Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision

Volume 18 | Number 2 Article 2

2024

A 20-Year Review of School Counselor Roles: Discrepancies Between Actual Practice and Existing Models

Joy J. Burnham
University of Alabama - Tuscaloosa, jburnham@ua.edu

Heather Fye
University of Alabama, hjfye@ua.edu

C. Marie Jackson
University of Alabama (retired), c.marie.jackson@gmail.com

Michelle Ocampo
University of Alabama, mocampo@crimson.ua.edu

Leah Clark
University of Alabama, lmclark4@crimson.ua.edu

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Recommended Citation

Burnham, J. J., Fye, H., Jackson, C. M., Ocampo, M., & Clark, L. (2024). A 20-Year Review of School Counselor Roles: Discrepancies Between Actual Practice and Existing Models. *Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision, 18*(2). 10.70013/z4hl7wy9

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Abstract

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Keywords

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This article is available in Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision: https://research.library.kutztown.edu/jcps/vol18/iss2/2

JOURNAL OF COUNSELOR PREPARATION AND SUPERVISION
The official journal of the North Atlantic Region Association for Counselor Education and Supervision

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Received: 02/08/23
Revised: 02/15/24
Accepted: 04/13/24

Joy J. Burnham, Heather Fye, C. Marie Jackson, Michelle Ocampo, Leah Clark

Abstract

Today's role-related issues in the school counseling literature are similar to the concerns from 100 years ago. To examine roles, Burnham and Jackson (2000) reported significant discrepancies between the actual practice of school counselors and the ideal roles identified in the literature, prior to the publication of the ASCA National Model. This replication study reexamines the status of school counselor roles twenty years later and includes roles addressed in the ASCA National Model. Overall, school counselor participants reported, on average, engaging in individual counseling for 35.37% of their time, 20.63% of time in small groups, 34.67% of time in classroom guidance, and 36.37% of time in nonguidance duties. Additional rates of role engagement are described along with offering comparisons between the present study and Burnham and Jackson's (2000) findings. Implications for the school counseling profession are discussed.

Keywords: school counselor, roles, nonguidance duties, ASCA National Model, counseling

Historically speaking, school counseling is a relatively young field (Gysbers, 2010; Schmidt, 2008; Studer, 2015). Yet, calls to define and structure the role of the school counselor appear in the literature over twelve decades (American School Counselor Association, [ASCA] 2021b; 2022a; 2022b; 2022c; Astramovich et al., 2013; Brewer, 1918; Brown, 1989; Culbreth et al., 2005; Fitch, 1936; Furlong et al., 1979; Gysbers, 2010; Gysbers & Henderson, 1994, 2001; 2014; Hart & Prince, 1970; Herr & Cramer, 1965; Hoyt, 1962; Kaplan & Gladding, 2011; Liberman, 2004; Lortie, 1965; Myers, 1924; Ohlsen, 1955; Pietrofesa & Vriend, 1971; Tennyson et al., 1989). Among early school counseling researchers, there were discussions about role-related concerns (Brewer, 1918; Fitch, 1936; Myers, 1924). While Myers (1924) reminded his readership that schools "load the vocational counselor with so many duties foreign to the office that little real counseling can be done" (p. 141), Brewer (1918) and Fitch (1936) conveyed messages about too many duties and responsibilities. Nearly eight decades after Brewer (1918), Murray (1995) noted little change, stating "the role of the school counselor reflects a history of unclear definition and confusion" (p. 6).

This type of role confusion described early in the school counseling field has continued into the 21st Century. At the turn of the century, researchers examined the landscape of school counseling (Green & Keys, 2001; Gysbers & Henderson, 2001; Johnson, 2000; Sink & MacDonald, 1998) and offered direction and hope for continued transformation. Nonetheless, two decades later, many studies point to role-related concerns, particularly role ambiguity (Astramovich et al.,

Joy J. Burnham, University of Alabama – Tuscaloosa); **Heather Fye**, University of Alabama; **C. Marie Jackson**, University of Alabama (retired); **Michelle Ocampo**, University of Alabama; **Leah Clark**, University of Alabama. Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Joy J. Burnham, University of Alabama (jburnham@ua.edu)

2013; Blake, 2020; Burnham & Jackson, 2000; Cervoni & DeLucia-Waack, 2011; Chandler et al., 2018; Culbreth et al., 2005; Freeman & Coll, 1997; Havlik et al., 2019; Johnson, 2000; Lambie et al, 2019; Levy & Lemberger-Truelove, 2021).

As we move forward into the 2020s, we have calls to refine school counseling roles and work on our professional identity (DeKruyf et al., 2013; Lambie et al., 2019; Levy & Lemberger-Truelove, 2021). For instance, Lambie et al. (2019) explained that "the identity and role of school counselors have historically fluctuated in scope and focus, leading to role ambiguity" (p. 51). Similarly, Blake (2020) revealed that without a clear job description, school counselors quickly would become the "dumping ground for tasks that did not fit under someone else's job description" (p. 320). The American School Counselor Associated (ASCA) published the National Model, which is now in its fourth edition, to provide a framework for school counselors' practices (ASCA, 2019). Most recently, while the ASCA State of the Profession Report (2021b) underlined substantial progress, they also noted role confusion and the need for continuous improvement in the field. Burnham and Jackson (2000) conducted a study on school counselor time spent in various roles. This study was completed before the implementation of the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2019). Our study seeks to understand the amount of direct and indirect services time that school counselors are engaging in and since the implementation of the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2019).

School Counselor Role History

The Formative Years

The formative years (1900s) of the school counseling field were related to vocational guidance. Teachers served as vocational guidance counselors in the 1920s and 1930s (Gysbers & Henderson, 2001). During the 1940s and 1950s, important legislation and initiatives increased the training and hiring of school counselors (Gysbers, 2010). The National Defense Education Act in 1958 offered additional support for school counselor role development. The 1960s ushered in clarity and, more specifically, "role and function" for the school counselor, and additional legislation. In the 1960s, ASCA introduced the early professional journals (*The School Counselor* and the *Elementary School Guidance and Counseling Journal)* and the number of textbooks about school counseling increased, offering "a new, expanded role for school counselors" (Schmidt, 2008, p. 16).

From Comprehensive School Counseling Models to Transforming School Counseling

During the 1970s, comprehensive school counseling programs emerged across the U.S. (Schmidt, 2008). During the 1980s, the comprehensive developmental models of Gysbers and Henderson (2014) and Myrick (2011) were widely implemented. Initiatives and leadership in the late 1990s guided the transforming school counseling movement (Education Trust, 1997).

The Transforming School Counseling Initiative (TSCI; Martin 2002) was a nationwide program focused on developing a curriculum for the preparation of school counselors to meet the changing needs of the 21st century (Education Trust, 1997). The vision of the TSCI included developing the mindset in counselors-in-training so they understood that they would ultimately determine the delivery of the school counseling program using leadership and advocacy skills and importantly using their consulting and collaboration skills when working with the administration, parents, and school community. In addition, an awareness of social issues impacting students' achievement was clearly part of the vision of the TSCI as an essential underpinning for counselors in a new era (Jackson et al., 2002) with an academic focus as the primary goal for the school counseling program (House & Martin, 1998).

The Transforming School Counseling Initiative (TSCI; Martin, 2002) certainly re-energized the development of the ASCA National Model. The field moved from "service-driven" to "standards-

based" models (Dahir & Stone, 2006, p. 43). This standards-based movement resulted from the seminal work of Campbell and Dahir (1997) and ASCA's response "to the demand for educational reform by standardizing the school counselor role and developing the ASCA National Standards" (Studer, 2015, p. 94).

The ASCA National Model

The ASCA National Model (ASCA 2003; 2005; 2013; 2019), currently in its fourth edition, was published initially in 2003. The ASCA National Model was pivotal in providing "uniformity to help the profession become as integral, understood and valued as other disciplines in a school building" (ASCA, 2019, p. ix). The ASCA National Model (2019) also offers definition to the school counselor's role, is a blueprint for building a comprehensive program based on best practice, and offers the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success (ASCA, 2021a) to guide children and adolescents to "achieve their highest potential" (ASCA, 2019, p. 2)

There are four quadrants in the ASCA National Model (2019), including Define, Manage, Deliver, and Assess. The ASCA themes are leadership, advocacy, collaboration, and systemic change. A multitiered systems of support (MTSS) approach is used to reach students, based on their needs. It is recommended that school counselors spend 80% of their time in direct student services (i.e., providing Instruction, Appraisal, Counseling). For example, direct student services include interventions such as individual counseling, small group counseling, and classroom guidance. ASCA expects counseling to be brief, short-term, with appropriate referrals for long-term counseling needs of students. The indirect student services are provided by such interventions as consultation, collaboration, and referrals (ASCA, 2019).

It is recommended that school counselors spend approximately 20% of their time in functions related to planning and support (ASCA, 2019). The ASCA National Model includes appropriate and inappropriate activities for school counselors. Examples of appropriate activities include academic advising, interpreting aptitude and achievement tests, providing short-term counseling, using consultation and collaboration with administrators and teachers (ASCA, 2019).

Nonguidance Duties

Examples of inappropriate activities include building the master schedule, coordinating testing, serving as a substitute, computing grade-point averages, writing individual education plans, and entering data (ASCA, 2019). Nonguidance duties have been prevalent concerns (Burnham & Jackson, 2000; Chandler et al., 2018, Lieberman, 2004; Mau et al, 2016; Moyer, 2011) known to distract school counselors from the work they are trained to provide and negatively related to their ability to implement the ASCA National Model (Fye et al., 2018).

The Current Study

Burnham and Jackson (2000) examined the roles of the school counselor three years before the initial ASCA National Model (2003) was published. They examined the actual roles of school counselors and compared them to the ideal roles described in prominent comprehensive, developmental counseling models (e.g., Gysbers & Henderson, 1994; Myrick, 1993). Burnham and Jackson (2000) reported significant discrepancies between school counselor's actual practice and the ideal roles identified in the literature. Because this article continues to resonate with the school counseling readership (i.e., cited 500+ times: 200+ articles, 200+ theses/dissertations, and 10 books [cf. Google Scholar, June 2024]) and calls to refine our professional identity continue (e.g., Levy & Lemberger-Truelove, 2021), this current study reexamines the status of school counselor roles twenty years after the original study.

This current study replicates the actual versus ideal roles of the school counselor study (Burnham & Jackson, 2000) to the degree possible.

Nonetheless, to examine where we are now, compared to 20 years ago, some modifications were made. For example, in this current study, the actual roles of school counselors are compared to the ideal roles of the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2019), while Burnham and Jackson (2000) compared to the models offered by Gysbers and Henderson (1994) and Myrick (1993). Descriptive data analyses were used to answer the following research questions: (1) What percentage of time is allocated to interventions used by the school counselors in this study? (2) How do the counseling interventions reported in this study compare with the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2019)?

Method

Participants

Participants in the current study consisted of 291 practicing school counselors. Their ages ranged from 25 to 71 or older (*M* = 43.8, *Mdn* = 44.0, *SD* = 29.0). Participants identified as female (*n* = 229, 78.7%), male (*n* = 20, 6.9%), another preferred identification (*n* = 5, 1.7%), and 37 (12.7%) participants did not respond to this question. The race and ethnicity of participants included African American/Black (*n* = 61, 21.0%); American Indian/Alaskan Native (*n* = 2, 0.7%); Latin/Hispanic/Spanish (*n* = 2, 0.7%); White (*n* = 182, 62.5%); Multiracial (*n* = 5, 1.7%); another preferred identification (*n* = 3, 1.0%), and 36 (*n* = 12.4%) did not answer.

Participants reported 1 to 30 years of experience (*M* = 10.2, *Mdn* = 8.0, *SD* = 7.2). Regarding grade levels of practice, 72 (24.7%) worked in Elementary (K-5) schools, 39 (13.4%) worked in Middle (6-8) schools, 71 (24.4%) worked in High (9-12) schools, 69 (23.7%) worked in Other (e.g., K-8, K-12, etc.), and 40 (13.8%) did not respond. For setting, participants worked in rural (*n* = 139, 47.8%), suburban (*n* = 70, 24.1%), and urban (*n* = 40, 13.7%), while 42 (14.4%) did not respond. Participants reported their school counselor-to-student ratio was: 1-250 (*n* = 31, 10.7%), 251-500 (*n* = 160, 55.0%), 501-750 (*n* = 55, 18.9%), 751-1000 (*n* = 6, 2.1%), 1501-1750 (*n* = 1, 0.3%), with 38 (13.1%) missing responses.

School counselor participants reported working 1 to 50 or more hours per week (*M* = 41.9, *Mdn* = 40.0, *SD* = 7.8). One hundred ninety-five participants (67.0%) earned a master's degree in school counseling, 17 (5.8%) participants earned a master's degree in related field, 35 (12.0%) earned an Educational Specialist degree, 2 (0.7%) participants earned a doctoral degree, and 6 (2.1%) participants identified another specialty degree, with 36 (12.4%) missing responses. Immediate supervisors included Assistant Principal/Principal (*n* = 232, 79.7%), Senior Level School Counselor (*n* = 5, 1.7%), Guidance Director (*n* = 12, 4.1%), Other (*n* = 5, 1.7%), and 37 did not respond (12.7%).

Instrument

The first and second authors created a demographics questionnaire, which included items pertaining to participants' individual (i.e., age, sex, race, and ethnicity) and organizational variables (i.e., grade levels of practice, years of experience, school district, school counselor-to-student ratio, hours worked, degree, and immediate supervisor).

The main instrument used in the present study was a modified version of Burnham and Jackson's (2000) School Counselor Questionnaire. The original questionnaire was developed prior to the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2003). The items on the original instrument were designed to determine the counseling and noncounseling duties performed, along with perceived levels of participation in various roles and functions. See Burnham and Jackson (2000) for more details and the original survey items. Many of the original survey items were used and any modification completed for the present study were made to align school counselor roles and duties according to the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2019). As a result, the instrument contained 17 items with sub-items. Overall, the items addressed the functions of individual counseling, group counseling, classroom guidance, testing at school, systemic change, consultation, collaboration, advisory council, use of

data, advocacy, leadership, and non-school counseling duties. The modified version of the School Counselor Questionnaire was reviewed by experts to ensure evidence of its validity and reliability. The questionnaire provides descriptive information and is not scaled or scored (Burnham & Jackson, 2000).

Procedure

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained prior to beginning the study. Adherence to professional research standards (i.e., American Counseling Association Ethical Codes, Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Best Practices) were maintained throughout the study. The second author sent recruitment emails to 179 directors of school counseling in one southeastern state. The recruitment email included a brief introduction to the study and request to forward the survey to all of the school counselors in their school district. The email included an anonymous link, which took potential participants to the online survey portal in Qualtrics. Potential participants first reviewed the informed consent. Once participants provided consent, they completed a demographics questionnaire and survey in Qualtrics, which took approximately 15 minutes. The second author sent two follow-up email remainder requests at approximately two-week intervals. Data were collected 20 years after Burnham and Jackson (2000; i.e., Fall 2020). Since data collection took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, participants were prompted to respond with a typical year in mind.

Data Analysis

Prior to performing the descriptive analyses to answer the research questions, we checked the data set for completeness. There were 455 participants who opened the survey. Of those participants, 264 did not complete the survey. Therefore, the researchers analyzed all participants who provided responses through the end of the modified school counselor questionnaire. As a result, 291 participants completed the survey, and these responses were used to answer the research questions in the present study. Due to the sampling procedures used, we were unable to calculate a response rate. Since the survey provided space for participants' narrative responses and participants could choose to not answer questions they did not want to or did not pertain to them, there were some missing data within the survey. Percentages of missing data for each research question is described in the results. Missing data within the 291 sample were handled in the analyses by the listwise deletion method. Burnham and Jackson (2000) collected data by completing interviews with 80 practicing counselors using a questionnaire created for the study. In the present study, participants were asked similar questions as in the Burnham and Jackson (2000) study but were additionally asked to respond to items about relevant school counseling practices, including their engagement in the ASCA National Model. See the Instrumentation section for more information about the questionnaire used in this study. We followed Burnham and Jackson's (2000) data analyses procedures to answer each research question; therefore, we used SPSS version 28 to tabulate frequency counts and descriptive statistics.

Results

Individual Counseling

Two hundred eighty-eight participants indicated that they offer individual counseling. The caseload of students seen per week ranged from one to 300 (M = 17.6, SD = 21.9). However, only two participants reported seeing 100 students and one participant reported seeing 300 students. See Tables 1 for details by grade level and Table 2 for details by school district type.

The percentage of time spent in individual counseling ranged from 5 - 95% (M = 35.4, Mdn = 30.0, SD = 20.7). Of those who provided responses, 113 participants spent up to 25% time on individual counseling, 118 spent up to 50% of time, 42 spent up to 75% of their time, and 15 spent 76-95% of time on individual counseling. On average, participants spent 34.1% (Mdn = 30.0, SD = 23.3)

of individual counseling time on academic needs, 17.9% (*Mdn* = 10.0, *SD* = 17.89) on career needs, and 49.5% of time on social/emotional needs (*Mdn* = 50.0, *SD* = 29.4). Twenty-three participants (7.9%) reported engaging in long-term counseling while 267 (91.8%) did not. As a result, 273 (93.8%) reported having a referral plan for mental health needs, while 17 (5.8%) of participants did not.

Small Group Counseling

Two-hundred and fifty-seven participants indicated they engage in small group counseling. The size of small groups ranged from two to 35 students (*M* = 8.9, *SD* = 6.8). Of those who engaged in small groups, 190 (80.2%) reported an average of two to ten students. See Table 1 for details by grade levels and Table 2 for details by school district type.

Time spent in small group counseling ranged from 1 to 100% (*M* = 20.6, *Mdn* = 17.0, *SD* = 18.5). Of those who engaged in small group counseling, 174 participants spent 25% or less, 63 spent 26-50% of time, 13 spent 51-75% of time, and seven spent 76% or more on groups. On average, participants spent 27.3% (*Mdn* = 20.0, *SD* = 24.6) on academic needs, 20.6% (*Mdn* = 15.0, *SD* = 20.5) on career needs, and 45.8% (*Mdn* = 50.0, *SD* = 33.6) on social/emotional needs with small group counseling.

Classroom Guidance

Classroom guidance was utilized by 280 participants. Participants reported seeing five to 1,100 students for classroom guidance (*M* = 136.2, *SD* = 201.4). Responses for how often school counselor participants completed classroom guidance lessons varied with 8 (2.9%) reported once per year, 49 (17.5%) reported once per semester, 83 (29.6%) reported once per month, 41 (14.6%) reported weekly, 35 (12.5%) reported daily, and 64 (22.9%) reported other frequencies of times providing classroom guidance. See Table 1 for details by grade level and Table 2 for details by school district type.

Percentage of time spent in classroom guidance ranged from 2-92% (*M* = 34.7, *Mdn* = 30.0, *SD* = 22.2). Of those participants who engaged in classroom guidance, 118 spent up to 25% on classroom guidance, 101 report 26-50% on classroom guidance, 44 spent 51-75% of time on classroom guidance, and 17 spent 76% or more on classroom guidance. On average, participants spent 31.7% (*Mdn* = 26.0, *SD* = 23.6) on academic needs, 23.7% (*Mdn* = 20.0, *SD* = 19.3) on career needs, and 44.5% (*Mdn* = 40.5, *SD* = 28.5) on social/emotional needs during classroom guidance.

Testing (Appraisal)

Time spent on testing and appraisal was reported by 269 participants. Of those who spent time on testing overall, their time ranged from 1-100% (*M* = 29.6, *Mdn* = 25.0, *SD* = 20.8). Additionally, time spent on interpreting tests to students or parents ranged from 1-100% (*M* = 15.21, *Mdn* = 10.0, *SD* = 14.3). When asked about coordinating testing at their schools, 199 (68.4%) reported yes, while 92 (31.9%) reported they did not coordinate testing. Additionally, 204 (70.1%) reported conducting in-service training to their schools on testing while 86 (29.6%) did not provide training. See Table 1 for details by grade levels and Table 2 for details by school district.

Consultation

For consultation, 288 participants reported engaging in 4-100% of their time with other faculty, students, and parents (*M* = 39.0, *Mdn* = 31.0, *SD* = 24.3). Consultation with agencies, college/universities, and vocational schools were utilized by 247 participants accounting for 1-100% of their time (*M* = 19.5, *Mdn* = 15.0, *SD* = 16.9). See Table 1 for details by grade levels and Table 2 for details by school district type.

ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2019)

To capture ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2019) roles not described in the previous sections, participants additionally reported their use of time in the areas of Systemic Change, Collaboration, Advisory Council, Use of Data, Advocacy, and

Leadership. Systemic Change was utilized by 215 participants from 1-100% of their time (*M* = 20.0, *Mdn* = 14.0, *SD* = 20.2). Collaboration was engaged by 288 participants, with administrators for 1-100% of their time (*M* = 45.9, *Mdn* = 41.0, *SD* = 28.9). While collaboration with outside agencies was completed by 266 participants within 1-100% of their time (*M* = 24.1, *Mdn* = 20.0, *SD* = 20.9).

For Advisory Council duties, 260 (89.3%) reported having an Advisory Council while 31 (10.7%) reported no Advisory Council. Participants reported meeting with their Advisory Council once (*n* = 45, 15.5%), twice (*n* = 194, 66.7%), three times (*n* = 8, 2.7%), four times (*n* = 8, 2.7%), five times (*n* = 1, 0.3%) each academic year, and four participants did not respond. Time spent using data to inform their counseling programs was reported by 273 participants, with 35.1% of their time, on average (*SD* = 28.1, *Mdn* = 30.0). Time spent on advocacy for students was reported by 282 (*M* = 55.1, *SD* = 31.8, *Mdn* = 51.0) participants. Time spent on advocacy for self was reported by 242 participants (*M* = 23.0, *Mdn* = 10.0, *SD* = 26.6). Time spent on leadership roles was reported by 261 participants (*M* = 37.7, *Mdn* = 29.0, *SD* = 28.8) within this role. See Table 1 for details by grade levels and Table 2 for details by school district type.

Table 1

School Counselor's Use of Time by Grade Levels

Category and Subcategory	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*Missing* *n*
Individual Counseling				
Elementary	72	33.5	20.20	-
Middle	38	40.0	19.1	*1*
High	71	38.6	24.8	-
Other	69	30.9	18.6	-
Small Group Counseling				
Elementary	71	24.5	20.1	*1*
Middle	38	15.1	13.9	*1*
High	63	18.3	15.7	*8*
Other	66	19.7	18.0	*3*
Classroom Guidance				
Elementary	72	48.6	21.2	-
Middle	39	28.2	18.9	-
High	66	23.0	15.0	*15*
Other	69	35.8	21.8	-
Consultation				
Elementary[1]	72	34.5	21.6	-
Elementary[2]	49	16.3	15.6	*23*
Middle[1]	39	39.8	23.6	-
Middle[2]	32	16.1	13.2	*7*

High[1]	70	40.7	27.2	*1*
High[2]	68	23.8	18.5	*3*
Other[1]	69	39.7	26.5	-
Other[2]	61	19.5	18.6	*8*
Testing (Appraisal)				
Elementary[1]	68	25.9	16.4	*4*
Elementary[2]	59	13.0	11.0	*13*
Middle[1]	38	30.8	21.3	*1*
Middle[2]	36	17.2	17.0	*3*
High[1]	68	30.9	24.2	*3*
High[2]	68	15.8	15.0	*3*
Other[1]	65	32.6	21.0	*4*
Other[2]	58	14.5	12.1	*11*
Systematic Change				
Elementary	63	16.8	12.0	*9*
Middle	30	18.6	20.8	*9*
High	59	22.2	22.7	*12*
Other	59	22.0	23.2	*10*
Collaboration				
Elementary[1]	72	43.79	26.22	-
Elementary[2]	61	20.9	19.1	*11*
Middle[1]	39	50.3	32.7	-
Middle[2]	37	22.2	20.9	*2*
High[1]	69	47.6	29.1	*2*
High[2]	68	28.4	24.2	*3*
Other[1]	69	41.4	27.7	-
Other[2]	65	23.3	18.7	*4*
Use of Data				
Elementary	70	34.7	25.8	*2*
Middle	37	36.11	28.67	*2*
High	68	33.0	25.7	*3*
Other	63	33.1	29.1	*6*
Advocacy				
Elementary[1]	71	49.1	30.1	*1*
Elementary[2]	64	22.1	22.0	*8*
Middle[1]	38	57.6	34.5	*1*
Middle[2]	35	18.5	25.6	*4*

High[1]	69	56.9	33.1	*2*
High[2]	56	26.4	31.4	*15*
Other[1]	66	52.1	31.5	*3*
Other[2]	55	21.5	25.9	*14*
Leadership				
Elementary	67	33.6	24.5	*5*
Middle	37	36.0	28.7	*2*
High	61	37.5	29.4	*10*
Other	62	39.6	30.5	*7*
Nonguidance Activities				
Elementary	72	28.0	18.7	-
Middle	39	37.4	23.8	-
High	71	42.2	25.4	-
Other	69	38.1	25.3	-

Notes. 1 = The percentages of their time with faculty, students, and parents.2 = The percentages of their time with agencies, colleges/university, and vocational schools. 3 = The percentages of their time interpreting tests to students or parents. 4= The percentages of their time with administrators. 5= The percentages of their time with outside agencies. 6= The percentages of their time advocating for students. 7= The percentages of their time advocating for themselves.

Table 2

School Counselor's Use of Time by School District

Category and Subcategory	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*Missing n*
Individual Counseling				
Rural	139	33.6	20.8	-
Suburban	69	34.3	19.7	1
Urban	40	43.9	23.3	-
Small Group Counseling				
Rural	131	18.0	16.6	8
Suburban	65	19.0	16.9	5
Urban	40	18.3	15.7	-
Classroom Guidance				
Rural	134	31.7	20.5	5
Suburban	70	38.9	24.6	-
Urban	40	37.3	19.5	-
Consultation				

Rural [1]	139	40.4	26.5	-
Rural [2]	120	21.7	18.1	19
Suburban [1]	70	35.4	21.5	-
Suburban [2]	53	16.2	17.0	17
Urban [1]	39	39.2	23.4	1
Urban [2]	35	19.7	15.5	5
Testing (Appraisal)				
Rural	136	32.6	21.3	3
Rural [3]	126	15.9	14.1	13
Suburban	65	26.0	18.2	5
Suburban [3]	60	12.8	10.5	10
Urban	36	28.1	23.3	4
Urban [3]	34	15.4	157.2	6
Systematic Change				
Rural	114	20.1	20.3	25
Suburban	57	19.3	19.9	13
Urban	38	20.6	19.9	2
Collaboration				
Rural[4]	137	46.7	28.2	2
Rural[5]	129	26.2	21.2	10
Suburban[4]	70	45.0	29.5	-
Suburban [5]	62	21.2	21.4	8
Urban[4]	40	41.8	27.4	-
Urban[5]	38	23.1	20.5	2
Use of Data				
Rural	128	30.9	26.5	11
Suburban	70	35.7	25.2	-
Urban	38	39.4	30.6	2
Advocacy				
Rural[6]	135	54.3	33.1	4
Rural[7]	107	24.7	28.8	32
Suburban[6]	69	49.7	30.6	1
Suburban[7]	63	18.8	21.7	7
Urban[6]	39	58.3	30.6	1
Urban[7]	38	24.2	27.0	2
Leadership				
Rural	127	41.3	30.1	12

Suburban	60	28.1	22.5	10
Urban	38	35.0	26.5	2
Nonguidance Activities				
Rural	139	41.8	25.7	-
Suburban	70	27.3	20.9	-
Urban	40	32.1	16.3	-

Notes. [1] = The percentages of their time with faculty, students, and parents.[2] = The percentages of their time with agencies, colleges/university, and vocational schools. [3] = The percentages of their time interpreting tests to students or parents. [4]= The percentages of their time with administrators. [5]= The percentages of their time with outside agencies. [6]= The percentages of their time advocating for students. [7]= The percentages of their time advocating for themselves.

Nonguidance Activities

Nonguidance duties were reported by 288 participants. The percentage of time spent in nonguidance duties ranged from 1-100% (*M* = 36.4, *Mdn* = 30.0, *SD* = 24.0). See Table 1 for details by grade levels and Table 2 for details by school district type. Of those who reported engaging in nonguidance duties, 122 spent 1 to 25% of their time, 93 spent 26 to 50% of their time, 53 spent 51 to 75% of their time, 20 spent 76% or more time in nonguidance duties. Table 3 offers details of specific nonguidance duties of the participants.

Table 3

Nonguidance Comparison 2000 to 2020

	Rank Order (2000)		Rank Order (2020)
1.	Requesting and receiving records	1.	Working with testing materials and test results
2.	Scheduling	2.	Supervising bus duty, hall duty, lunchroom, restroom
3.	Permanent records	3.	Scheduling responsibility
4.	Enrolling students	4.	Maintaining student records
5.	Special education references and placement	5.	Requesting and receiving Records
6.	Record keeping	6.	Student enrollment and withdrawals
7.	Filing paperwork	7.	Record keeping
8.	Withdrawing students	8.	Maintaining transcripts
9.	Computer time	9.	Computer time
10.	Checking immunization records	10.	Checking attendance
11.	Grades and report cards	11.	Duplicating or copying materials
12.	Duplicating material	12.	Building the master schedule
13.	Working with testing materials and testing results	13.	Report cards
14.	Scholarship recommendations	14.	Special education referrals and placement

15.	Telephone reception	15.	Scholarship recommendations
16.	Office reception	16.	Providing office sitting or reception
17.	Nurse/medical coordinator	17.	Averaging grades or GPAs
18.	n/a	18.	Clubs/organizations
19.	n/a	19.	Telephone reception services
29	n/a	20.	Nurse or medical concerns

Discussion

The results of this study were compared to Burnham and Jackson (2000) and to the suggestions offered in the ASCA National Model (2019). These are offered subsequently.

Individual Counseling

Individual counseling falls under the Deliver quadrant as one of the direct student services of the ASCA National Model (2019). In this study, the majority the school counselors provided individual counseling to students, with an average caseload of 17 students per week. While 39% of the participants spent 0 – 25% of their time in individual counseling, there is concern that 61% of the participants spent between 26 -100% of their time in individual counseling. This percentage appears to be disproportionate based on the ASCA National Model (2019) expectations and counter to "When students require long-term counseling or therapy, school counselors make referrals to appropriate community resources and maintain collaborative relationships with providers to align service coordination" (p. 80).

A comparison to Burnham and Jackson (2000) offers insights (see Table 4) regarding individual counseling. Approximately 90% of the participants in both studies utilized individual counseling (see Table 4). Yet, a higher percentage used individual counseling in 2020 (35%) than in 2000 (24%). The frequency of individual counseling not only increased, but the number of counselors who spent more than 25% of their time on individual counseling also increased in 2020. This trend was surprising with the current emphasis on a multitiered approach for interventions, short-term counseling goals, and the expectations for referrals for long-term counseling (ASCA National Model, 2019).

There were several changes from 2000 to 2020. On a strong note, over 90% were making referrals rather than engaging in long-term counseling with students, which fits the ASCA National Model (2019) framework. The caseload for individual counseling decreased from 23% to 18% in 2020. Nonetheless, with the decrease in caseload, we expected a decrease in the overall use of individual counseling, which was not the case.

Small Group Counseling

Small group counseling falls under the Deliver quadrant as one of the direct student services of the ASCA National Model (2019). In this study, 87% of the school counselors provided small group counseling, in alignment with ASCA's (2020) position about the importance and effectiveness of group counseling. The average amount of time spent on small group counseling was 21%. While 68% of the school counselors spent approximately 25% or less of their time on small group counseling, 25% spent up to one-half of their time in small group counseling. Looking specifically at the counseling domains, Tables 1 and 2 offer deeper insight into small group counseling interventions. For example, nearly one-half of the small group time was spent on social/emotional concerns.

A comparison to Burnham and Jackson (2000) offers an awareness of changes over time. Table 4

shows 90% of the participants offered group counseling in 2000 compared to 87% of the participants in 2020. The average number of students in small groups was similar in both studies, (i.e., averaging about 9 students per group). These small group sizes fall within the ASCA National Model (2019) suggestions. Overall, there were few small group differences between these two studies.

Table 4

Twenty-Year Comparison of School Counseling Interventions

	Burnham & Jackson, 2000	**Current Study, 2020**
Individual Counseling (IC)	91% provide IC	99% provide IC
Percentage of Time	2 - 75% on IC *M* = 24.24	5 - 95% on IC *M* = 35.37
Caseload	*M* = 23.08	*M* = 17.55
Frequency	*M* = 24.24 0-25% - (58%); 26-50% - (25%); 51-100% - (6 %)	*M* = 35.37 0-25% - (39%); 26-50% - (41%); 51-100% - (20%)
Small Group Counseling (GC)	90% provide GC	87% provide GC
Number in groups	*M* = 9.0	*M* = 8.93
Percentage of Time	10-23%	1 – 100%; *M* = 20.63
Classroom Guidance (CG)	98% provide CG	96% provide CG
Frequency	10-23%	2 - 92%; *M* = 34.67
Size	*M* = 32.22	
How often is CG?	38%–weekly; 18%– twice a month; 20% - monthly; 5% - every six weeks; 11%– not regular basis	14.6% – weekly; 12.5% - daily; 29.6% - monthly; 17.5% - once semester; 22.9%; not regular basis
Consultation	1-80% M=18.42, Mdn =15, SD = 15.35	4-100% with faculty, students, and parents; *M* = 38.95, *Mdn* = 31, *SD* = 24.31 1-100% with agencies, colleges/universities, and vocational schools. *M* = 19.47, *Mdn* = 15, *SD* = 16.90
Testing/Appraisal	87.5% provide Testing/Appraisal	92% provide Testing/Appraisal
Provides	81% – conducted inservice training for faculty 90% – interpreted test results to students, parents, and faculty	Time spent on testing: 1-100% (*M* = 29.61, *Mdn* = 25, *SD* = 20.80). Time spent interpreting tests 1-100% *M* = 15.21, *Mdn* = 10, *SD* = 14.32

Classroom Guidance

Classroom guidance falls under the Deliver quadrant as one of the direct student services of the ASCA National Model (2019). In this study, 96% of the school counselors provide classroom guidance. The percentage of time spent in classroom guidance average to 35% in 2020. Our results shows that 78% of the counselors spent up to 50% of their time in classroom guidance. It appears that classroom guidance is a way counselors teach and apply the domains and the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors curriculum (ASCA, 2021a).

A comparison to Burnham and Jackson (2000) offers an important overview. Table 4 shows 98% of the participants offered classroom guidance in 2020 compared to 96% in 2020. These data indicate slightly less classroom guidance in 2020. Table 3 shows the comparison of classroom guidance in 2000 and 2020.

Appraisal/Testing

While **Appraisal** falls under the Deliver quadrant as one of the direct student services of the ASCA National Model (2019), **Testing** does not. According to the ASCA National Model (2019), "coordinating cognitive, aptitude and achievement testing programs" are categorized as inappropriate activities for school counselors (p. xiv). It appears that many school counselors in this 2020 study are busy with testing and testing coordination at their schools.

A comparison to Burnham and Jackson (2000) shows that testing was a substantial task for the participants in 2000 (88%) and perhaps even more so in 2020 (92%) (see Table 4). In 2020, the average was about 30% of time spent on testing. Of the participants in 2020, 68.4% coordinate testing and 70% conduct in-service training related to testing. The testing activities required of the participants in this study are not condoned by the ASCA National Model (2019).

Consultation

Consultation falls under the Deliver quadrant as one of the indirect student services of the ASCA National Model (2019). For consultation, most participants engaged in this activity. Participants reported an average of 38% of their time in consultation with other faculty, students, and parents. Consultation with agencies, college/universities, and vocational schools was acknowledged at about 19% of their time. See Table 4 for details. Consultation seems to "to support student success and to promote equity and access for all students" (ASCA National Model, 2019, p. 81).

A comparison to Burnham and Jackson (2000) offers a significant increase in consultation in 2020. Table 4 shows that the average amount of time spent on consultation in 2000 was at about 18%. These data indicate more emphasis on consultation in 2020, which follows guidelines of the ASCA National Model (2019) for this important service.

ASCA National Model

While there was no ASCA National Model (2003) when Burnham and Jackson (2000) was published, it is important to examine progress. Tables 1 and 2 offer averages of time spent on interventions and activities by grade levels and school district types. Strengths include the number of school counselors (89%) who have advisory committee meetings and the time spent on the following: advocacy for students (55%), collaboration with administrators (45%), and leadership roles (38%). Specific areas that need improvement are collaboration with outside agencies (25%) and time spent on systemic change (20%).

Nonguidance

The average percentage of time spent on nonguidance duties was 36%. Nonguidance is a serious concern for participants in this study. Of those who reported engaging in nonguidance duties, 122 spent 1 to 25% of their time, 93 spent 26 to 50% of their time, and 73 spent more than 50% of their time. Specific nonguidance duties and their

frequency of engagement are reported in Tables 1, 2, and 3.

In comparison to Burnham and Jackson (2000), there were changes in nonguidance duties and details (see Table 3). For example, in 2000, "filing paperwork" (ranked 7th) and "checking immunizations" (ranked 10th). These two duties were not in the top 20 in 2020. On the other hand, several nonguidance duties ranked higher in 2020. For example, "working with testing materials and test results" moved from 13th in 2000 to 1st in 2020, "supervising bus duty, hall duty, lunchroom, and restroom" moved from "not ranked" in 2000 to 2nd in 2020, "maintaining transcripts" moved from "not ranked" in 2000 to 8th in 2020. "Checking attendance" moved from "not ranked" in 2000 to 10th in 2020, "duplicating and copying material" moved from 12th in 2000 to 11th in 2020, and "building the master schedule" moved up from "not ranked" in 2000 to 12th in 2020. On a positive note, "special education referrals and placement" moved down from 5th in 2000 to 14th in 2020. The ASCA National Model (2019) is explicit about 80% on direct services and 20% on indirect services. Nonguidance duties do not fall under either service. Rather, they are defined as "inappropriate activities for school counselors" (p. xiv).

Limitations and Future Research

There were limitations within the study. Participants completed the survey during the COVID-19 pandemic of Fall 2020. Participants were asked to complete their responses (i.e., perceptions of their roles) based upon a typical year. The extent to which COVID-19 impacted their responses is unknown. Additionally, since the study was based upon self-reported data, there is a possibility of social desirability bias in participants' responses. For those who may have reported 100% of their time in an area, we were unable to follow up with clarification as to their other roles or perceptions of their time in other areas of practice. Participants were practicing school counselors from one state and predominantly identified as white and female. Although we received a strong participant response pool, our results may have generalizability limitations with school counselors in other states or regions of the U.S. Future researchers may want to replicate the study with a national sample or include state representation from various regions of the U.S. It may be helpful for researchers to conduct qualitative studies to explore related topics in-depth, such as their lived experiences and perceptions of their roles. This research may be particularly important given the potential impact of COVID-19 on school counselor roles. Related research may want to examine how school counselor roles have changed since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Implications

Our results provide implications for school counselor training, supervision, and professional development. Discrepant findings of school counselor roles between Burnham and Jackson's (2000) and the current study focus on several areas. In the present study, time spent engaging in individual counseling increased when compared to the 2000 study. In addition, more school counselors in the present study reported engaging in long-term counseling. It is unknown what contextual factors may be contributing to the increase in individual counseling, but these findings do speak to the consideration of more (awareness of) mental health needs of students in schools. While counselors were asked to report on a typical year, it could also be that given the COVID-19 pandemic, school counselors were engaging in more individual counseling and long-term counseling given the social isolation of students and lack of referral opportunities as agencies were closed or offered only virtual options. It was also interesting to note that school counselors who work in urban settings and elementary grade levels tended to endorse higher amounts of time spent in direct services areas. Relatedly, consultation time tended to increase in the present study. It may be helpful for those training school counselors to ensure curricular areas continue to meet the needs of current school counselors job roles. Although school counselors do not typically have supervision required post-licensure and are often supervised by senior-level administrators (Bledsoe et al., 2019), our findings

indicate that having supervision or peer consultation with mental health professionals support the mental health roles school counselors are engaging in the school setting. These supportive professional activities may be especially important given the potential impact of COVID-19 on school counselors roles and mental health needs of students. With the problems presented in 21st Century schools (i.e., high caseloads, meeting mental health needs of students, professional advocacy, COVID-19; Chandler et al., 2018; Dahir et al, 2009; DeKruyf et al., 2013; Havlik et al., 2019; Savitz-Romer, 2019), school counselors need ample direct service time for work with students, parents, faculty, and to consult and coordinate with other mental health providers.

Another area of school counselor role findings with implications for the profession are related to the significant amount of time school counselors reported spending on nonguidance duties. For example, there were several duties that were not ranked in Burnham and Jackson's (2000) study but were highly endorsed in the presenting study, including supervising students during bus and lunch duties and testing. For testing, almost 70% of school counselors reported being the testing coordinator. These outcomes are significant, especially given the profession's long history of advocating against these roles (Havlik et al., 2019), and including them as inappropriate activities in the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2019). On a positive advocacy outcome, some states have adopted legislation that forbids school counselors from serving as coordinators of standardized testing (e.g., North Carolina; ASCA, n.d.). Alongside these findings, school counselors tended to endorse low amounts of time spent in systemic change in the present study, despite this activity being a theme of the National Model (ASCA, 2019). Recommendations for Counselor Educators include ensuring that school counseling students are receiving relevant training in their roles and discussing where noncounseling duties fit, how to receive training in areas not discussed in the counseling-focused curriculum, and ways to increase success within a variety of tasks demanded within the educational environment. It could be helpful for counselor educators to continue educating related stakeholders of school counselors' trainings and abilities related to counseling roles in the school setting to increase students' academic achievements, so they are not primarily relegated to noncounseling testing duties. From a professional development perspective, school counselors must be able to navigate the educational environment and related educational roles to maintain their job, which may require special areas of educational training.

This study reveals the continued need for school counselor advocacy. School counselors need support and training from counselor educators, district level counseling directors, school administrators, state agencies that oversee certification and licensure, and professional organizations (Astramovich et al., 2013). We hope this study underlines that training, support, supervision, advocacy, and professional development from school counseling stakeholders remain critically important for school counselors (Havlik et al., 2019). Additionally, it is important for school counselor educators who are training school counselors to provide them with information about the direct and indirect roles school counselors engage in along with the realities faced by many school counselors regarding role discrepancies. Providing instructional time to process these realities and create advocacy solutions with supervised feedback will provide school counselors-in-training with proactive strategies to meet these role discrepancy demands as early as during supervised field placements in the schools. Since mental health needs have increased due to COVID-19 and beyond, it is important to continue advocating for school counselors to engage in roles that aid students in increasing their academic, career, and social emotional needs. In the post-COVID-19 world, the urgency to allow school counselors to do what they are trained to do is critical with significant student, family, and community needs. Support for school counselors to provide direct services is central to academic success.

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Author Information

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

The author(s) reported no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article. [If there is funding reported, can edit]

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JOURNAL OF COUNSELOR PREPARATION AND SUPERVISION
The official journal of the North Atlantic Region Association for Counselor Education and Supervision

How to Cite this Article:

Burnham, J. J., Fye, H., Jackson, C. M., Ocampo, M., & Clark, L. (2024) A 20-year review of school counselor roles: Discrepancies between actual practice and existing models. *Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision, 18*(2), 1-19

Joy J. Burnham, University of Alabama – Tuscaloosa); **Heather Fye**, University of Alabama; **C. Marie Jackson**, University of Alabama (retired); **Michelle Ocampo**, University of Alabama; **Leah Clark**, University of Alabama. Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Joy J. Burnham, University of Alabama (jburnham@ua.edu)