theory

According to social identity theory, self-identity can be divided into three contextual components. Tajfel (1978) postulated that identity occurs as a result of cognitive centrality, in-group affect, and in-group ties. The notion of cognitive centrality deals with the psychological meaning an individual attaches to membership in a particular group (Cameron, 2004). This is likened to how often group membership "comes to mind" and the importance of membership in self-definition (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). Further, the concept seeks to explain how positively or negatively salient group membership is. Group desirability is affected by the attributes an individual assigns to it. Stets and Burke (2000) pointed out that social stereotyping and group homogeneity are rooted in cognitive centrality. To some degree, behavior becomes socially structured and ordered in an attempt to enhance the self (McDermott & Roth, 1978).

In-group affect refers to the evaluative or emotional dimension of belongingness (Stets & Burke, 2000). For example, a school counselor may assign specific emotions to membership such as feeling "glad" or "unhappy" to be a part of the school counseling profession. Hogg and

Hardie (1992) indicated that the affective component creates strong alignment and attraction to the group, regardless of whether the group is considered high status.

Cameron (2004) indicated that in-group ties are best described as the extent to which an individual feels aligned with or accepted by the group. Stets and Burke (2000) posited that an individual's behavior is predicated and normed based on these basic interactional assumptions; that is, an individual's overt actions become prototypical of the representative group. Individuals perform self-perceived normative and non-normative actions in an attempt to conform to the existing social system (Boen &Vanbeselaere, 2001). In-group ties add to group cohesion (Cameron, 2004).

Group Membership and Belongingness

A group's perception of an individual's role is based on the motives, competencies, interactions, and beliefs of the larger group (Amatea & Clark, 2005). Membership in a particular group is driven by the individual's need to be in agreement with the perceived in-group (Boen &Vanbeselaere, 2001; Kalkoff & Barnum, 2000). Once individuals feel aligned with a particular group, they may derive esteem from that group and have a better understanding of their place in the social structure (Kalkoff & Barnum, 2000). Further, identity is the knowledge and awareness that an individual has about belonging to a specific category or group (Stets & Burke, 2000).

According to Social Identity Theory, some categories or groups to which individuals belong are more or less prestigious or powerful than others (Abrams & Hogg, 1998). For instance, a school counselor may gravitate more to the administration group on campus than to the teacher group. Based on this premise, the school counselor may derive a sense of purpose from that social category to which he or she ascribes and may feel a sense of belonging. As a

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result, Abrams and Hogg (1998) indicated that individuals become emotionally connected or feel connected to their membership.

Social Identity and Social Influence

Social identity is based on being part of the group, perceiving one's group membership as important, and having the same basic beliefs and alignments as the group (Stets & Burke, 2000). To some degree, then, an individual's sense of belonging and meaning can be socially influenced. The saliency of the influence depends largely on how the individual feels about the group (Bagozzi & Lee, 2002). Platow, Mills and Morrison (2000) believe that individuals are most influenced by others with whom they can identify in their reference group. This is due, in part, to an individual's motivation to maintain a positive sense of self (Roccas, 2002).

According to social identity theory, role uncertainty or group disagreement may occur as a result of social influence (Kalkhoff & Barnum, 2000). In theory, individuals modify their behaviors and attitudes based on the norms of the group (White, Smith, Terry, Greenslade, & McKimmie, 2009). In order to keep collective identity intact individuals must reconcile perceived influence and risk.

Sometimes people may place so much importance on group identity that they develop difficulty and ambiguity when a real or perceived risk is present (Dietz-Uhler & Murrell, 1998). The individuals may feel bad about themselves. In response, they may use a variety of tactics in order to maintain identity status and deal with self-perceived threats to identity. Regardless of success or failure of threats to identity, individuals seek to enhance their self-esteem. Dietz-Uhler and Murrell (1998) indicated that people who have a high collective group identity tended to be more direct in strategies to maintain their sense of self, whereas those with lower collective group identity used more indirect tactics to maintain esteem. Identity management happens on

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both an individual and collective scale and depends on stability and permeability of the group (Boen & Vanbeselaere, 2001).

According to Roccas (2002), an individual might deal with risks by exhibiting individual social mobility, collective social creativity, or collective social competition. Social mobility occurs when a person changes groups to a more attractive group in an effort to maintain his or her identity. For instance, a school counselor who has a more clinical approach may feel threatened in a work environment where a more administrative approach is deemed to hold higher status. He or she may be motivated to adopt a more administrative approach in an effort to maintain professional identity, achieve a higher status, and increase self-esteem (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992).

Social creativity occurs when an individual draws esteem from making comparisons to less desirable groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). For example, this strategy might exist for school counselors as they compare themselves to teachers or discipline administrators. The school counselor may begin to emulate the attitudes and behavior of the comparison group in an effort to achieve belongingness.

Social competition occurs when an individual or group of individuals directly competes with another socially desirable group in an effort to maintain a particular status (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Social competition allows a particular group to have collective capability. Collectively, school counselors may feel compelled to compete with other school-based mental health providers or educators using status-relevant similarities and qualities. This approach requires group cohesion and high status and esteem because of the potential risk of loss of position in the established social hierarchy (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992).

Professional groups may use the tenets of social identity theory to make sense of the environment in which they work. Traditionally, a large majority of individuals tend to be motivated to align with the perceived high status organizational group, or in-group (Chattopadhyay, Tluchowska, & George, 2004). Social identity theory, then, provides individuals the ability to define themselves in terms of others. For the purposes of this study, Social Identity Theory provides the framework for assessing collective/social identity.

Collective Self-esteem/Social Identity

European social psychologists have long theorized that social identity plays a valuable role in identity development. Some believe that social identity refers to the appeal, attractiveness, and mannerisms that an individual displays in relation to others. Social psychologists, like Tajfel and Turner, have underscored the importance of membership to an individual's self-concept (Hogg & Hardie, 1992). Similar to social identity is the Americanized term, collective identity (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992).

From Luhtanen and Crocker's (1992) empirical work on social/collective identity, researchers derived the concept of collective self-esteem. Collective self-esteem denotes those aspects of identity that are related to membership in social groups and the respective value that one places on one's membership (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). Research has indicated that self-esteem is an important mediator in maintaining, protecting, and promoting identity (Taylor & Brown, 1988). Much of the evaluation of self-esteem, however, has been relegated to a more individualistic domain (Cameron, 2004).

Collective self-esteem, on the other hand, allows for a multidimensional view of identity. Attributes include membership esteem, private collective self-esteem, public collective self-esteem, and identity. Membership esteem refers to the individual's perception that his or her

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group membership is worthy (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). According to Luhtanen and Crocker

(1992), membership esteem is based on subjective judgments of value.   Private collective self-

esteem deals with the individual's subjective assessment of the group as a whole. Public self-

esteem refers to an individual's perceptions about how others view the group. Identity refers to

the level of importance to self concept that an individual places on a group. Group membership

is seen as a direct reflection of who the individual is.

Collective Self-esteem and the Counseling Profession

Because the professional identity of the school counselor is often subject to the external

interpretations and pressure of others, it may be useful to examine the extent to which collective

self-esteem affects the profession of counseling. By definition, collective self-esteem is

paramount in assisting individuals to make sense of the environment in which they work

(Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). Butler and Constantine (2006) indicated that individuals who

place value on belongingness and possess a strong sense of group identification may display

interdependence with the group. Collective self-esteem is important to the counseling profession

and has implications for professional identity. Several researchers have found that collective

self-esteem has played a role in issues vital to the counseling profession, such as school

counselor burnout, the ability of school counselor-trainees ability to conceptualize cases, and

counselor job dissatisfaction and job performance (Butler & Constantine, 2005; Butler &

Constantine, 2006; Yu, Lee, & Lee, 2007).

Butler and Constantine (2005) conducted a quantitative study that investigated the

relationship between the four dimensions of collective self-esteem (public collective esteem,

private collective esteem, membership esteem, and identity) and three dimensions of burnout

(emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and feelings of personal accomplishment). The

researchers invited 1000 randomly selected members of AS Cato participate in the study; 532

people participated.

Respondents were asked to complete a demographic questionnaire, the *Collective Self*

Esteem Scale (CSES), and the *Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey* (MBI-ES). The

researchers conducted a multivariate multiple regression analysis. The predictor variables

consisted of the four subscales of the CSES (public collective esteem, private collective esteem,

membership esteem, and identity). The criterion variables were the three subscales of the MBI-

ES (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and feelings of personal accomplishment).

Analysis indicated that the proportion of variance in the MBI-ES subscales accounted for by the

four subscales of the CSES was significant (Butler & Constantine, 2005).

Further univariate analysis revealed that higher private collective esteem was associated

with greater feelings of personal accomplishment. There was also a significant relationship

between higher public collective self-esteem and lower emotional exhaustion, as well as higher

feelings of personal accomplishment. In addition, there was a statistically significant

relationship between higher identity collective self-esteem and lower feelings of

depersonalization, and higher feelings of personal accomplishment (Butler & Constantine, 2005).

According to Butler and Constantine (2005), the study revealed small but significant

results, and did not account for the total variance in burnout. Of significance is the relationship

between public collective self-esteem and feelings of personal accomplishment. That is, the

more positively others perceive the reference group, in this case school counselors, the higher

they rated their self-competence. Further, there was a relationship between higher identity

collective self-esteem and lower depersonalization and increased feelings of personal

accomplishment. School counselors in the study may have viewed their social group

memberships (i.e. their professional membership) as an important part of their personal and professional identity (Butler & Constantine, 2005).

As the profession of school counseling continues to evolve, school counselors may become increasingly susceptible to role confusion and ambiguity. In one quantitative study, Butler and Constantine (2006) examined the extent to which school counselor interns reported increased collective self-esteem(how positive they felt about being a school counselor) and their case conceptualization ability (how they operationalized a student's mental health concern) after participating in a web-based supervision group. Forty eight participants were equally divided into a treatment group (those who volunteered to receive web-based supervision) and the comparison group (those who did not receive web-based supervision).

After informed consent was obtained, both groups were given a pretest, which included a demographic questionnaire, (including sex, age, race/ethnicity, and whether they had any prior counseling experience) the *Collective Self-esteem Scale* (including public collective esteem, private collective esteem, membership collective esteem, and identity collective esteem subscales), and a case conceptualization ability exercise that was coded by raters (Butler & Constantine, 2006). Each treatment group participant met one hour per week for twelve weeks for web-based supervision in addition to their weekly individual supervision. Upon completion of the twelve weeks, a posttest using the same instruments was conducted.

A series of statistical tests were performed. According to Butler and Constantine (2006), posttest group differences were analyzed using a multivariate analysis of variance (MANCOVA) yielding significant results at $p<.001$. Further, a univariate analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) revealed that school counselor trainees who were in the treatment group reported having higher

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collective self-esteem than the participants in the comparison group. The treatment group scored

significantly higher in conceptualization and treatment scores (Butler & Constantine, 2006).

Though the study is limited because of its small sample size, it does have some practical

applications related to school counseling (Butler & Constantine, 2006).The results indicate that

web-based supervision might increase a sense of professional community among school

counselors who may be isolated from other members of the profession. According to Butler and

Constantine (2006), a positive sense of collective esteem may play a vital role in professional

identity development.

Further underscoring the importance of collective self-esteem in counseling, Yu, Lee, and

Lee (2007) performed a study to determine whether or not collective self-esteem would mediate

the relationship between a counselor's job satisfaction and client relationships. The 132

participants were professional counselors. Participants were asked to complete the *Collective*

Self-esteem Scale (consisting of the public collective esteem, private collective esteem,

membership collective esteem, and identity collective esteem subscales), an adaptation of the

scale used in the National Center for education Statistics' National education Longitudinal Study

of 1988, and the Devaluing subscale of the *Counselor Burnout Inventory* (Yu, Lee, & Lee,

2007).

A three-step analysis test was performed. According to Yu, Lee, and Lee (2007), the

criterion variable (client relationships) was regressed, the mediators (CSES subscales) were

regressed on the predictor variable (job satisfaction), and the criterion variable was regressed on

the predictor variable (job satisfaction), and the mediators (CSES subscales) were regressed.

Client relationships regressed onto job satisfaction was significant. Multivariate regression of job

satisfaction on the mediators (public collective esteem, private collective esteem, membership

collective esteem, and identity collective esteem subscales) was significant. Private collective self-esteem was predicted by job satisfaction. A total mediated effect of .273 was found, with private collective self-esteem significantly mediating the relationship between job satisfaction and client relationships (Yu, Lee, & Lee, 2007).

According to Yu, Lee, and Lee (2007) the results of this study indicate that having a positive evaluation of their social group (the counseling profession) mediates the quality of counselors' work and their job satisfaction. Further, the researchers contended that the results point to participants having a relatively stable sense of the counseling profession. That is, increased sense of collective self-esteem, specifically private collective self esteem, assisted counselors in defining their distinct role (Yu, Lee, & Lee, 2007).

Conclusions

School counselors have struggled to answer the most basic question: "Who are we?"

School counselors view themselves as either educators or mental health practitioners. To date, no research has been conducted to determine the relationship, if any, between these divergent professional identities and the collective self-esteem/social identity (belongingness to the profession) of school counselors.

A unified, definitive professional school counseling identity is necessary for the fitness, promotion, and longevity of the profession. Counselors must be able to articulate the uniqueness of the profession in such a way that they set themselves apart from other professions (Calley & Hawley, 2008). The strength of the school counseling profession depends on its members' ability to carry out the demands of their jobs professionally, as well as make significant contributions to the field (Brott & Myers, 1999; Johnson, 2000; Myers, Sweeney, & White,

2002). The presence of a strong and definitive professional identity is generally marked by how favorable members feel about the profession (collective self-esteem), professional pride, and affiliation (Bauman, 2008; Butler & Constantine, 2005; Butler & Constantine, 2006; Remley & Herlihy, 2010; Yu, Lee, &, Lee, 2007). No previous research study has examined the relationship between the four vital components of professional identity and the collective self-esteem of the school counselor.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the methodology that was used in this study is presented. Subsections included are: purpose of the study, description of the sample, variables that were studied, the general and specific research questions and hypotheses, selection criteria for participants, instrumentation, procedures, the data collection plan, and the methods of data analysis.

Purpose of this Study

Although a large body of research exists on the professional identity of the school counselor, little research has been conducted on the influence of social identity and its relationship to professional identity. From a social identity theory perspective (Tajfel, 1978), school counselors may attempt to use group membership to promote their personal esteem, shape their identity through group membership, and maintain their identity by differentiating themselves from other relevant groups (Van Dick et al., 2005). This study sought to determine the relationship between social/collective identity and the professional identity of the school counselor. Professional identity was explored in terms of the four criteria identified in the literature of pride, affiliation, a guiding ethical standard, and credentialing. Social identity was used synonymously with collective self-esteem. An organizational flow of the general concept of identity and its components is shown in Figure 1.

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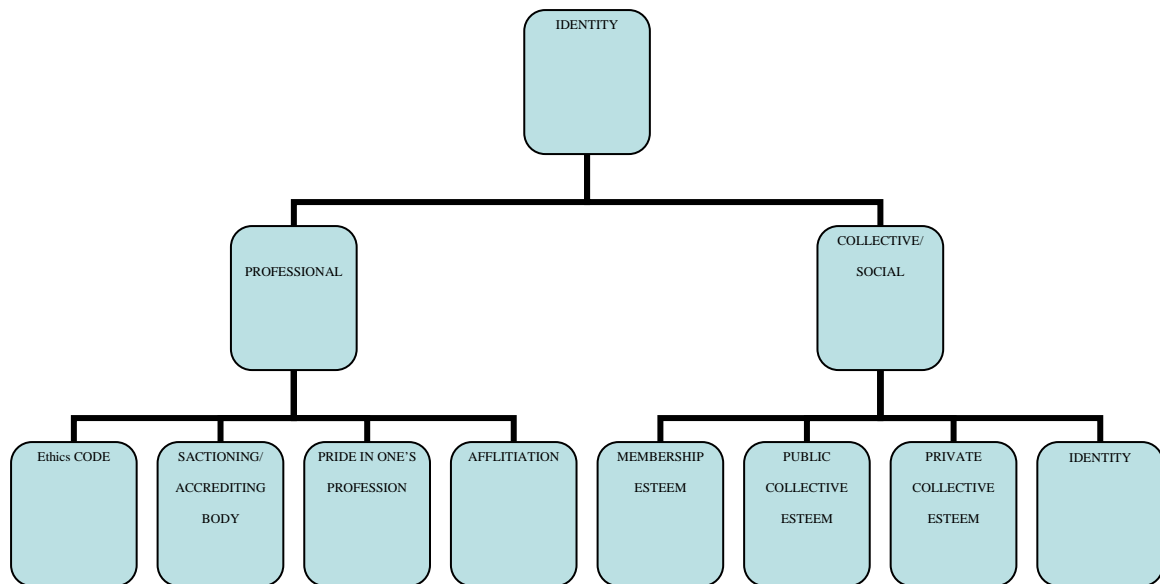
Figure1-Organizational Flow of Identity

Participants

Participants in this study were practicing school counselors who held certifications or
licenses to practice school counseling in the respective states in which they work. To gather a
representative sample, a generic school counseling electronic mailing list was generated and
used. A three step process was used to formulate the list. Using the regional breakdown of the
Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors (ACES), five states were selected to
participate in the study. This method was used to insure that all regions were represented in the
study. States included in the study were Washington, Colorado, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and
Florida.   Twenty-four school districts were selected to participate from each of the five selected
states. Web-based school district information was then utilized to compile a list of practicing
school counselors.

Independent Variables and Dependent Variables

Independent Variables

Two groups of independent variables were examined in this study:

Background Variables

This group of variables included years of experience as a school counselor, current school counseling level, primary background experience, and current geographical area of school counseling practice. The variables were defined as:

1. Years of experience: Years of experience referred to the number of years participants have been practicing as school counselors.

2. Years of experience in current school: Years of experience in current school referred to the number of years participants have been practicing as a school counselor in the current school.

3. Level: Level referred to the school setting in which participants work (elementary school, middle school, or high school).

4. Primary background experience: Primary background experience referred to the capacity in which the school counselor has spent a majority of his or her professional time. Experience can be K-12 teaching on non-teaching.

5. Area of practice: Area of practice was defined the geographic area in which the participant practices school counseling (rural, urban, and suburban).

Professional Identity Variables

All professions, including counseling, are identified and reinforced by certain criteria. Affiliated professional organizations, ethical standards or a code of ethics, an accrediting and sanctioning body that deals with preparation, credentialing, licensure, and pride in one's profession are

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necessary to be considered a bona fide profession (Gale & Austin, 2003; Remley & Herlihy, 2010). This group of variables included pride, professional affiliation, primary ethical code, credentialing, and role definition. These variables were defined as:

1. <u>Affiliation</u>: Affiliation referred to the extent to which participants belong to professional organizations.

 2. <u>Pride:</u> Pride referred to how proud participants are to be part of the profession.

3. <u>Primary ethical code</u>: Primary ethical code referred to the primary code of ethics the school counselor adheres to (ACA Code of Ethics, ASCA Ethical standards, or NBCC Code of Ethics).

4. <u>Credentialing</u>: Credentialing referred to all professional credentials that the participant holds (NCC, NCSC, NBST, LPC or equivalent, and/or certified/licensed in the state of practice).

5. <u>Role definition:</u> Role definition referred to whether or not participants view themselves as educators who use counseling skills or as counselors working in an educational setting.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variable was collective self-esteem. Collective self-esteem was measured using the *Collective Self-Esteem Scale*, a 16-item Likert type scale developed by Luhtanen and Crocker in 1992 and based on social identity theory.

Characteristics of the sample.

The target population for this study was 2000 school counselors who practiced in Washington, Colorado, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Florida. Two hundred ninety-eight participants (298) returned the survey, for a return rate of 14.9%. Of these returned surveys, 283 were fully completed. Because some returned surveys were missing responses to one or more survey items, the number of responses to individual survey items varies.

The majority of study participants were female (77.2%). Table 1 includes descriptive statistics for the participants' sex.

Table 1

Frequency Distribution of Participants by Sex

Sex	n	%
Female	230	79.0
Male	61	21.0
Total	291	100.0

The majority of the participants were Caucasian (83.2 %). Black/African Americans

comprised 4.4% of the respondents. Hispanics/Latinos comprised 4.4% of the study participants,

as well. Another 2.7% self-identified as mixed race/ethnicity, while 1.3% identified themselves

as Asian and 1.0% identified themselves as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.

American Indian or Alaska Natives comprised less than 1% of the sample. The descriptive

statistics for race/ethnicity are shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Frequency Distribution of Participants by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	n	%
American Indian/Alaska Native	1	.3
Asian	4	1.3
Black/African American	13	4.4
Hispanic/Latino	13	4.4
Mixed Race/Ethnicity	8	2.7
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	3	1.0

Table 2, cont.

White/Caucasian	248	83.2
Total	290	100.0

Over 40% of the participants were from Washington (20.8%) and Pennsylvania (20.8%). Florida comprised 20.1% of participants, while 18.6% self-identified as practicing in Colorado. Minnesota yielded 17.4% of participants. Table 3 contains the descriptive statistics for study participants by state.

Table 3
Frequency Distribution of Participants by State

State	n	%
Colorado	54	18.1
Florida	60	20.1
Minnesota	52	17.4
Pennsylvania	62	20.8
Washington	62	20.8
Total	290	97.3

Participants ranged in years of experience from 1 to 25 or more years. The mean number of years as a school counselor was 11.38 (SD=7.56). Descriptive statistics for the number of years of experience as a school counselor are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Frequency Distribution of Participants by Years of Experience as a School Counselor

Years	n	%
1	15	5.2
2	13	4.5
3	16	5.6
4	26	9.1
5	15	5.2
6	16	5.6
7	14	4.9
8	16	5.6
9	6	2.1
10	16	5.6
11	12	4.2
12	8	2.8
13	5	1.7
14	8	2.8
15	10	3.5
16	6	2.1
17	14	4.9
18	7	2.4

Table 4, cont.

19	4	1.4
20	15	5.2
21	5	1.7
22	6	2.1
23	5	1.7
24	6	2.1
25+	23	8.0
Total	287	100.0

Of the two hundred and eighty- four (284) respondents, participants ranged in years of experience from 1 to 25 or more years in their current school. The mean number of years experience as a school counselor in the current school was 7.54 (*SD*=6.35). Descriptive statistics for the number of years of experience as a school counselor in the current school are shown in Table 5.

Table 5
Frequency Distribution of Participants by Years of Experience as a School Counselor in their Current School

Years	n	%
1	30	10.6
2	33	11.6
3	26	9.2
4	36	12.7

Table 5, cont.

5	24	8.5
6	14	4.9
7	12	4.2
8	18	6.3
9	11	3.9
10	8	2.8
11	14	4.9
12	7	2.5
13	2	.7
14	6	2.1
15	3	1.1
16	4	1.4
17	9	3.2
19	2	.7
20	2	.7
21	6	2.1
22	5	1.8
23	4	1.4
24	3	1.1
25+	5	1.8
Total	284	100.0

A plurality of participants (42.6%) were high school counselors. Elementary school counselors comprised 27.7% of the participants. Middle school/junior high school counselors accounted for 29.8% of respondents. The descriptive statistics for the current school counseling level are shown in Table 6.

Table 6
Frequency Distribution of Participants by Current School Level

Level	n	%
Elementary (Pre-kindergarten-4th grade)	80	27.7
Middle/Junior High School (5th-8th grade)	86	29.8
High School (9th -12th grade)	123	42.6
Total	289	100.0

Over three-fourths of study participants (78.5%) indicated that the majority of their professional time has been spent in a non-teaching capacity. Descriptive statistics for professional experience are shown in Table 7.

Table 7
Frequency Distribution of Participants by Professional Experience

Experience	n	%
Teacher	62	21.5
Non-teacher	226	78.5
Total	288	100.0

A majority of the respondents in the study (51.4%) practiced in a suburban area. Urban participants accounted or 22.8%, while 25.9% of participants came from rural areas. Table 8 includes the descriptive statistics for the area in which participants currently practiced.

Table 8
Frequency Distribution of Participants by Area of Practice

Area	n	%
Urban area	66	22.8
Suburban area	149	51.4
Rural area	75	25.9
Total	290	100.0

Of the two hundred ninety- eight participants that responded, 73.8% indicated that they were affiliated with one or more national, state, and/or local counseling association. Of those, 53.7% belonged to national organizations, 52.3% belonged to state organizations, and 32.6% belonged to local organizations. Table 9 depicts the frequency of participants by their affiliation.

Table 9
Frequency of Participants by Affiliation

Affiliation	n	%
No membership	78	26.2
National	160	53.7
State	156	53.3
Local	97	32.6

Note. Because it is common for school counselors to belong to one or more association, totals for the frequencies of responses exceed the total number of respondents.

A majority of participants (82.6%) indicated that the primary code of ethics that guides their work is the ASCA Ethical Standards. The ACA *Code of Ethics* accounted for 12.7%, while

the NBCC Code of Ethics guided 4.7% of school counselors. Table 10 includes the descriptive

statistics for participants by ethical standards.

Table 10
Frequency Distribution of Participants by Ethical Standards

Code	n	%
ACA Code of Ethics	35	12.7
ASCA Ethical Standards	228	82.6
NBCC Code of Ethics	13	4.7
Total	276	100.0

Instrumentation

Participants were asked to complete a brief, 10 to 15 minute online survey powered by

Qualtrics™, Inc. The survey was comprised of demographic information, questions about

professional identity, and the *Collective Self-Esteem Scale*. The *Collective Self-Esteem Scale* has

been made available for education and research purposes by the authors with written permission

located in Appendix D.   Demographic information, including gender and race/ethnicity, was

gathered for the purpose of describing the sample. Other information related to area of work

setting, state in which the school counselor practices, years of experience, and level of

employment was gathered and used in determining differences related to collective self-esteem,

pride, affiliation, primary code of ethics, and credentialing. Respondents were asked to respond

to the items on this scale based on the school environment in which they currently work.

Section I: Demographic Information

This section contained eight questions designed to identify demographic information specific to the participants. Gender, ethnicity, years of experience as a school counselor, years of experience in current school, teaching or non-teaching background, current school counseling level, and the state and geographic area in which the counselor currently practices was solicited from the study participants. A copy of the demographic questions is located in Appendix A.

Section II: Professional Identity Assessment

This section contained six questions designed by the researcher to identify the level of participation in professional organizations and affiliations, assess how the participants view their role in the profession, and to measure pride as a function of professional identity. The *Professional Identity Assessment* is located in Appendix A.

Section III: Collective Self-esteem Scale

This section contained *the Collective Self-esteem Scale*. The *Collective Self-esteem Scale* is a 16-item Likert-type scale developed by Luhtanen and Crocker in 1992 based on social identity theory. It is used to measure how respondents feel about their social identity; a collective-self esteem total battery score was computed and used. The overall collective self-esteem battery consists of the following four subscales: membership esteem, private collective self-esteem, public collective self-esteem, and identity. Membership esteem refers to the individual's perception that his or her group membership is worthy (Luhtanen &Crocker, 1992). Items 1, 5, 9, and 13 comprise the Membership self-esteem subscale. Private collective self-esteem deals with the individual's subjective assessment of the group as a whole. Items 2, 6, 10, and 14 comprise the Private Collective Self-esteem scale. Public collective self-esteem refers to an individual's perceptions about how others view the group. Items 3,7,11 and 15 comprise the Public Collective Self-esteem scale. Identity refers to the level of importance to self-concept that

an individual places on a group. Items 4, 8, 12, and 16 comprise the Identity subscale. Each item has a possible score from 1 to 7, with 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree. Items 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 12, 13, and 15 are reverse-scored.

Initially, the scale was comprised of 43 items with a variance of subscale items of 55.2%. The variance refers to how many items overlap in the subscales. The scale was shortened by Luhtanen and Crocker (1992), who based on the 4 highest loading items in each subscale (all but two items had factor loadings greater than .70) and item-total correlations items correlated with subscales at ∂≥.55. Analysis of the final 16-scale item showed that 72.3% of total variance was accounted for by the four factors. The 16 items all loaded on the appropriate subscales, loading between .58 and .88. Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from .83 to .88. Item- total correlations for subscales ranged from .51 to .80 and .40 to .71 for the total scale (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992).   According to Luhtanen and Crocker (1992), the Cronbach's alphas are high enough to provide confidence in the instrument.

Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) conducted three studies to test the fitness, reliability and validity of the instrument. The researchers administered the instrument to a group of voluntary introductory psychology students. When factor analysis was performed, the four factors accounted for 60.7% of the variance. Each item loaded on the appropriate subscale, with correlations ranging from .54 to .83. Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to determine the fit. The four-factor correlated and the hierarchical model yielded acceptable fit. Luhtanen and Crocker reported alpha coefficients range from .85 for the total scale and subscales from .73 (Membership subscale) to .80 (Public Collective self-esteem subscale). Item total correlations ranged from .45 to .66 for subscales and .37 to .59 for the total scale. The highest subscale

correlation was found between Membership esteem and Private Collective self-esteem (z=.59, ρ<.001).

I derived a composite variable for this study entitled collective self-esteem from items 15(1) to 15(16). The 16 items correspond to questions that compose the Collective self-esteem scale. The possible item responses included (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) disagree somewhat, (4) neutral, (5) agree somewhat, (6) agree, and (7) strongly agree. Items 15(2), 15(4), 15(5), 15(7), 15(10), 15(12), 15(13), and 15(15) were recoded for reverse scoring. Participants had a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.49 (SD=.73), mid-way between the choices of "agree somewhat" and "agree," which was interpreted to indicate moderately high collective self-esteem. The frequencies and percentages for collective self-esteem are presented in Table 11.

Table 11
Frequency Distribution of Total Collective Self-esteem Score

	n	%
3.19	1	. 4
3.38	1	.4
3.56	1	.4
3.63	1	.4
3.69	2	.7
3.81	1	.4
3.94	5	1.9
4.00	1	.4
4.13	2	.7

Table 11, cont.

4.19	1	. 4
4.25	1	.4
4.31	1	.4
4.38	3	1.1
4.44	4	1.5
4.50	2	.7
4.56	5	1.9
4.63	3	1.1
4.69	4	1.5
4.75	5	1.9
4.81	8	3.0
4.88	1	.4
4.94	5	1.9
5.00	7	2.6
5.06	6	2.2
5.13	5	1.9
5.19	10	3.7
5.25	5	1.9
5.31	14	5.2
5.38	4	1.5
5.44	8	3.0

Table 11, cont.

5.50	9	3.3
5.56	14	5.2
5.63	9	3.3
5.69	6	2.2
5.75	10	3.7
5.81	8	3.0
5.88	14	5.2
5.94	11	4.1
6.00	10	3.7
6.06	5	1.9
6.13	10	3.7
6.19	3	1.1
6.25	6	2.2
6.31	4	1.5
6.38	10	3.7
6.44	4	1.5
6.50	5	1.9
6.56	5	1.9
6.63	2	.7
6.69	1	.4
6.75	4	1.5

Table 11, cont.

6.81	1	.4
6.88	1	.4
7.00	1	.4
Total	270	100.0

Note: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Disagree Somewhat, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree Somewhat, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly Agree

Research Questions

The general research question that was addressed in this study is: What is the relationship between social identity (as measured by scores on the *Collective Self-Esteem Scale*) and professional identity (as measured by responses on the *Professional Identity Assessment* component of the survey designed to measure pride, professional affiliation, guiding ethical standard, and credentialing) among school counselors?

Specific research questions were derived from the general research question. Based on the assumptions of social identity theory and the literature regarding the professional identity of the school counselor, the following research questions were explored:

1. Does collective self-esteem differ among school counselors who work at the elementary, middle, and high school levels?

2. Is there a correlation between collective self-esteem and pride in the profession?

3. Is there a difference in collective self esteem among school counselors with a teaching or non-teaching background?

4. Does collective self-esteem differ between school counselors who are professionally affiliated and those who are not?

5. Is there a correlation between years of experience as a school counselor and collective self-esteem?

6. Does collective self-esteem differ by years of total experience and years of experience at the current school?

7. Does collective self-esteem differ among elementary, middle, and high school counselors who view themselves as counselors first and those who view themselves as educators first?

8. Does collective self-esteem differ in school counselors who work in urban, suburban, and rural settings?

9. Is there a correlation between role definition (counselor first or educator first) and the credentials held by school counselors?

10. Is there a relationship between role definition (counselor first or educator first) and the primary chosen code of ethics?

11. Is there is difference between collective self-esteem and the primary chosen code of ethics?

Data Collection

All procedures and protocols related to data collection were submitted, reviewed, and approved by the University of New Orleans Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects Research (IRB) prior to conducting the study. A copy the IRB approval is located in Appendix C. Once IRB approval was gained, an electronic mailing list was generated. Twenty-four school districts were selected to participate from each of the five selected states. Web-based school district information was then utilized to compile a list of practicing school counselors

Data collection was conducted anonymously utilizing Qualtrics™, Inc
(http://www.qualtrics.com), an online survey software service. Participants were able to access
the survey using a secure link provided through an electronic communication that solicits study
participation. No identifying information on individual participants was provided to the
researcher.

Potential participants were contacted via mass email message requesting their
participation. A copy of the electronic mailing is located in Appendix B. The electronic
communication included an abbreviated description of the study, assurances regarding the
voluntary and anonymous nature of the study, and a consent form to participate in the study. As
previously stated, the mailing contained instructions for survey completion and a secure access
link to the survey. Because the initial mailing did not yield a sufficient number of respondents, a
second mass email (see Appendix B), was sent to potential participants two weeks after the
initial electronic mailing.

Methods of Data Analysis

Because of the number of statistical tests conducted on these data, a conservative alpha level
(p=.01) was utilized for all data analyses.

Research Question 1: Does collective self-esteem differ between school counselors who work at
the elementary, middle, and high school levels?

Data Analysis 1: Descriptive statistics were calculated using current school level participants
practiced at (item 8) and for the total battery of the *Collective Self-esteem Scale* [total battery
score for items 15(1) to 15(16)].   These data were analyzed using descriptive statistical measures
of central tendency.   A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. The ANOVA

was used to determine whether or not mean significant differences existed between the collective

self-esteem of school counselors who work at the elementary, middle, and high school levels

Research Question 2: Is there a correlation between collective self-esteem and pride in the

profession?

Data Analysis 2: Descriptive statistics were calculated using pride in the profession (item 14)

and collective self-esteem [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)]. These data were

analyzed and presented utilizing descriptive statistical measures of central tendency. A Pearson

product moment correlation was utilized to analyze the data. This statistical procedure was used

to evaluate the degree and direction of the relationship between collective self-esteem and years

of experience.

Research Question 3: Is there a difference in collective self esteem among school counselors

with a teaching or non-teaching background?

Data Analysis 3: Descriptive statistics were calculated using prior professional experience (item

7) and collective self-esteem [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)].   These data were

analyzed utilizing descriptive statistical measures of central tendency. A one-way analysis of

variance (ANOVA) was performed to determine whether or not mean significant differences

exist between the collective self-esteem of school counselors who have a K-12 certified teaching

and non-teaching background.

Research Question 4: Does collective self-esteem differ between school counselors who are

professionally affiliated and those who are not?

Data Analysis 4: Descriptive statistics were calculated for professional affiliation (items 9A to

9D) and for the total battery of the *Collective Self-esteem Scale* [total battery score for items

15(1) to 15(16)].   Central tendency statistics were calculated. A series of ANOVAs were

calculated to determine whether a significant difference existed between collective self-esteem

and school counselors who were professionally affiliated.

Research Question 5: Is there a correlation between years of experience as a school counselor

and collective self- esteem?

Data Analysis 5: Descriptive statistics were calculated for years of experience (item 4-) and

collective self-esteem [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)]. Central tendencies were

measured. Pearson product moment correlations were utilized to analyze the data.

 Research Question 6: Does collective self-esteem differ by years of total experience and years

of experience at the current school?

Data Analysis 6: Descriptive statistics were calculated for years of experience (item 4 and

collective self-esteem [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)].   These data were analyzed

and presented utilizing descriptive statistical measures of central tendency. A multiple

regression analysis was performed on these data.

Research Question 7: Does collective self-esteem differ among elementary, middle, and high

school counselors who view themselves as counselors first and those who view themselves as

educators first?

Data Analysis 7: Descriptive statists were calculated for the educator first position (item12), the

counselor first position (item 13), current school counseling level (item 6), and the total battery

score for collective self-esteem [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)]. These data were

analyzed utilizing descriptive statistical measures of central tendency. To determine whether

differences existed in collective self-esteem between participants with the counselor first position

and the educator first position at the elementary, middle/junior high, and high school level, a multiple regression analysis was conducted.

Research Question 8: Does collective self-esteem differ in school counselors who work in urban, suburban, and rural settings?

Data Analysis 8: Descriptive statistics, shown in Table 37, were calculated using the area of practice for the participant (item 8) and collective self-esteem [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)]. These data were analyzed utilizing descriptive statistical measures of central tendency. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to determine whether differences existed between school counselors who work in urban, suburban, and rural settings.

Research Question 9: Is there a correlation between role definition (counselor first or educator first) and the credentials held by school counselors?

Data Analysis 9: Descriptive statistics, shown in Table 39, were calculated for professional credentials [items 11(1), 11(2), 11(3), 11(4), and 11(5)], the educator first position (item 12), and the counselor first position (item 13). These data were analyzed utilizing descriptive statistical measures of central tendency. To determine whether or not there was a correlation between the type of professional credentials held by the participant and role definition, a Pearson product moment correlation was conducted.

Research Question 10: Is there a relationship between role definition (counselor first or educator first) and the primary chosen code of ethics?

Data Analysis 10: Descriptive statistics were computed for role definition [educator first (item 12) and counselor first (item 13)] and the primary code of ethics chosen by participants (item 10). These data were analyzed using descriptive statistical measures of central tendency. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to determine whether a significant

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difference existed between role definition (counselor first or educator first) and the primary

chosen code of ethics. Post hoc testing was conducted to determine whether differences existed

between groups.

Research Question 11: Is there is relationship between collective self-esteem and the primary

chosen code of ethics?

Data Analysis 11: Descriptive statistics were calculated for the total battery of the *Collective*

Self-esteem Scale [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)] and primary chosen code of

ethics (item 10). Measures of central tendency were reported. A one-way analysis of variance

(ANOVA) was performed to determine whether a difference existed between collective self-

esteem and the primary chosen code of ethics.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

In this chapter, the results of the study are presented. The purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between social/collective identity and the professional identity of the school counselor. The general research question for the study was: What is the relationship between social/collective identity and professional identity among school counselors?

The survey was comprised of demographic information, questions about professional identity, and the *Collective Self-Esteem Scale*. The *Collective Self-Esteem* Scale has been made available for education and research purposes by the authors.   Demographic information, including gender and race/ethnicity, was gathered for the purpose of describing the sample. Other information related to area of work setting, state in which the school counselor practices, years of experience, and level of employment was gathered and used in determining differences related to collective self-esteem, pride, affiliation, primary code of ethics, and credentialing. The survey was sent via email to 2000 practicing school counselors in five states. A total of 298 school counselors responded to the survey. Because some participants did not respond to all survey items, the total number of responses to items varies from 262 to 291.

Analysis of the Research Questions

Research Question 1.

Research Question 1 asked: Does collective self-esteem differ among school counselors who work at the elementary, middle, and high school levels? Descriptive statistics were calculated using current school level at which participants practiced at (item 8) and for the total battery of the *Collective Self-esteem Scale* [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)]. Participants could respond that they practiced at the elementary (pre-kindergarten-4th grade),

middle/junior high school (5th-8th grade) and high school (9th -12th grade) for item 8.

Collective self-esteem referred to the degree to which the school counselor drew belonging from

membership to school counseling profession. The possible item responses for collective self-

esteem included (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) disagree somewhat, (4) neutral, (5) agree

somewhat, (6) agree, and (7) strongly agree. Middle/junior high school counselors had the

highest mean collective self-esteem score at 5.57 (SD=.72). Elementary school counselors had a

mean collective self-esteem score of 5.41 (*SD*=.69) and high school counselors had a collective

self esteem score of 5.50 (*SD*=.69). Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 12.

Table 12
Descriptive Statistics for Collective Self-esteem and Current School Level

Level	n	*M*	*SD*
Elementary (Pre-kindergarten-4th grade)	76	5.41	.69
Middle/Junior High School (5th-8th grade)	76	5.57	.72
High School (9th -12th grade)	117	5.50	.76
Total	269	5.49	.73

Note. 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Disagree Somewhat, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree Somewhat, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly Agree

An ANOVA was performed to determine whether significant differences existed between

collective self-esteem and current school counseling level. The statistical test yielded no

significant differences between the groups (*F*=.90, α=.41, *partial η^2=.007*). Further, the

calculated effect size (*η^2=.082)* indicated that current school counseling level accounted for an

insignificant proportion of variance in collective self-esteem. The results of the ANOVA are

depicted in Table 13.

Table 13

AVOVA of Collective Self-Esteem and Current Level

	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	.95	2	.48	.90	.41
Within Groups	141.00	266	.53		
Total	141.95	268			

Research Question 2.

Research Question 2 asked: Is there a correlation between collective self-esteem and pride in the profession? Descriptive statistics were calculated using pride in the profession (item 14) and collective self-esteem [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)]. For pride in the profession, the participants were asked to evaluate the extent of their agreement or disagreement with statement the statement " "I feel proud to be a member of my profession," using a Liker-type scale with anchored responses at each point. The possible responses included (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) disagree somewhat, (4) neutral, (5) agree somewhat, (6) agree, and (7) strongly agree. Of the 289 responses to item 14 regarding pride in the profession, a majority (54.7%) indicated that they strongly agreed that they felt pride in the profession. Another 28.5% agreed, with 7.0 % agreeing somewhat. Seven participants (2.3%) indicated neutral feelings regarding professional pride. Ten participants (3.5%) indicated they strongly disagreed with having feelings of pride, while 0.3% said they disagreed and 0.7 disagreed somewhat. The frequency distribution for pride in the profession is shown in Table 14.

Table 14

Frequency Distribution for Feeling Proud to be a Member of the Profession

"I feel proud to be a member of my profession,"	n	%
Strongly Disagree	10	3.5
Disagree	1	.3
Disagree somewhat	2	.7
Neutral	7	2.4
Agree somewhat	21	7.3
Agree	85	29.4
Strongly Agree	163	56.4
Total	289	100.0

Of the 289 participants who responded, the mean score for pride in being a member of the profession was 6.24 (SD=1.29). Again the mean score for collective self-esteem was 5.49 (SD=.73).The descriptive statistics for pride and collective self-esteem are shown in Table 15.

Table 15

Descriptive Statistics for Pride in Profession and Collective Self-esteem

Item	n	*M*	*SD*
"I feel proud to be a member of my profession."	289	6.24	1.29
Collective self-esteem	270	5.49	

Note. 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Disagree Somewhat, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree Somewhat, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly Agree

To investigate whether there is a relationship between collective self-esteem [composite variable from items 15(1) to 15(16)] and pride in the profession (item 14), a Pearson product moment correlation was calculated at $\alpha=.01$. A significant positive correlation was found between pride in the profession of school counseling and collective self-esteem ($r=.28$). Results of the Pearson product moment correlation between collective self-esteem and pride are shown in Table 16. While the correlation is significant, the effect size is small at 8%. ($r^2=.08$).

Table 16

Correlation Results for Collective Self-esteem and Pride

		Collective Self-esteem	"I feel proud to be a member of my profession."
Collective Self-esteem	Pearson Correlation	1.00	.28
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.00
	n	20	20
"I feel proud to be a member of my profession."	Pearson Correlation	.28	1.00
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00	
	n	270	289

Research Question 3.

Research Question 3 asked: Is there a difference in collective self esteem among school counselors with a teaching or non-teaching background? Descriptive statistics were calculated using prior professional experience (item 7) and collective self-esteem [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)]. The possible responses for the collective self-esteem included (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) disagree somewhat, (4) neutral, (5) agree somewhat, (6) agree, and (7) strongly agree. For prior professional experience, the participants were asked to indicate whether or not the majority of their professional experience was in a teaching or non-teaching capacity. The mean collective self-esteem score of participants with a teaching background (n=57) was 5.43 (*SD*=.73). The mean collective self-esteem score was 5.51 (SD=.73) for those who indicated having a non-teaching background (n=211). The descriptive statistics for professional background and collective self-esteem are shown in Table 17.

Table 17
Descriptive Statistics for Professional Background and Collective Self-esteem

	n	*M*	SD
Teacher	57	5.43	.73
Non-teacher	211	5.51	.73
Total	268	5.49	.73

Note. 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Disagree Somewhat, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree Somewhat, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly Agree

An ANOVA test was performed to determine whether a significant difference existed between professional background and collective self-esteem. The test yielded no significant difference in the collective self-esteem of those with a teaching versus a non-teaching background (F=.40, α=.53, partial η^2=.002). An insignificant amount of variance in collective

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self-esteem is explained by the participants professional background $(\eta^2=.04)$. The results of the

ANOVA are shown in Table 18.

Table 18
AVOVA of Professional Background and Collective Self-esteem

	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	.01	1	.21	.40	.53
Within Groups	141.32	266	.53		
Total	141.54	267			

Research Question 4.

Research Question 4 asked: Does collective self-esteem differ between school counselors

who are professionally affiliated and those who are not? Descriptive statistics were calculated

for professional affiliation (items 9A to 9D) and for the total battery of the *Collective Self-esteem*

Scale [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)]. For the purpose of this study, participants

were asked to indicate whether or not they were affiliated on the national level, on the state level,

with any other organizations, or with no counseling organizations. Of the 161 participants who

responded, 160 indicated they were affiliated on the national level (item 9A). The majority of

those who indicated that they were nationally affiliated belonged to the American School

Counselor Association (n=112), while 44 belonged to the American Counseling Association.

Other national affiliations accounted for 1.2% of those who indicated they were affiliated on the

national level. The frequency distribution for affiliation on the national level is shown in Table

19.

Table 19

Frequency Distribution of Participants who were Nationally Affiliated

	n	% Nationally Affiliated	% of Total Sample
American Counseling Association	44	27.5	14.8
Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)	1	.6	.3
American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA)	1	.6	.3
American School Counselor Association (ASCA)	112	70.0	37.6
Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC)	1	.6	.3
National Employment Counseling Association (NECA)	1	.6	.3
Total	160	100.0	53.7

Descriptive statistics were calculated for collective self-esteem and national affiliation. The mean collective self-esteem score for participants who were affiliated at the national level was 5.52 (*SD*=.69). For those participants who indicated they were members of the American Counseling Association, the mean collective self-esteem score was 5.60 (*SD*=.68). Those who indicated they were members of the American Counselor Education and Supervision had a mean

collective self-esteem score of 5.31.   A mean collective self-esteem score of 5.94 was garnered

for participants who indicated that they were members of the American Mental Health

Counselors Association. Participants who indicated that they were members of the American

School Counselor Association had a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.51 (*SD*=.69). The

mean score for participants who were members of the Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and

Religious Values in Counseling had a mean collective self-esteem score of 4.31. Participants

who indicated that they were members of the National Employment Counseling Association had

a mean collective self-esteem score of 4.44. Descriptive statistics for affiliation on the national

level and collective self-esteem are found in Table 20.

Table 20

Descriptive Statistics for Affiliation at the National Level and Collective Self-esteem

Affiliation	n	*M*	*SD*
American Counseling Association	42	5.60	.68
Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)	1	5.31	
American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA)	1	5.94	
American School Counselor Association (ASCA)	107	5.51	.69
Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC)	1	4.31	
National Employment Counseling Association (NECA)	1	4.44	
Total	153	5.52	.69

Note. 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Disagree Somewhat, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree Somewhat, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly Agree

An ANOVA was computed to determine whether there was a significant difference between collective self-esteem and national affiliation. The test yielded no significant relationship between affiliation on a national level and collective self-esteem (F=1.32, α=.26, partial η^2=04). The results of the ANOVA are found in Table 20.

Table 21
Results of ANOVA between Affiliation at the National Level and Collective Self-esteem

	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	3.11	5	.62	1.32	.26
Within Groups	69.24	147	.47		
Total	73.35	152			

Data for state affiliation were analyzed. Of 156 participants who responded, 156 indicated they were affiliated on the state level (item 9B). A majority, 35.2%, of those who indicated they were affiliated at the state level belonged to state school counseling associations. Thirty-two of those who were affiliated at the state level belonged to state counseling associations. Four participants belonged to state mental health counseling associations. Both the state associations for rehabilitation and for assessment in counseling and education accounted for 1. 0% of the total sample. Other associations on the state level accounted for 0.9% of the distribution. The frequency distribution for affiliation at the state level is located in Table 22.

Table 22
Frequency Distribution of Participants who are Affiliated at the State Level

	n	% State Affiliated	% of Total Sample
State Association for Assessment in Counseling and Education	3	1.9	1.0
State Counseling Association	32	21.6	10.7
State Association for Counselor Education and Supervision	3	1.9	1.0
State Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development	1	.6	.3

Table 22, cont.

State Mental Health Counselors Association	4	2.6	1.0
State Rehabilitation Counseling Association	1	.6	.3
State School Counselor Association	105	67.3	35.2
State Employment Counseling Association	1	.6	.3
Total	156	100	52.3

Descriptive statistics for collective self-esteem and affiliation at the state level were calculated. The mean collective self-esteem score for participants who were affiliated on the state level was 5.48 (*SD*=.71).   For those participants who indicated they were members of their state counseling association, the mean collective self-esteem score was 5.41 (*SD*=.13). Participants who indicated they were members of state associations for assessment in counseling and education had a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.53 (*SD*=.66). Those who indicated they were members of the state association for counselor education and supervision had a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.38 (*SD*=1.15). Participants who indicated they were members of the state mental health counselors association had a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.78 (*SD*=1.07). The mean collective self-esteem score for state associations in rehabilitation counseling was 5.75.   The mean collective self-esteem score for participants who indicated they belonged to state school counselor associations had a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.47 (*SD*=.71). The mean collective self esteem score for participants of state employment counseling

associations was 5.56. Descriptive statistics for affiliation at the state level and collective self-esteem are presented in Table 23.

Table 23

Descriptive Statistics for Affiliation at the State Level and Collective Self-Esteem

	n	*M*	*SD*
State Association for Assessment in Counseling and Education	2	5.53	.66
State Counseling Association	32	5.41	.13
State Association for Counselor Education and Supervision	3	5.38	1.15
State Mental Health Counselors Association	4	5.78	1.07
State Rehabilitation Counseling Association	1	5.75	
State School Counselor Association	105	5.47	.71
State Employment Counseling Association	1	5.56	
Total	148	5.48	.71

Note.   1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Disagree Somewhat, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree Somewhat, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly Agree

An ANOVA was calculated for affiliation at the state level and collective self-esteem. No significant relationship was found ($F = .16$, $\alpha = .99$). An insignificant amount of the variance in collective self-esteem is accounted for by affiliation at the state level *($\eta^2 = .007$)*. The results of the ANOVA are located in Table 24.

Table 24

Results of the ANOVA between Affiliation at the State Level and Collective Self-esteem

	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	.50	6	.08	.16	.99
Within Groups	74.43	141	.53		
Total	74.92	147			

Participants (n=93) who indicated they belonged to other associations had a mean

collective self- esteem score of 5.56 (*SD*=.67). The descriptive statistics for affiliation in other

associations and collective self-esteem is shown in Table 25.

Table 25

Descriptive Statistics for Affiliation to Other Associations and Collective Self-esteem

	n	M	SD
Other Associations	93	5.56	.67
Total Sample	270	5.50	.73

Note. 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Disagree Somewhat, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree
Somewhat, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly Agree

Of the 298 responses, 18.8% of participants indicated that they had no affiliation with any

professional associations. The mean collective self-esteem score for those participants who had

no affiliation any professional memberships was 5.44 (*SD*=.72). The descriptive statistics for

collective self-esteem and no affiliation are shown in Table 26.

Table 26
Descriptive Statistics for No Affiliation and Collective Self-esteem

	n	*M*	*SD*
No membership	56	5.44	.72
Total Sample	270	5.50	.73

Note. 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Disagree Somewhat, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree Somewhat, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly Agree

A dichotomous composite variable for affiliation was computed. Participants who indicated they were affiliated with a national, state, and/or other counseling association was assigned a value of 0. Those participants who indicated they were not affiliated with a counseling organization were assigned a value of 1. A majority of the participants (n=242) indicated they were affiliated with a counseling organization. Of those who responded, 56 indicated they were not affiliated with any organization. A frequency distribution for affiliation is shown in Table 27.

Table 27
Frequency Distribution of Affiliation

	n	%
Affiliation	242	81.2
No affiliation	56	18.8
Total	298	100.0

Descriptive statistics, shown in Table 28, were calculated for collective self-esteem and affiliation. Of the 270 participants who responded, the mean collective self–esteem score was 5.50 (*SD*=.73). For those who indicated they were professionally affiliated, a collective self-

esteem score of 5.49 (*SD*=.74) was found. Participants who indicated they were not professionally affiliated had a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.54 (*SD*=.67).

Table 28
Descriptive Statistics for Affiliation and Collective Self-esteem and Affiliation

	n	*M*	*SD*
Affiliation	216	5.49	.74
No affiliation	56	5.54	.67
Total	270	5.50	.73

Note.   1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Disagree Somewhat, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree Somewhat, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly Agree

An ANOVA was performed to determine whether a significant difference existed in collective self-esteem between those who are professionally affiliated and those who were not. No significant differences were found in collective self-esteem existed between those who were affiliated and those who were not *(F=.24, α=.66 η²=.001).* Nearly no effect size was evident. The results of the ANOVA are shown in Table 29.

Table 29
Results of the ANOVA for Affiliation and Collective Self-esteem

	SS	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Between Groups	.13	1	.13	.24	.66
Within Groups	142.22	268	.53		
Total	142.35	269			

Research Question 5.

Research Question 5 asked: Is there a correlation between years of experience as a school counselor and collective self- esteem?   Descriptive statistics, shown in Table 30, were calculated using years of experience (item 4) and the total battery of the *Collective Self-esteem*

Scale [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)]. Participants were asked to specify the

number of years they have practiced school counseling. Responses ranged from 1 to 25 or more

years, with a mean of 11.38 years of experience (SD=7.56). The mean collective self-esteem

score for these participants was 5.50 (SD=.27).

Table 30

Descriptive Statistics for Years of Experience and Collective Self-esteem

	n	*M*	*SD*
Years of experience	287	11.38	7.56
Collective Self-esteem	270	5.50	.73

Of the 268 participants who answered item 4, the total years of experience as a school

counselor ranged from 1 to 25 or more. The mean collective self-esteem score was 5.50

(*SD*=.73). The descriptive statistics for collective self-esteem by the number of years of

experience are found in Table 31.

Table 31
Descriptive Statistics for Collective Self-esteem by the Number of Years Experience

Years of experience	n	*M*	*SD*
1	14	5.86	.81
2	13	5.54	.59
3	15	5.41	.60
4	25	5.33	.74
5	13	5.63	.63
6	16	5.42	.82
7	14	5.33	.87

Table 31, cont.

8	14	5.25	.77
9	6	5.45	.83
10	15	5.33	.71
11	12	5.59	.61
12	7	5.38	.61
13	5	5.59	.72
14	8	5.28	1.06
15	9	5.60	.86
16	6	5.40	. 65
17	14	5.44	.75
18	7	5.71	.63
19	3	6.02	.69
20	11	5.60	.95
21	5	5.11	1.15
22	6	5.83	.46
23	5	5.70	.32
24	5	5.59	.61
25+	20	5.72	.58
Total	268	5.50	.73

Note. 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Disagree Somewhat, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree Somewhat, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly Agree

To investigate whether there is a relationship between collective self-esteem [composite

variable from items 15(1) to 15(16)] and years of experience as a school counselor (item 14), a

Pearson product moment correlation was calculated at $\alpha=.01$.   No significant correlation was found between years of experience and collective self-esteem $(r=.08)$.

Research Question 6

Research Question 6 asked: Does collective self-esteem differ by years of total experience and years of experience at the current school?   Descriptive statistics, shown in Table 33, were calculated using years of experience (item 4), years of experience in current school (item 5), and the total battery of the *Collective Self-esteem Scale* [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)].   The possible responses for collective self-esteem included (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) disagree somewhat, (4) neutral, (5) agree somewhat, (6) agree, and (7) strongly agree.   Both years of experience years of experience and current years of experience ranged from 2 to 25 or more years. Participants had a mean of 11.38 total years of experience (SD=7.56) and 7.54 years of experience at their current school (SD=6.35).   The mean collective self-esteem score was 5.50 (*SD*=.73).

Table 32
Descriptive Statistics for Years of Experience, Years of Experience at Current School and Collective Self-esteem

Years of Experience	Years of Experience at CURRENT School	n	*M*	*SD*
1	1	13	5.85	.85
	Total	13	5.85	.85
2	1	4	5.23	.87
	2	9	5.67	.42
	Total	13	5.54	.59
3	1	3	5.67	.37

Table 32, cont.

	2	5	5.26	.43
	3	7	5.40	.79
	Total	15	5.40	.60
4	1	1	5.88	
	2	1	5.8	
	3	4	4.64	.80
	4	18	5.42	.72
	Total	24	5.33	.76
5	1	3	5.33	.78
	4	3	5.90	.22
	5	7	5.64	.70
	Total	13	5.63	.63
6	2	5	5.38	.72
	3	3	5.06	1.72
	4	2	5.63	
	6	6	5.56	.56
	Total	16	5.42	.82
7	1	1	4.88	
	2	2	5.84	1.28
	3	1	6.25	

Table 32, cont.

	4	4	4.91	.45
	6	1	3.56	
	7	5	5.74	.60
	Total	14	5.33	.87
8	2	1	4.50	
	3	3	4.75	.85
	4	1	5.56	
	5	1	4.69	
	6	1	5.56	
	8	7	5.56	.80
	Total	14	5.25	.77
9	4	1	6.13	
	6	2	5.09	1.64
	8	1	5.31	
	9	2	5.53	.04
	Total	6	5.45	.83
10	1	1	4.44	
	2	3	5.31	.44
	3	2	5.84	1.02
	4	1	5.34	
	5	2	5.53	.49

Table 32, cont.

	6	1	4.75	
	8	3	5.08	1.14
	10	2	5.75	.71
	Total	15	5.33	.71
11	5	2	5.50	.44
	6	1	5.44	
	7	1	5.94	
	8	1	5.56	
	10	1	5.88	
	11	6	5.54	.86
	Total	12	5.59	.61
12	7	1	4.81	
	9	1	5.81	
	10	1	6.00	
	11	1	5.88	
	12	3	5.04	.63
13	1	1	5.31	
	9	1	6.38	
	11	1	5.94	
	13	2	5.16	.93

Table 32, cont.

	Total	5	5.59	.72
14 years	2	1	5.31	
	4	2	5.88	.71
	9	1	3.63	
	10	1	6.13	
	14	3	5.15	1.27
	Total	8	5.28	1.06
15	4	1	7.00	
	5	1	5.44	
	9	1	4.75	
	10	2	5.91	.04
	12	1	5.56	
	15	2	5.00	1.50
	Total	8	5.57	.92
16	4	1	5.69	
	5	1	5.88	
	6	1	5.13	
	9	1	4.19	
	15	1	5.75	
	16	1	5.75	
	Total	6	5.40	.65

Table 32, cont.

17	2	1	5.00	
	3	2	5.84	.84
	5	3	5.29	.79
	11	1	5.75	
	12	1	6.56	
	16	1	5.63	
	17	5	5.13	.84
	Total	14	5.44	.75
18	1	1	5.06	
	4	1	6.38	
	5	2	5.44	.18
	11	2	5.44	.35
	17	1	6.75	
	Total	7	5.71	.63
19	2	1	6.06	
	3	1	5.31	
	7	1	6.69	
	Total	3	6.02	.69
20	5	1	5.94	
	7	1	6.38	
	9	2	6.13	.53

Table 32, cont.

	14	1	4.81	
	17	1	4.94	
	20	2	4.78	.93
	Total	8	5.48	.82
21	10	1	5.19	
	16	1	5.19	
	19	1	3.19	
	21	2	6.00	.09
	Total	5	5.11	1.15
22	6	1	5.88	
	8	2	5.84	.75
	16	1	5.50	
	17	2	5.97	.57
	Total	6	5.83	.46
23	7	1	5.63	
	21	1	6.25	
	23	3	5.54	.10
	Total	5	5.70	.32
24	8	1	4.81	
	12	1	5.81	
	21	1	6.31	

Table 32, cont.

	22	2	5.50	.53
	Total	5	5.59	.61
25+	2	1	6.13	
	3	1	5.31	
	5	1	6.50	
	7	1	6.44	
	8	1	4.44	
	11	2	5.84	.57
	14	1	5.56	
	21	1	6.13	
	22	3	5.58	.48
	23	1	5.31	
	24	2	5.56	1.06
	25+	5	5.79	.46
	Total	20	5.71	.58
Total	1	28	5.56	.77
	2	30	5.45	.56
	3	24	5.25	.92
	4	35	5.54	.68
	5	21	5.56	.59
	6	14	5.28	.81

Table 32, cont.

7	11	5.87	.63
8	16	5.38	.78
9	9	5.34	.97
10	8	5.81	.39
11	13	5.64	.62
12	6	5.51	.73
13	2	5.16	.93
14	5	5.16	.94
15	3	5.25	1.15
16	4	5.52	.24
17	9	5.47	.88
19	1	3.19	
20	2	4.78	.93
21	5	6.14	.15
22	5	5.55	.43
23	4	5.48	.14
24	2	5.56	1.06
25+	5	5.79	.46
Total	262	5.49	.73

Note. 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Disagree Somewhat, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree Somewhat, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly Agree

To determine whether or not there was a difference in collective self-esteem by years of total experience and years of experience at the current school, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. The ANOVA yielded no significant differences ($F=.91$, $p=.40$). Results of the ANOVA are located in Table 33.

Table 33
Results of the Regression Analysis for Years of Experience, Years of Experience at the Current School, and Collective Self-esteem

	SS	df	MS	F	p
Regression	.96	2	.48	.91	.40
Residual	136.34	259	.53		
Total	137.30	261			

Beta weights, shown in Table 34, suggest that the simultaneous regressions used in this model do not predict collective self-esteem ($\beta=.12,-.07$).

Table 34
Regression Analysis Summary for Years of Experience, Years of Experience at the Current School, and Collective Self-esteem

	B	SEB	β	t	p
Collective self-esteem	5.42	.08		67.08	.00
Years of experience as a school counselor	.012	.01	.12	1.29	.20
of experience as a school counselor in CURRENT school	-.01	.01	-.07	-.71	.48

Further, no significant correlation was found between collective self-esteem, years of experience ($r^2=.07$, $p=.13$), and years of experience at the current school ($r^2=.02$, $p=.35$). Results of the Pearson product moment correlation are shown in Table 35.

Table 35

Results of the Pearson Product Moment Analysis for Years of Experience, Years of Experience at the Current School, and Collective Self-esteem

		Collective self-esteem	Years of experience as a school counselor:	Years of experience as a school counselor in CURRENT school:
Pearson Correlation	Collective self-esteem	1.00	.07	.02
	Years of experience as a school counselor	.07	1.00	.75
	Years of experience as a school counselor in CURRENT school	.02	.75	1.00
p	Collective Self-esteem		.13	.35
	Years of experience as a school counselor	.13		.00
	Years of experience as a school counselor in CURRENT school	.35	.00	

Research Question 7.

Research Question 7 asked: Does collective self-esteem differ among elementary, middle, and high school counselors who view themselves as counselors first and those who

view themselves as educators first? Descriptive statistics were calculated for the educator first

position (item12), the counselor first position (item 13), current school counseling level (item

6), and the total battery score for collective self-esteem [total battery score for items 15(1) to

15(16)].   The possible collective self-esteem responses included (1) strongly disagree, (2)

disagree, (3) disagree somewhat, (4) neutral, (5) agree somewhat, (6) agree, and (7) strongly

agree.   For item 12, participants were asked to evaluate the statement, "I see myself as an

educator that uses counseling skills." Possible self-esteem responses included (1) strongly

disagree, (2) disagree, (3) disagree somewhat, (4) neutral, (5) agree somewhat, (6) agree, and

(7) strongly agree. The mean score was 5.05 (SD=1.83)

To gauge the counselor first position (item 13), participants were asked to evaluate the

statement, "I see myself as mental health counselor who works in a school setting." Again, the

possible responses included (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) disagree somewhat, (4)

neutral, (5) agree somewhat, (6) agree, and (7) strongly agree. The mean score was 4.01

(SD=1.93). Descriptive statistics for role definition are shown in Table 36.

Table 36
Descriptive Statistics for Role Definition

	N	*M*	*SD*
"I see myself as an educator that uses counseling skills"	287	5.05	1.83
"I see myself as mental health counselor who works in a school setting."	287	4.01	1.93

Participants could respond elementary (pre-kindergarten-4th grade), middle/junior high school (5th-8th grade) or high school (9th -12th grade) for item 8.

Descriptive statistics, shown in Table 37, were calculated for collective self-esteem, current school counseling level, the counselor first position, and educator first position. Participants who strongly disagreed with both the educator first position and the counselor first position had a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.81. The mean collective self-esteem score for participants who strongly disagreed with the educator first position and disagreed with the counselor first position was 5.61 (*SD*=.21). For those participants who strongly disagreed with the educator first position and disagreed somewhat with the counselor first position, a mean collective self-esteem score of 6.16 (*SD*=.31) was found. Further, the mean collective self-esteem score for participants who strongly disagreed with the educator first position and strongly agreed was 5.61 (*SD*=.90).

Of those participants who disagreed with the educator first and strongly disagreed with counselor first position, the mean collective self-esteem score was 4.91 (*SD*=.70). The mean collective self-esteem score for participants who disagreed with both positions was 5.78 (*SD*=.84). For those who disagreed somewhat with the counselor first position, the mean collective self-esteem was 4.91 (*SD*=13). The mean collective self-esteem for those who disagreed with the educator first poison and agreed somewhat with the counselor first position was 5.52 (*SD*=1.11). Participants who disagreed with the educator first position and agreed with the counselor first position garnered a mean collective self-esteem of 5.40 (*SD*=.50). A mean collective self-esteem of 4.84(*SD*= .66) was found for those who strongly agreed with the counselor first position.

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Twenty-two participants disagreed somewhat with the educator first position. Of those, the mean collective self-esteem for participants who disagreed with the counselor first position was 5.73 (*SD* =.53). Participants who disagreed somewhat with both positions had a mean collective self-esteem of 5.09 (*SD*= .22). A mean collective self-esteem of 5.44 was found for individuals who had neutral responses to the counselor first position. For those who disagreed somewhat with the educator first position and agreed somewhat with the counselor first position, a mean collective self-esteem of 5.42 (*SD*=.76) was garnered. Participants who agreed with the counselor first position had a mean collective self-esteem of 5.22 (*SD*=.63). A mean collective self-esteem of 5.25 (*SD*=.97) was found for those who strongly agreed with the counselor first position in this group.

Of the participants who had neutral feelings regarding the educator first position and disagreed with the counselor first position, the mean collective self-esteem was 4.69. For those who disagreed somewhat the mean collective self-esteem was 5.50. The mean collective self-esteem for participants who felt neutral about both positions was 5.33 (*SD*=.40). Those participants who had neutral feelings about the educator first position and agreed somewhat with the counselor first position had a mean collective self-esteem of 5.44. Participants who agreed with the counselor first position had a mean collective self-esteem of 5.56. The mean collective self-esteem for those who strongly agreed was 5.63.

Fifty-four participants agreed somewhat with the educator first position. Of those, the mean collective self-esteem score for those who strongly disagreed with the counselor first position was 6.38. Participants who disagreed with the counselor first position had a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.15 (*SD*=.68). The mean collective self-esteem for participants who disagreed somewhat with the counselor first position was 5.35 (*SD*=.85). Those with

neutral feelings regarding the counselor first position had a mean self-esteem score of 5.78 (*SD*=.80). Participants who agreed somewhat with both positions had a mean self-esteem score of 5.43 (*SD*=.75). Those who agreed somewhat with the educator first position and agreed with the counselor first position had a mean collective self-esteem of 5.38 (*SD*=.27). Those that agreed somewhat had a mean collective self-esteem of 5.79 (*SD*=.85).

Seventy-eight participants indicated that they agreed with the educator first position. Of the participants, the mean collective self-esteem score for those who strongly disagreed with the counselor first position was 6.13 *(SD*=.62). Those who disagreed with the counselor first position had a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.56 (*SD*=.69). For the participants that disagreed somewhat, a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.18 (*SD*=.67) was found. Participants that had neutral feelings regarding the counselor first position had a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.06 (*SD*=1.19). Those who agreed somewhat had a mean score of 5.45 (*SD*=.89). Those who agreed with both positions had a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.41 (*SD*=.68). For participants who agreed with the educator position and strongly agreed with the counselor first position, the mean collective self-esteem score was 5.85 (*SD* =.48).

For those participants who strongly agreed with the educator first position and strongly disagreed with the counselor first, the mean collective self-esteem score was 5.67 (*SD*=.54). Participants who strongly agreed with the educator first position and disagreed with the counselor position had a collective self-esteem of 5.70 (*SD*=.80). For those who disagreed somewhat with the counselor first position, the mean collective self-esteem score was 5.79 (*SD*=.76). Those with a neutral opinion of the counselor first position had a mean collective self-esteem score of 6.63 (*SD*=.53). Participants who strongly agreed with the educator first position and agreed somewhat with the counselor position had a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.32

(*SD*=.79). Participants that agreed with the counselor first position had a score of 6.10 (*SD*=.45).

Those who strongly agreed with both had a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.48 (*SD* =.89).

Table 37

Descriptive Statistics for Collective Self-esteem, Current School Counseling Level, the Counselor First Position, and the Educator First Position

"I see myself as an educator that uses counseling skills"	"I see myself as mental health counselor who works in a school setting."	Current school counseling level:	n	*M*	*SD*
		Middle/Junior High School	1	6.50	5.81
		Total	1	5.81	
	Disagree	Elementary	2	5.75	.18
		Middle/Junior High School	2	5.47	.13
		Total	4	5.61	.21
	Disagree somewhat	Middle/Junior High School	2	6.16	.31
		Total	2	6.16	.31
	Strongly agree	Elementary	3	5.79	1.01
		High School	1	5.06	
		Total	4	5.61	.90
		Elementary	5	5.78	.72
		Middle/Junior High School	4	5.81	.44
		High School	2	5.44	.53
		Total	11	5.73	.56

Table 37, cont.

Disagree	Strongly disagree	Elementary	2	5.06	.18
		High School	2	4.75	1.15
		Total	4	4.91	.70
	Disagree	Middle/Junior High School	3	5.48	1.03
		High School	2	6.22	.13
		Total	5	5.78	.84
	Disagree somewhat	Elementary	1	4.81	
		High School	1	5.00	
		Total	2	4.91	.13
	Agree somewhat	Middle/Junior High School	3	5.57	1.46
		High School	4	5.48	1.01
		Total	7	5.52	1.11
	Agree	Elementary	3	4.96	.38
		Middle/Junior High School	2	6.03	.22
		High School	3	5.42	.16
		Total	8	5.40	.50
	Strongly agree	Elementary	1	5.31	
		High School	1	4.38	
		Total	2	4.84	.66
	Total	Elementary	7	5.02	.28

Table 37, cont.

		Middle/Junior High School	8	5.65	.99
		High School	13	5.35	.81
		Total	28	5.35	.78
Disagree somewhat	Disagree	Elementary	1	5.94	
		Middle/Junior High School	1	5.13	
		High School	1	6.13	
		Total	3	5.73	.53
	Disagree somewhat	High School	2	5.09	.22
		Total	2	5.09	.22
	Neutral	High School	1	5.44	
		Total	1	5.44	
	Agree somewhat	Elementary	3	5.10	.83
		Middle/Junior High School	2	5.06	.35
		High School	3	5.98	.72
		Total	8	5.42	.76
	Agree	Elementary	3	4.92	.69
		Middle/Junior High School	2	5.81	. 09
		High School	1	4.94	
		Total	6	5.22	.63

Table 37, cont.

	Strongly agree	Elementary	1	5.94	
		Middle/Junior High School	1	4.56	
		Total	2	5.25	.97
	Total	Elementary	8	5.24	.72
		Middle/Junior High School	6	5.24	.51
		High School	8	5.58	.63
		Total	22	5.37	.63
Neutral	Disagree	High School	1	4.69	
		Total	1	4.69	
	Disagree somewhat	Middle/Junior High School	1	5.50	
		Total	1	5.50	
	Neutral	Elementary	2	5.56	.09
		Middle/Junior High School	2	5.16	.66
		High School	1	5.19	
		Total	5	5.33	.40
	Agree somewhat	High School	1	5.44	
		Total	1	5.44	
	Agree	Middle/Junior High School	1	5.56	

Table 37, cont.

		Total	1	5.56	
	Strongly agree	Middle/Junior High School	1	5.63	
		Total	1	5.63	
	Total	Elementary	2	5.56	.09
		Middle/Junior High School	5	5.40	.40
		High School	3	5.10	.38
		Total	10	5.34	.37
Agree somewhat	Strongly disagree	High School	1	6.38	
		Total	1	6.38	
	Disagree	Elementary	5	4.73	.60
		Middle/Junior High School	1	4.56	
		High School	5	5.70	.35
		Total	11	5.15	.68
	Disagree somewhat	Elementary	1	5.50	
		Middle/Junior High School	7	5.66	.78
		High School	5	4.89	.89
		Total	13	5.35	.85
	Neutral	Middle/Junior High School	2	6.41	.22
		High School	2	5.16	.57

Table 37, cont.

	Total	4	5.78	.80
Agree somewhat	Elementary	3	5.90	.13
	Middle/Junior High School	3	5.58	.63
	High School	7	5.17	.90
	Total	13	5.43	.75
Agree	Elementary	2	5.66	.13
	Middle/Junior High School	2	5.50	.27
	High School	2	4.97	.31
	Total	6	5.38	.38
Strongly agree	Elementary	1	4.81	
	Middle/Junior High School	3	5.77	.96
	High School	2	6.3	.53
	Total	6	5.79	.85
Total	Elementary	12	5.24	.65
	Middle/Junior High School	18	5.67	.72
	High School	24	5.35	.79
	Total	54	5.43	.75
	High School	3	6.00	.70
	Total	4	6.13	.62

Table 37, cont.

Disagree	Elementary	7	5.61	.53
	Middle/Junior High School	3	5.90	.54
	High School	11	5.42	.81
	Total	21	5.56	.69
Disagree somewhat	Elementary	5	5.21	.60
	Middle/Junior High School	6	4.88	.74
	High School	3	5.75	.17
	Total	14	5.18	.67
Neutral	Middle/Junior High School	1	5.56	
	High School	4	4.94	1.34
	Total	5	5.06	1.19
Agree somewhat	Elementary	7	5.70	.69
	Middle/Junior High School	5	5.05	.97
	High School	5	5.50	1.08
	Total	17	5.45	.89
Agree	Elementary	3	5.67	.56
	Middle/Junior High School	1	5.75	
	High School	7	5.26	.76
	Total	11	5.41	.68

Table 37, cont.

	Strongly Agree	Elementary	1	6.06	
		Middle/Junior High School	1	6.50	
		High School	4	5.64	.41
		Total	6	5.85	.48
	Total	Elementary	23	5.58	.59
		Middle/Junior High School	18	5.36	.86
		High School	37	5.45	.82
		Total	78	5.46	.77
Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	Elementary	3	5.40	.89
		Middle/Junior High School	5	5.63	.48
		High School	6	5.82	.42
		Total	14	5.67	.54
	Disagree	Elementary	1	6.44	
		Middle/Junior High School	4	5.78	.65
		High School	7	5.56	.91
		Total	12	5.70	.80
	Disagree somewhat	Elementary	1	4.81	
		Middle/Junior High School	2	6.09	.93
		High School	4	5.88	.70

Table 37, cont.

	Total	7	5.79	.76
Neutral	Elementary	1	7.00	
	Middle/Junior High School	1	6.25	
	Total	2	6.63	.53
Agree somewhat	Elementary	5	4.98	.67
	Middle/Junior High School	3	5.54	.71
	High School	3	5.69	1.05
	Total	11	5.32	.79
Agree	Elementary	1	6.44	
	Middle/Junior High School	1	6.13	
	High School	5	6.03	.51
	Total	7	6.10	.45
Strongly agree	Elementary	3	4.92	1.05
	Middle/Junior High School	1	5.19	
	High School	3	6.15	.28
	Total	7	5.48	.89
Total	Elementary	15	5.37	.94
	Middle/Junior High School	17	5.74	.57
	High School	28	5.82	.66

Table 37, cont.

		Total	60	5.68	.73
	Strongly disagree	Elementary	5	5.26	.66
		Middle/Junior High School	6	5.78	.56
		High School	13	5.74	.70
		Total	24	5.64	.66
Total	Disagree	Elementary	16	5.42	.70
		Middle/Junior High School	14	5.56	.67
		High School	27	5.56	.74
		Total	57	5.52	.70
	Disagree somewhat	Elementary	8	5.15	.51
		Middle/Junior High School	18	5.49	.82
		High School	15	5.36	.74
		Total	41	5.38	.73
	Neutral	Elementary	3	6.04	.83
		Middle/Junior High School	6	5.82	.68
		High School	8	5.09	.92
		Total	17	5.51	.88
	Agree somewhat	Elementary	18	5.43	.71
		Middle/Junior High School	16	5.34	.86

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Table 37, cont.

		High School	23	5.48	.89
		Total	57	5.42	.81
Agree		Elementary	12	5.36	.64
		Middle/Junior High School	9	5.79	.27
		High School	18	5.45	.66
		Total	39	5.50	.60
Strongly agree		Elementary	10	5.43	.85
		Middle/Junior High School	7	5.60	.82
		High School	11	5.73	.67
		Total	28	5.59	.76
Total		Elementary	72	5.40	.69
		Middle/Junior High School	76	5.57	.72
		High School	115	5.51	.76
		Total	263	5.49	.73

Note. 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Disagree Somewhat, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree Somewhat, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly Agree

To determine whether collective self-esteem differed among elementary, middle, and high school counselors who view themselves as counselors first and those who view themselves as educators first, a multiple regression analysis was performed. No significant difference was found between elementary, middle and high school participants who view themselves as

counselors first and those who view themselves as educators first (F=.82,p=.48). Results of the

ANOVA are shown in Table 38.

Table 38
Results of the Regression Analysis for Collective Self-esteem between Elementary, Middle, and High School Counselors who View Themselves as Counselors First and Those who View Themselves as Educators First

	SS	df	MS	F	p
Regression	1.32	3	.44	.82	.48
Residual	138.40	259	.53		
Total	139.72	262			

Beta values, shown in Table 39, indicate that the simultaneous regressions used in this

model do not predict collective self-esteem (β=.05, .08, .00).

Table 39

Regression Analysis Summary for Collective Self-esteem between Elementary, Middle, and High School Counselors who View Themselves as Counselors First and Those who View Themselves as Educators First

	B	SEB	β	t	p
Collective self-esteem	5.24	.21		24.93	.00
Current school counseling level	.04	.06	.05	.72	.47
"I see myself as an educator that uses counseling skills"	.03	.03	.08	1.32	.19
"I see myself as mental health counselor who works in a school."	6.57E-5	.02	.00	.00	.99

Further, a Pearson product moment correlation yielded no significant correlations (α=.01) between collective self-esteem and current level (elementary, middle, and high school) and role definition (counselor first or educator first position).   Correlation results are located in Table 40.

Table 40
Results of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation between Collective Self-esteem, Current Level of Practice, and Role Definition

		Collective self-esteem	Current school counseling level	"I see myself as an educator that uses counseling skills"	"I see myself as a mental health counselor who works in a school."
Pearson Correlation	Collective Self-esteem	1.00	.05	.09	-.01
	Current school counseling level	.05	1.00	.08	-.08
	"I see myself as an educator that uses counseling skills"	.09	.08	1.00	-.13
	"I see myself as a mental health counselor who works in a school."	.01	-.08	-.13	1.00
p	Collective Self-esteem		.20	.08	.41
	Current school counseling level	.20		.10	.11

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Table 40, cont.

"I see myself as an educator that uses counseling skills"	.08	.10		.02
"I see myself as a mental health counselor who works in a school."	.41	.11	.02	

Research Question 8.

Research Question 8 asked: Does collective self-esteem differ in school counselors who work in urban, suburban, and rural settings? Descriptive statistics, shown in Table 41, were calculated using the area of practice for the participant (item 8) and collective self-esteem [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)]. Possible responses for item 8 included urban, suburban, and rural settings. The possible responses for collective self-esteem ranged from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), disagree somewhat (3), neutral (4), agree somewhat (5), agree   (6), and strongly agree (7).   Of the 270 participants who responded to item 8, the total collective self-esteem was 5.50 (SD=.73). The mean collective self-esteem score for those from urban areas (n=63) was 5.44 (SD=.72), 5.54 (SD=.71) for participants from suburban areas (n=138), and 5.45 (SD=.78) for those from rural areas (n=69).

Table 41

Descriptive Statistics for Collective Self-esteem and Area of Practice

Area of school counseling practice:	n	*M*	*SD*
Urban area	63	5.44	.72
Suburban area	138	5.54	.71
Rural area	69	5.45	.78
Total	270	5.50	.73

To determine whether significant differences existed between collective self-esteem and area of practice, an ANVOA was calculated. No significant differences were found between and within groups (*F*=.61, p=.55 partial η^2=.05). The results of the ANOVA are shown in Table 42.

Table 42

Results of ANOVA between Collective Self-esteem and Area of Practice

	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	.64	2	.32	.61	.55
Within Groups	141.71	267	.53		
Total	142.35	269			

Research Question 9.

Research Question 9 asked: Is there a correlation between role definition (counselor first or educator first) and the credentials held by school counselors? Descriptive statistics, shown in Table 43, were calculated for professional credentials [items 11(1), 11(2), 11(3), 11(4), and

11(5)], the educator first position (item 12), and the counselor first position (item 13). Possible

responses for credentialing included NCC [item 11(1)], NCSC [item 11(2)], NBST [item 11(3)],

LPC or equivalent [item 11(4)], and certified or licensed in the state of practice [item11 (5)].

Because school counselors in the study may have held more than one credential, participants

may have responded to more than one question regarding credentialing [items 11(1), 11(2),

11(3), 11(4), and 11(5)]. Possible responses for role definition [the educator first position (item

12), and the counselor first position (item 13)] included (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3)

disagree somewhat, (4) neutral, (5) agree somewhat, (6) agree, and (7) strongly agree. School

counselors who held the NCC credential had a mean score of 4.67 (SD=1.98) for the educator

first position and a mean score of 4.73 (SD=1.99) for the counselor first position. For counselors

who held the NCSC credential, a mean educator first score of 5.25 (SD=1.83) and a mean

counselor first 4.00 (SD=2.56) were found. School counselors who held the NBST credential

had a mean score of 4.33(SD= 2.52) for the educator first position and a mean score of 4.67

(SD=2.52) for the counselor first position. School counselors who held an LPC or equivalent in

their state of practice had a mean educator first score of 4.51 (SD=2.01) and a mean counselor

first score of 5.23 (SD=2.02). School counselors who were certified or licensed as a school

counselor in the state of practice had a mean educator first score of 5.09 (SD=1.80) and a

counselor first score of 3.99 (SD=1.94).

Table 43
Descriptive Statistics for Credentialing and Role Definition

		"I see myself as an educator that uses counseling skills"	"I see myself as mental health counselor who works in a school setting.
NCC	*M*	4.67	4.73

Table 43, cont.

	n	39	40
	SD	1.98	1.99
NCSC	M	5.25	4.00
	n	8	8
	SD	1.83	2.56
NBST	M	4.33	4.67
	n	3	3
	SD	2.52	2.52
LPC/ Equivalent	M	4.51	5.23
	n	37	39
	SD	2.01	2.02
Certified/ Licensed as a school counselor in the state of practice	M	5.09	3.99
	n	259	259
	SD	1.80	1.94

Note. 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Disagree Somewhat, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree Somewhat, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly Agree

To determine whether there was a correlation between the type of professional credentials held by the participant [items 11(1), 11(2), 11(3), 11(4), and 11(5)], and role definition [the educator first (item 12) and the counselor first position (item 13)], a Pearson product moment correlation was conducted. Results of the test are shown in Table 44. No significant correlations were found with regard to the type of credentials held and the educator first position. A

significant negative correlation was found for the counselor first position and those credentialed as an LPC or equivalent*(r=-.25).*

Table 44

Results for the Pearson Product Moment Correlation for Credentials and Role Definition

		NCC	NCSC	NBST	LPC/ Equivalent	Certified/ Licensed as a school counselor in the state you practice
"I see myself as an educator that uses counseling skills"	Pearson Correlation	.08	-.02	.04	.11	-.07
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.16	.75	.50	.06	.22
	n	287	287	287	287	287
"I see myself as mental health counselor who works in a school setting."	Pearson Correlation	-.15	.00	-.04	-.25*	.01
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.01	.99	.55	.00	.62
	n	287	287	287	287	287

Research Question 10.

Research Question 10 asked: Is there a relationship between role definition (educator first and counselor first) and the primary chosen code of ethics? Descriptive statistics, shown in Table 45 were computed for role definition [educator first (item 12) and counselor first (item 13)] and the primary code of ethics chosen by participants (item 10).   The possible responses for role definition [the educator first position (item 12), and the counselor first position (item 13)] included (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) disagree somewhat, (4) neutral, (5) agree

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somewhat, (6) agree, and (7) strongly agree.   Possible responses for the primary chosen code of

ethics included the ACA Code of Ethics, the ASCA Ethical Standards, and the NBCC Code of

Ethics.   Results are shown in Table 42. Participants who chose the ACA Code of Ethics as the

primary code of ethics they used had a mean educator first score of 4.62 (*SD*=2.03) and a mean

counselor first score of 4.62 (*SD*=2.15). For those who indicated that the ASCA Code of Ethics

was the primary code of ethics they used, the mean educator first score was 5.11 (*SD*=1.81) and

the mean counselor first score was 5.46 (*SD*=1.76).   For those who chose the NBCC Code of

Ethics, the mean educator first score was 5.00 (*SD*=1.96) and the mean counselor first score was

5.46 (*SD*=1.76).

Table 45
Descriptive Statistics for Primary Chosen Ethical Code and Role Definition

		n	*M*	*SD*
"I see myself as an educator that uses counseling skills"	ACA Code of Ethics	34	4.62	2.03
	ASCA Ethical Standards	226	5.11	1.81
	NBCC Code of Ethics	13	5.00	1.96
	Total	273	5.04	1.84
"I see myself as mental health counselor who works in a school setting."	ACA Code of Ethics	34	4.62	2.15
	ASCA Ethical Standards	226	3.84	1.85
	NBCC Code of Ethics	13	5.46	1.76
	Total	273	4.01	1.92

Note.   1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Disagree Somewhat, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree
Somewhat, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly Agree

To determine whether or not a relationship existed between for role definition [educator first (item 12) and counselor first (item 13)] and the primary code of ethics chosen by participants (item 10), an ANOVA was calculated and results are shown in Table 46. No significant difference was found between the educator first and the primary ethical code chosen by participants ($F=1.04$, $p=.35$, $\eta^2=.01$).   A significant difference was found between the counselor first position and the primary chosen code of ethics ($F=6.53$, $p=.002$, $\eta^2=.05$).

Table 46
Results of the ANOVA for Primary Chosen Ethical Code and Role Definition

		SS	df	MS	F	p
"I see myself as an educator that uses counseling skills"	Between Groups	7.08	2	3.54	1.04	.35
	Within Groups	917.48	270	3.40		
	Total	924.56	272			
"I see myself as mental health counselor who works in a school setting."	Between Groups	46.42	2	23.21	6.53	.002
	Within Groups	959.53	270	3.55		
	Total	1005.94	272			

A Bonferroni post hoc test was conducted to determine what relationship was significant. A significant mean difference was found between those who held an educator first position who used the NBCC Code of Ethics as their primary code of ethics and those who held an educator first position and used the ASCA Code of Ethics as their primary code of ethics. Results of the post hoc test are shown in Table 47.

Table 47

Results of Post Hoc Testing for Primary Chosen Code OF Ethics and Role Definition

	(I) What do you see as the PRIMARY set of ethical standards that guides your professional work?	(J) What do you see as the PRIMARY set of ethical standards that guides your professional work?	*M* Difference	*SE*	*p*
"I see myself as an educator that uses counseling skills"	ACA Code of Ethics	ASCA Ethical Standards	-.49	.34	.45
		NBCC Code of Ethics	-.38	.60	1.00
	ASCA Ethical Standards	ACA Code of Ethics	.49	.34	.45
		NBCC Code of Ethics	.11	.53	1.00
	NBCC Code of Ethics	ACA Code of Ethics	.38	.60	1.00
		ASCA Ethical Standards	-.11	.53	1.00
"I see myself as mental health counselor who works in a school."	ACA Code of Ethics	ASCA Ethical Standards	.78	.35	.08
		NBCC Code of Ethics	-.84	.62	.51
	ASCA Ethical Standards	ACA Code of Ethics	-.78	.35	.08
		NBCC Code of Ethics	-1.62	.54	.01
	NBCC Code of Ethics	ACA Code of Ethics	.84	.62	.51
		ASCA Ethical Standards	1.62	.54	.01

Research Question 11.

Research Question 11 asked: Is there is relationship between collective self-esteem and the primary chosen code of ethics? Descriptive statistics, shown in Table 48, were calculated for the total battery of the *Collective Self-esteem Scale* [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)] and primary chosen code of ethics (item 10). The possible responses for collective self-esteem included (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) disagree somewhat, (4) neutral, (5) agree somewhat, (6) agree, and (7) strongly agree. Possible responses for primary chosen code of ethics included the ACA Code of Ethics, the ASCA Ethical Standards, and the NBCC Code of Ethics. Of the 258 participants who responded, the overall mean collective self-esteem score was 5.49 (*SD*=72). Participants who chose the ACA Code of Ethics had a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.18 (*SD*=.76). A mean collective self-esteem score of 5.53 (*SD*= .71) was found for participants who chose the ASCA Ethical Standards. For those who chose the NBCC, a mean collective self-esteem score of 5.63 (*SD*=.63) was found.

Table 48
Descriptive Statistics for Collective Self-esteem and Primary Chosen Code of Ethics

	n	*M*	*SD*
ACA Code of Ethics	34	5.18	.76
ASCA Ethical Standards	213	5.53	.71
NBCC Code of Ethics	11	5.63	.63
Total	258	5.49	.72

An ANOVA was calculated to determine whether differences existed between collective self-esteem [total battery score for items 15(1) to 15(16)] and primary chosen code of ethics

(item 10). Results are shown in Table 49. A non-significant difference was found between

collective self-esteem (F=3.80, p=.02, η^2=.03) and chosen primary code of ethics.

Table 49

Results of the ANOVA for Collective Self-esteem and Primary Chosen Code of Ethics

	SSS	df	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Between Groups	3.84	2	1.92	3.80	.02
Within Groups	129.07	255	.51		
Total	132.92	257			

In summary, the findings of this study indicated that collective self-esteem was relatively

stable and remained moderately high across several demographic variables related to

professional identity. Collective self-esteem remained relatively consistent across level of

practice (elementary, middle, and high school), professional background (teaching versus non-

teaching background), years of total experience and years of experience at the current school,

and area of practice (urban, suburban, and rural). Further, collective self-esteem remained

moderately high for those who were affiliated (with national, state, and other counseling

organization) and those who were not. Results also suggested that collective self-esteem is

constant regardless of variations in credentialing (NCC, NCSC, NBST, LPC, or equivalent,

and/or certified or licensed as a school counselor in the state of practice), chosen code of ethics

(ACA Code of Ethics, ASCA Ethical Standards, or NBCC Code of Ethics), role definition

(educator first or counselor first), and professional pride.

There were three significant findings in the study. A small, significant positive correlation was found between pride in the profession ("I feel proud to be a member of the profession") and collective self-esteem(*r=.28, α=.01*). Also, a small, significant negative correlation was found between those participants who viewed themselves as a counselor first ("I see myself as a mental health counselor who works in a school setting") and held an LPC or equivalent *(r=-.25, α=.01)*. Further, a significant relationship was found between those participants who held the counselor first position and chose the NBCC Code of Ethics as their primary code of ethics and between those participants who held the counselor first position and chose the ASCA Ethical Code as their primary code of ethics (*F=6.53, p=.002,η²=.05*).

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore whether a relationship existed between professional identity of the school counselor and collective self-esteem. Collective self-esteem, according to Luhtanen and Crocker (1992), denotes those aspects of identity that are related to membership in social groups and the value that one places on that membership. In this study, collective self-esteem was measured by participants' scores on the Collective Self-esteem Scale (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992) which consists of 16 items that are scored on a scale from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. Professional identity, although a nebulous concept (Remley & Herlihy 2010), was assumed for the purposes of this study to be comprised of the four elements of having affiliated professional organizations (national, state, and/or other counseling associations), ethical standards or a code of ethics (ACA Code of Ethics, ASCA Ethical Standards, and NBCC Code of Ethics), an accrediting and sanctioning body that deals with preparation, credentialing, and licensure (NCC, NCSC, NBST, LPC or equivalent, and/or certified or licensed in the state of practice), and pride in one's profession("I feel proud to be a member of the profession").

In this chapter, the findings are discussed. Implications for counselors and counselor educators and implications for further research are discussed. Limitations of the study are acknowledged

Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1.

Research Question 1 asked: Does collective self-esteem (CSE) differ among school counselors who work at the elementary, middle, and high school levels? The literature suggests

that distinct differences exist among elementary, middle, and high school counselors and their roles; that high school counselors consistently perform more non-counseling-related tasks and have less direct contact with students than do elementary counselors (Nelson, Robles-Pina, & Nichter, 2007; Scarborough, 2005; Sink, 2005); and that performance of non-counseling related tasks negatively influences the professional commitment and sense of identity of school counselors (Baggerly & Osborn, 2005; Butler & Constantine, 2006) Therefore, differences in CSE across levels were anticipated. However, in this study, no significant differences were found among elementary school (*M*=5.41), middle school (*M*=5.57), and high school (*M*=5.50) counselors.   The mean collective self-esteem scores for each of the groups were almost identical, suggesting that CSE is consistent across levels.

Research Question 2.

Research Question 2 asked: Is there a correlation between collective self-esteem and pride in the profession? A significant correlation was found between collective self-esteem and pride in the profession (*r*=.28). The mean collective self-esteem score for all participants was 5.49. This score falls mid-way between (5) agree somewhat and (6) agree, suggesting that participants moderately agreed that that they felt a belongingness to the school counseling profession. Further, participants in the study indicated a high level of agreement with the statement, "I feel proud to be a member of my profession" with a mean score of 6.24. This finding lends support to Remley and Herlihy's (2010) assertion that pride is important in defining and maintaining professional identity. The significant correlation found between CSE and pride needs to be viewed with caution, however, due to the small effect size (*r²*=.08).

The results of this study do not seem to support the notion that belongingness or pride is affected by the ambiguity and role confusion that has been described as permeating the

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profession (Schmidt & Ciechalski, 2001). This is due, in part, to the evolution of two diverging

schools of thought ("mental health counselor first" or "educator first") that have developed and

been maintained by organizations that support them (Paisley, Ziomek-Daigle, Getch, & Bailey,

2007). Webber and Mascari (2006) suggested that the more splintering that occurs in the role

of the school counselor, the more those roles seemed to be blurred. While no prior research on

the professional identity of school counseling specifically examined the constructs of pride and

belongingness, this study suggests that school counselors may feel a moderately strong sense of

professional pride.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 asked: Is there a difference in collective self esteem among school

counselors with a teaching or non-teaching background? The majority of study participants

(78.7%) indicated that they came from a non-teaching background.

The debate about whether or not school counselors should have teaching experience

has existed since the inception of the National Defense Education Act in the 1950s (Desmond,

West, & Bubenzer, 2007). Though research indicates that the teacher-first position of school

counseling is waning, proponents of teaching experience believe that having school-based

experience enables the school counselor to better navigate the school climate (Bringham & Lee,

2008). Smith (2001) pointed out that some teachers and administrators believe that school

counselors are more effective in delivering student and staff related activities when they have

prior teaching experience. Some states still have a teaching prerequisite to become a school

counselor (Bringham & Lee, 2008; Peterson, Goodman, Keller, & McCauley, 2004; Quarto,

1999). On the other hand, according to Bringham and Lee (2008) and Smith (2001), some

educators and a majority of counselor educators believe that prior teaching experience is not a component to becoming an effective school counselor.

No significant difference in collective self-esteem was found among school counselors with a teaching (*M*=5.43) and a non-teaching (*M*=5.51) background. The mean CSE score was moderately high for both groups, indicating that participants without teaching backgrounds experienced a sense of belongingness to the school counseling profession that was comparable to that of their peers with teaching backgrounds.

Research Question 4.

Research Question 4 asked: Does collective self-esteem differ between school counselors who are professionally affiliated and those who are not? No significant differences were found between school counselors who were affiliated (*M*=5.49) and those who were not (M=5.54). Further, there was no difference in collective self-esteem for those affiliated at the national level (*M*=5.52), the state level (*M*=5.48), or with other associations (*M*= 5.56).

Of the 270 participants who responded, a majority (81.2%) indicated that they were affiliated with national, state, and/or other associations. Over a third who were affiliated (35.2%) were members of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). This finding is inconsistent with an earlier research study conducted by ASCA (2009) which reported that only 11% of practicing school counselors belonged to the organization. The finding also does not support Bauman's (2008) supposition that many school counselors fail to join professional organizations due to the increased price of professional membership. It is possible that more school counselors are joining ASCA in recent years, perhaps in the belief that a strong national association will better serve their interests in economically straitened times, when their positions may be in danger of being eliminated. An alternative explanation is that counselors who were

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affiliated were more likely to respond to the survey than counselors who were not affiliated, and that the sample was not representative of the larger population of school counselors. The fact that no significant differences in CSE were found between affiliated and non-affiliated counselors does not support the expectation that affiliation would be associated with a greater sense of belongingness to the profession.

Research Questions 5 and 6.

Research Question 5 asked: Is there a correlation between years of experience as a school counselor and collective self- esteem? Research Question 6 asked: Does collective self-esteem differ by years of total experience and years of experience at the current school? No mean differences in collective self-esteem were found for total years of experience (M=5.50) or years of experience at the current school (*M*=5.49). This finding suggests that collective self-esteem may remain stable over time. It is possible that collective self-esteem is more closely related to a sense of belonging to the counseling profession rather than to the particular school in which the counselor practices. If so, it is logical that CSE would remain stable even when counselors relocate from school to school.

Research Question 7.

Research Question 7 asked: Does collective self-esteem differ among elementary, middle, and high school counselors who view themselves as mental health counselors first and those who view themselves as educators first? No significant differences in collective self-esteem were found among elementary, middle, and high school counselors who view themselves as mental health counselors first and those who view themselves as educators first (*M*=5.49).

According to Paisley et al. (2007), school counselors either view themselves as mental health counselors working in the school setting or as educators using counseling skills. Participants agreed with the statement "I see myself as an educator that uses counseling skills" (*M*=5.05). Of those who responded, 69 participants (24.0%) strongly agreed, 81 participants (28.2%) agreed, and 57 participants (19.9%) agreed somewhat with the educator first position. Further, their response to the statement "I see myself as a mental health counselor who works in the school setting" was neutral (*M*=4.01). Of those who responded to this item, 33 participants (11.5%) strongly agreed, 45 participants (15.7%) agreed, and 59 participants (20.6%) agreed somewhat with the mental health counselor first position. The findings seem to be consistent with previous literature that suggests that two competing roles have developed within the profession of school counseling. Participants in this study tended to favor an educator first position Webber (2004) conducted a study with New Jersey school counselors and found that nearly three fourths of those surveyed viewed themselves as counselors working in a school setting, as opposed to 20% who viewed themselves as primarily educators.

Research indicates that differences exist between elementary, middle, and high school counselors and their roles. Scarborough and Culbreath (2008) found that elementary school counselors indicated that they were practicing as they preferred, as opposed to their high school counselors counterparts who indicated that they were not practicing as they preferred. High school counselors consistently perform more non-counseling related tasks and have less direct contact with students and their families than elementary school counselors (Nelson, Robles-Pina, & Nichter, 2007; Scarborough, 2005; Sink, 2005). The results of this study indicated that school counselors at the elementary, middle, and high school level experienced no significant differences in collective self-esteem. It is possible that the high school counselor participants in

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this study were indeed practicing as they prefer. In this study, CSE was not related to whether

counselors at any level saw themselves as mental health counselors first or educators first.

Perhaps the distinction in role is more important to the professional associations that promote

them, such as ACA and ASCA, than it is to school counseling practitioners themselves.

Research Question 8

Research Question 8 asked: Does collective self-esteem differ in school counselors who

work in urban, suburban, and rural settings? No significant differences were found in collective

self-esteem among school counselors who work in urban (*M*=5.44), suburban (*M*=5.54), and

rural (*M*=5.45) settings. Literature has suggested that differences exist between rural school

counselors and their urban and suburban school counselor counterparts. Rural school counselors

carry the sole responsibility for implementing guidance and support services to their students

(Hines, 2002), and they may feel a sense of isolation and ineffectiveness (Morrissette, 2000).

Results of this study do not support Morrissette's assertion. In contrast, participants in this study

reported similar levels of collective self-esteem, or sense of belonging, across urban, suburban,

and rural settings.

Research Question 9.

Research Question 9 asked: Is there a correlation between role definition (counselor first

or educator first) and the credentials held by school counselors? No significant correlations were

found for participants who held the NCC (*M*=4.67), NCSC (*M*=5.25), NBST (*M*= 4.33), LPC or

equivalent (*M*=4.51), and/or being certified or licensed in the state of practice (*M*=5.09) and the

educator first position. No significant correlations were found for participants who held the

NCC (*M*=4.73), NCSC (*M*=4.00), NBST (*M*=4.67), and/or who were certified or licensed in the

state of practice (*M*=3.99) and the educator first position. A significant negative correlation *(r=-*
.25) was found for the counselor first position and those participants who held an LPC or
equivalent *(M=5.23)*. The correlation must be viewed with caution because the effect size
(*r²*=.06) is small.

Researchers have pointed out that advanced credentialing has had an impact on the
professional identity of the school counselor (NBCC, 2009; NBPTS, 2009; Webber & Mascari,
2006). The results of this study may underscore the ambiguity that seems to exist in role
identity. Even though the National Board of Certified School Counselors and the National Board
of Certified Counselors promote the idea that school counselors are counselors first and the
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards views the role of the school counselor as
primarily that of educator (NBCC, 2009; NBPTS, 2009; Webber & Mascari, 2006), in this study
found no correlation was found between the credential held and how participants defined their
role. Further, there was no correlation between those who defined their role as an educator first
and were credentialed as an LPC or equivalent. These participants may have a clear distinction
about the demands and responsibilities of their role as an LPC and that of an educator. For those
participants who had a counselor first position and held an LPC or equivalent, the demands may
be conflicting or less clearly defined.

Research Question 10.

Research Question 10 asked: Is there a relationship between role definition (educator
first and counselor first) and the primary chosen code of ethics? No significant difference was
found between the educator first position and those who chose the ACA *Code of Ethics*
(*M*=4.62), the ASCA *Ethical Standards* (*M*=5.11), and the NBCC *Code of Ethics* (*M*=5.00). A

significant difference was found between the counselor first position and the primary chosen code of ethics. A significant mean difference was found between those who held a counselor first position who used the NBCC *Code of Ethics* as their primary code of ethics(M= 5.46) and those who held a counselor first position and used the ASCA *Ethical Standards* as their primary code of ethics (M=3.84).

The literature indicated that the bodies that sanction the various codes of ethics have fundamental differences with respect to how they define school counselor roles (ASCA, 2001; NBCC, 2009). According to the National Board of Certified Counselors (2009), the NBCC Ethics Code is a general code of ethics that applies to all those certified by NBCC regardless of any other professional affiliation and promotes the general standards of all counselors. As such, the NBCC views the role of the school counselor as that of a counselor first. In contrast, the ASCA Ethical Standards, developed and sanctioned by American School Counselor Association, were designed specifically for those certified or licensed in school counseling with unique qualifications and skills for addressing the academic, personal and social, and career needs of all students in their charge (ASCA, 2001). Historically, ASCA (2001) has supported an educator first position with respect to the role of the counselor. This is consistent with the findings of this study. Participants who used the NBCC Code of Ethics as their primary code of ethics were more likely to have a counselor first position than those who used the ASCA Ethical Standards as their primary code of ethics.

Research Question 11.

Research Question 11 asked: Is there is a difference between collective self-esteem and the primary chosen code of ethics? No significant difference was found in collective self esteem between those who chose the ACA Code of Ethics (M=5.18), the ASCA Ethical Standards

(*M*=5.53), and the NBCC Code of Ethics (*M*=5.49). The collective self-esteem scores of study participants were moderately high and consistent across the primary chosen code of ethics. This suggests that the primary code of ethics chosen by participants had no bearing on their sense of belongingness to the profession.

Implications for School Counselors

In this study, the relationship was explored between professional identity and collective self-esteem in a sample of school counselors. Prior research indicated that affiliated professional organizations; ethical standards or a code of ethics; an accrediting and sanctioning body that deals with preparation, credentialing, and licensure; and pride in one's profession are necessary in the development of professional identity (Gale & Austin, 2003; Remley & Herlihy, 2010). This research study was the first to examine these constructs and collective self-esteem as they relate to school counseling.

The results of the study point to implications for school counselors. The requirements to practice school counseling vary by state (ASCA, 2009). Further, job requirements for school counselors vary within the state, district, and even within schools. Paisley, et al. (2007) found that school counselors either view themselves as mental health counselors working in the school setting or as educators using counseling skills. The findings of this study seem to be consistent with those of Paisley et al., suggesting that two competing roles have developed within the profession of school counseling. Regardless of the variability, however, participants in this study seemed to have a high level of pride and belongingness related to the profession of school counseling.   As such, school counselors may want to continue to network with other professionals and participate in professional development opportunities to reconcile the gap that seems to exist in role definition.

Implications for Counselor Educators

Graduate programs vary in course content, delivery personnel, and clinical training of school counselors (CACREP, 2009; Gale & Austin, 2003). According to Bradley and Fiorini (1999), clinical training for school counselors is inconsistent, which makes it difficult to ensure that all school counseling students receive comparable experiences. The findings of this study point to theoretical and training implications for counselor educators. Study participants indicated having neutral feelings about the counselor first position, agreement with the educator first position, and a moderately high sense of belonging to the profession. As such, counselor educators may want to teach both models or try to reconcile them into a consensus model to reduce he variability and better meet the demands of the profession.

Whereas the American Association of State Counseling Boards (AASCB) is an entity that is responsible for the licensure and certification of counselors throughout the United States (AASCB, 2010), no entity has been created to promote the existence of a universal professional identity for school counselors.   School counseling is largest growing specialty in the counseling profession, yet the profession has no dedicated regulatory association such as the AASCB (ASCA, 2009). Counselor educators might work toward the establishment of a board that oversees the reciprocity, consistency, and professional development of school counseling.

Implications for Future Research

The results of this study have several implications for future research. Because this study utilized cluster sampling and included only a small percentage of practicing school counselors, a replication study on a national level may be warranted. A larger, national, representative sample would increase the generalizability of the findings.

Role diffusion is a well documented issue within the school counseling profession. Results indicated that the participants in this study lacked consensus related to role definition. As the social justice movement becomes more prevalent in the counseling profession, a social work model seems to be developing and gaining ground. For example, one participant who responded to the survey indicated that she spends more and more of her time connecting students with community resources so the students can address basic survival needs and that she sees herself as a teacher, a counselor, and in a growing role as a social worker. Future researchers might study how school counselors balance the demands of these multiple roles.

Professional identity is defined in the literature by having affiliated professional organizations; ethical standards or a code of ethics; an accrediting and sanctioning body that deals with preparation, credentialing, and licensure and professional pride (Gale & Austin, 2003; Remley & Herlihy, 2010). Future researchers might examine professional identity through a qualitative lens. School counselors might be interviewed regarding their perceptions of what constitutes their professional identity. In the present study, participants indicated a high level of professional pride and collective self-esteem. Future researchers might explore how school counselors qualify the relationship between pride and belongingness.

Limitations

Participants were asked to assign certain values to dimensions of their professional identity and social/collective identity. As such, they were asked to evaluate their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes related to identity at the time of this study. Thoughts, feelings, and attitudes might change over time; therefore, the results represent the participants' attitudes only at the time they responded to the survey. Further, some participants may have responded in socially desirable ways. A cluster sample was used in this study. Because the sample in the

present study was small and was limited to school counselors practicing in five states (Washington, Colorado, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Florida), the results may have limited generalizability to all school counselors.

Although the *Collective Self-esteem Scale* has been used in previous studies related to school counselor burnout, the ability of school counselor-trainees ability to conceptualize cases, and counselor job dissatisfaction and job performance (Butler & Constantine, 2005 Yu, Lee, & Lee, 2002), the instrument has never been used for the purpose of this study. It is possible that the instrument did not accurately measure the construct of belongingness.

Conclusions

This quantitative study was designed to examine the professional identity of school counselors. The purpose was to explore the relationship between professional identity and collective self-esteem among school counselors.

The findings of this study indicated that collective self-esteem was relatively stable and remained moderately high across several demographic variables related to professional identity. Collective self-esteem remained relatively consistent across level of practice (elementary, middle, and high school), professional background (teaching versus non-teaching background), years of total experience and years of experience at the current school, and area of practice (urban, suburban, and rural). Further, collective self-esteem remained moderately high for those who were affiliated (with national, state, and other counseling organization) and those who were not. Results also suggested that collective self-esteem is constant regardless of variations in credentialing (NCC, NCSC, NBST, LPC, or equivalent, and/or certified or licensed as a school counselor in the state of practice), chosen code of ethics (ACA Code of Ethics, ASCA Ethical

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Standards, or NBCC Code of Ethics), role definition (educator first or counselor first), and professional pride.

The findings also suggest that some significant relationships may exist related to professional identity. A small yet significant positive correlation was found between pride in the profession ("I feel proud to be a member of the profession") and collective self-esteem. Additionally, a small, significant negative correlation was found between those participants who viewed themselves as a counselor first ("I see myself as a mental health counselor who works in a school setting") and held an LPC or equivalent. Further, a significant relationship was found between those participants who held the counselor first position and chose the NBCC Code of Ethics as their primary code of ethics and between those participants who held the counselor first position and chose the ASCA Ethical Code as their primary code of ethics.

What constitutes the professional identity of school counselors? While the results of this study lend support to the documented variability that exists in the professional identity of school counselors, participants had a moderately high degree of pride in the profession and collective self-esteem. Perhaps, these constructs have greater bearing on school counselors' professional identity than has been previously recognized.

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APPENDIX A

Section I: Demographic Information

1. Sex:

___ Male

___ Female

2. Race/Ethnicity:

___ American Indian or Alaska Native

___ Asian

___Black or African American

___Hispanic or Latino

___Middle Eastern

___Mixed Race/Ethnicity

___Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

___White/Caucasian

3. State/District in which you currently practice:

___Colorado

___Florida

___Minnesota

___Pennsylvania

___ Washington

4. Years of Experience as a School Counselor:

___1

___2

___3

___4

___5

___6

___7

___8

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___10

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___13

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___21

___22

___23

___24

___25+

5. Years of Experience as a School Counselor at the current school:

___1

___2

___3

___4

___5

___6

___7

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___10

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___21

___22

___23

___24

___25+

6. Current School Counseling Level:

____Elementary (Pre-kindergarten-Fourth)

____Middle/Junior High School (Fifth through eighth)

____Senior High School (Ninth through twelfth)

7. The majority of your professional time has been spent as:

____Teacher

____Non-teacher

8. Current area of school counseling practice:

____Urban

____Suburban

____Rural

Section II - Professional Identity Assessment

9. Please mark what professional organizations/affiliations to which you currently belong:

A. National Counselor association membership:

____American Counseling Association

____Association for Assessment in Counseling and Education (AACE)

____Association for Adult Development and Aging (AADA)

____Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC)

____American College Counseling Association (ACCA)

____Association for Counselors and Educators in Government (ACEG)

____Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)

____Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Counseling

(ALGBTIC)

____Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD)

____American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA)

____American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA)

____American School Counselor Association (ASCA)

____Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in

Counseling (ASERVIC)

____Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW)

____Counseling Association for Humanistic Education and Development (C-AHEAD)

____Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ)

____International Association of Addictions and Offender Counselors (IAAOC)

____International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors (IAMFC)

____National Career Development Association (NCDA)

____National Employment Counseling Association (NECA)

B. State counselor association membership:

____ State Counselor Association American Counseling Association

____State Association for Assessment in Counseling and Education

____State Association for Adult Development and Aging

____State Association for Creativity in Counseling

____State American College Counseling Association

____State Association for Counselors and Educators in Government

____State Association for Counselor Education and Supervision

____State Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Counseling

____State Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development

____State Mental Health Counselors Association

____State Rehabilitation Counseling Association

____State School Counselor Association

____State Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling

____State Association for Specialists in Group Work

____State Counseling Association for Humanistic Education and Development

____State Counselors for Social Justice

____State Association of Addictions and Offender Counselors

____State Career Development Association

____State Employment Counseling Association

C. Other

___ Other counselor association membership. Please specify.

D. None

___No membership

10. What do you see as the PRIMARY set of ethical standards that guides your professional work?

____ACA Code of Ethics

____ASCA Ethical standards

____NBCC Code of Ethics

11. What professional credential(s) do you hold? [check all that apply].

____ NCC

____NCSC

____NBST

____LPC or equivalent

____ certified/licensed in the state where you practice

12. I see myself as an educator who uses counseling skills.

___strongly disagree

___disagree

___disagree somewhat

___neutral

___agree somewhat

___agree

___strongly agree

13. I see myself as a mental health counselor who works in a school setting.

___strongly disagree

___disagree

___disagree somewhat

___neutral

___agree somewhat

___agree

___strongly agree

14. I feel proud to be a member of my profession.

___strongly disagree

___disagree

___disagree somewhat

___neutral

___agree somewhat

___agree

___strongly agree

Section III- Collective Self-esteem Scale (CSE)

15. INSTRUCTIONS: We are all members of different social groups or social categories. One category may pertain to gender, race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class. Please consider your membership to the profession of school counseling, and respond to the following statements on the basis of how you feel about those groups and your memberships in them. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these statements.   Please read each statement carefully, and respond by using the following scale from 1 to 7:

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I am a worthy member of the social groups I belong to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	I often regret that I belong to some of the social groups I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	Overall, my social groups are considered good by others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	Overall, my group memberships have very little to do with how I feel about myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	I feel I don't have much to offer to the social groups I belong to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	In general, I'm glad to be a member of the social groups I belong to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	Most people consider my social groups, on the average, to be more ineffective than other social groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	The social groups I belong to are an important reflection of who I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	I am a cooperative participant in the social groups I belong to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10.	Overall, I often feel that the social groups of which I am a member are not worthwhile.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	In general, others respect the social groups that I am a member of.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	The social groups I belong to are unimportant to my sense of what kind of a person I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.	I often feel I'm a useless member of my social groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	I feel good about the social groups I belong to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.	In general, others think that the social groups I am a member of are unworthy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16.	In general, belonging to social groups is an important part of my self image.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

APPENDIX B

First Electronic Message

Dear School Counselor:

     I am writing to request your assistance with my dissertation study titled *The Relationship between Professional Identity and Collective Self-esteem in School Counseling*. Please take approximately 15 minutes to read the following information and follow the hyperlink to complete the Inventory.

     The purpose of the study is to investigate the relationship between components of professional identity and collective self-esteem (how important school counselors perceive their professional group membership). Information will be gathered related professional pride, affiliation with professional organizations, credentialing, and guiding ethical principles. Additional information will be gathered regarding demographic information, years of practice, level of practice and state/area of practice. I plan to use the data from the survey to assist school counselors and counselor educators in clarifying factors that may contribute to school counselor professional identity. Your answers on the survey will provide important information that the school counseling profession can use to ultimately strengthen the profession.

     There will be no way to identify you after you submit your answers, therefore all information that you provide is anonymous. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. If you are willing to assist me with this important part of my study, please click the following link to connect to *The Relationship between Professional Identity and Collective Self-esteem in School Counseling.*
       http://www.qualtrics.com
     If you are not connected automatically, cut-and-paste the link into the address box on your web browser and then press enter.

     You will indicate your consent for participation in this study by completing and electronically submitting the survey. As in most internet communication, you may have a record of exchange in a cache somewhere on your computer system or internet service provider's log file. As a precaution, I suggest that you clean out your temporary internet files and close your browser after submitting your survey. I want to remind you again that the information you are transmitting is unspecified and unidentifiable.

     Your participation in this study is **entirely voluntary**; you may withdraw your consent and terminate participation at any time without consequence. The risks associated with this study are minimal. Some individuals may tire while answering the questions. If you would like additional information about this study or would like to discuss any discomforts you may experience, please send your request to the investigator of this study, Susan J. Foster, by email at sjfoster@uno.edu. You may also contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Barbara Herlihy, by email at bherlihy@uno.edu or by telephone, 504-280-6662, for more information regarding this study.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Susan J. Foster, M.Ed., NCC
Doctoral Candidate
University of New Orleans
348 Bicentennial Education Building
University of New Orleans, Lakefront Campus 2000
Lakeshore Drive New Orleans, LA 70148

Note: If you do not wish to receive any more emails concerning this research, please click the following link: https://www.qualtrics.com/optout.

Second Electronic Message

Dear Professional Counselor:

This is the final reminder for those of you who have not had the opportunity to participate in my dissertation study titled *The Relationship between Professional Identity and Collective Self-esteem in School Counseling*. Please take approximately 15 minutes to read the following information and follow the hyperlink to complete the Inventory. **If you have already participated in this study by completing the survey thank you again for your participation.**

The purpose of the study is to investigate the relationship between components of professional identity and collective self-esteem (how important school counselors perceive their professional group membership). Information will be gathered related professional pride, affiliation with professional organizations, credentialing, and guiding ethical principles. Additional information will be gathered regarding demographic information, years of practice, level of practice and state/area of practice. I plan to use the data from the survey to assist school counselors and counselor educators in clarifying factors that may contribute to school counselor professional identity. Your answers on the survey will provide important information that the school counseling profession can use to ultimately strengthen the profession.

There will be no way to identify you after you submit your answers, therefore all information that you provide is anonymous. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. If you are willing to assist me with this important part of my study, please click the following link to connect to *The Relationship between Professional Identity and Collective Self-esteem in School Counseling.*

http://www.qualtrics.com

If you are not connected automatically, cut-and-paste the link into the address box on your web browser and then press enter.

You will indicate your consent for participation in this study by completing and electronically submitting the survey. As in most internet communication, you may have a record of exchange in a cache somewhere on your computer system or internet service provider's log file. As a precaution, I suggest that you clean out your temporary internet files and close your browser after submitting your survey. I want to remind you again that the information you are transmitting is unspecified and unidentifiable.

Your participation in this study is **entirely voluntary**; you may withdraw your consent and terminate participation at any time without consequence. The risks associated with this study are minimal. Some individuals may tire while answering the questions. If you would like additional information about this study or would like to discuss any discomforts you may experience, please send your request to the investigator of this study, Susan J. Foster, by email at

sjfoster@uno.edu. You may also contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Barbara Herlihy, by email at bherlihy@uno.edu or by telephone, 504-280-6662, for more information regarding this study.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Susan J. Foster, M.Ed., NCC
Doctoral Candidate
University of New Orleans
348 Bicentennial Education Building
University of New Orleans, Lakefront Campus 2000
Lakeshore Drive New Orleans, LA 70148

   Note: If you do not wish to receive any more emails concerning this research, please click the following link: https://www.qualtrics.com/optout.

APPENDIX C

University of New Orleans IRB Approval

*University Committee for the Protection
of Human Subjects in Research*

University of New Orleans

_____

Campus Correspondence

Principal Investigator: Barbara Herlihy

Co-Investigator:Susan J. Foster

Date: May 20, 2010

Protocol Title:The relationship between Professional Identity and Collective Self-esteem in School counselors

IRB#:04May10

The IRB has deemed that the research and procedures described in this protocol application are exempt from federal regulations under 45 CFR 46.101category 2 due to the fact that this research will involve the use of interview procedures. Although information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research wouldn't reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Exempt protocols do not have an expiration date; however, if there are any changes made to this protocol that may cause it to be no longer exempt from CFR 46, the IRB requires another standard application from the investigator(s) which should provide the same information that is in this application with changes that may have changed the exempt status.

If an adverse, unforeseen event occurs (e.g., physical, social, or emotional harm), you are required to inform the IRB as soon as possible after the event.

Best wishes on your project!

Sincerely,

Robert D. Laird, Chair

UNO Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research

APPENDIX D

Permission to Use the Collective Self-esteem Scale

Permission to use the CSE Scale
Jennifer K Crocker [crocker.37@osu.edu]

Sent: Thursday, September 23, 2010 7:50 AM

To: Susan Jane Foster

Dear Susan,

You have my permission to use the Collective Self-esteem Scale

in your research.

Best,

Jennifer Crocker

Ohio Eminent Scholar and Professor of Psychology

1835 Neil Avenue

Columbus, OH 43210

Office: 614-292-0985

Email: crocker.37@osu.edu

VITA

The author of was born in Starkville, Louisiana. She obtained her Bachelor's degree in

psychology from Southeastern Louisiana University in 2003. She received her Master's degree

in counselor education in 2006. In 2007, she began to pursue a PhD in counselor education and

supervision.