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ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT OF COUNSELING PROGRAMS

By

Patrick J. O'Connor

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Educational Administration

2000

ABSTRACT

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT OF COUNSELING PROGRAMS

By

Patrick J. O'Connor

The purpose of this study was to provide a clear definition of administrative support of counseling programs and to develop and test a valid, reliable, credible, and comprehensive instrument with which to measure the multiple facets of administrative support of school counseling programs. In the first part of this study, a content analysis was conducted on the existing literature on administrative support in general. This content analysis was compared to the content analysis of notes taken in a series of focus groups with high school counselors, who discussed what administrative support of counseling programs meant to them. A working definition of administrative support of counseling programs was created from this comparison. This working definition contained five components for the construct.

In preparation for the second part of the study, items were developed for an instrument designed to measure administrative support of counseling programs. These items were field tested with two other sets of focus groups, who provided suggestions and comments on the items. An instrument

measuring administrative support of counseling programs was developed, the Counseling Assessment Questionnaire (CAQ).

In the second part of this study, the CAQ was sent as part of a questionnaire packet to 711 public high school counselors in the greater Detroit area. The questionnaire packet also contained two instruments measuring support-related constructs, the School Climate Survey (SCS, which measured school climate), and the short version of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ, which measured job satisfaction).

A confirmatory factor analysis of the CAQ affirmed the existence of five factors, or components, for the construct of administrative support of counseling programs. Four of the five components revealed in the factor analysis matched the components of the working definition developed in part one of the study.

The reliability measure of the CAQ was .97 (Cronbach's alpha), and the CAQ was shown to correlate very highly with the SCS (Pearson product moment correlation of .87) and the MSQ (.55). As a result, the utility of the CAQ as a measure of administrative support of counseling programs was confirmed.

In addition to offering new insights into the nature of administrative support in general, the development and testing of the CAQ leaves the field with an instrument that provides a comprehensive measure of administrative support of school counseling programs and lends specific direction to counselors and administrators for increasing existing levels of administrative support.

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**To the educators, colleagues, family, and friends
who quietly saw this work to its completion,
especially Dianne, Leland, and Lily; Mom, Dad, and Brian;
to all who seek to make a difference;
and to the counselors.**

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work is the product of the expertise, insights, wisdom, patience, and love of many individuals, whose support and contributions I acknowledge here with a humble and grateful heart:

To my dissertation committee, whose view of what education is, and could be, inspired me as a student. Their insights, as well as their patience, humor, and humanity, made this endeavor a meaningful capstone to my doctoral program:

Dr. Frederick Ignatovich, chair of my committee, whose encouragement, wisdom, and keen appreciation for clarity, rightness, and statistical representation helped me find my voice in writing this work and in bringing it from abstract concept to reality.

Dr. Philip Cusick, whose insight and pragmatism helped me focus this work at both the abstract and applied levels.

Dr. Marvin Grandstaff, whose view of education as a supportive structure inspired me to keep the interest of the students in mind throughout the completion of this work.

Dr. Norman Stewart, whose perspective on the historic and future directions of school counseling helped keep this work focused on how school counselors can be better supported.

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To the former members of my committee, whose commitment to my pursuit of a doctoral degree at the early stages of my work as a graduate student is manifested in this work as well:

Dr. Richard Cole, whose insights into education and public policy were of tremendous benefit to me in executing the survey component of my work.

The late Dr. Sam Moore, whose perspective on the changing and demanding field of educational administration gave powerful breadth to my academic program.

To Susan Miller, whose editing and word-processing abilities combined with her expertise in dissertations and her gracious flexibility to produce this work in its final form in record time.

To the counselors of the Greater Metropolitan Detroit area, who gave so generously of their time, talent, and expertise in completing the surveys and participating in the focus groups that served as the basis for this work.

To the educators who never had me as a student but treated me as one of their own in guiding my steps at crucial points throughout this work:

Dr. John Sutton, Jr., of the University of Southern Maine, for his willingness to share his knowledge on counselor support and self-efficacy, and for his willingness to provide copies of the modified School Climate Survey for this work.

Dr. Theodore Coladarci of the University of Maine, for his permission to use and print the School Climate Survey in this work.

Dr. Ernie Bauer of Oakland Schools (Oakland County, Michigan), for his willingness to discuss statistical and measurement issues at a moment's notice with humor and breadth.

To those fellow educators whose examples of professionalism and compassion have been invaluable in inspiring this study:

Dr. Joan Firestone of Oakland Schools, for her insights into the nature of supporting students, and for her assistance in procuring resources for this work.

Gwen Hairabedian of Oakland Schools, for her tireless interest in providing resources and opportunities for educators to renew and improve themselves.

Roxanne Reschke of Oakland Schools, for her creative insights in inspiring and supporting the education of all children.

Dr. Carl Barnes of Oakland University, whose understanding of and appreciation for scholarship anchored this work in many ways.

Sandra Trosien of Washtenaw Intermediate School District, for her example of offering support to educators and administrators to create new opportunities for students.

Dr. Bernard Brock of Wayne State University, for his enthusiastic support and interest in this study, and for his insights into the nature of scholarly work.

James Wolfe, whose love for counseling and his children serves as a constant inspiration to me and to many.

Dr. Cathy Pietrofesa, whose sense of caring, commitment, balance, and joy is an example for all to follow.

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To my colleagues, who have provided assistance and support that has made all the difference in the completion of this work:

Chancellor Richard Thompson and the Board of Trustees of Oakland Community College, who provided me the opportunity to begin this work by granting me a sabbatical.

Maryanne Nagler, librarian at Oakland Community College, for her expertise in finding resources and references for this study, no matter how obscure, and for her encouragement and enthusiasm in discussing this work with me.

Dr. Michael Khirallah of Oakland Community College, for reviewing a draft of a dissertation proposal at a crucial time of this work, and for sharing his insights into the pursuit of a dissertation.

Dr. Martha Smydra, President of the Royal Oak/Southfield Campus of Oakland Community College, for her enthusiastic interest in the completion of this work, and her insistent reminders that this work be completed without great sacrifice to my family.

Barbara Einhardt, Thomas Kress, Mary Kay Lawless, Dr. Vera Lewis, Alicia Paramo-Dionne, Noreen Ruehs, and John Sloan, counselors at the Royal Oak/Southfield campus of Oakland Community College, for their support of my work and their willingness to lend a hand when needed.

Vice Chancellor Carol Brown of Oakland Community College, for her counsel on the nature of academic work, and her demonstrated belief in the power of quiet determination.

Robin Evans, administrative assistant at Oakland Community College, for her invaluable technical support in the production of this work.

Carolyn Harrison, Director of Instructional Support Services at Oakland Community College, for her interest in and support of this work, and her interest in academic pursuits for all students.

Ernestine Sanders, whose interest in pursuit of a doctoral degree inspired me to begin my studies.

The members and staff of the National Association for College Admission Counseling, whose professional excellence in working with students and families in the college selection process inspired me in this work, and inspires me in my daily work.

To my friends, whose support made a difference in this endeavor, as it does in my life:

Dr. Peter Vandebosch, for his enthusiastic support of this work and his ability to see and articulate what could be.

Dr. Marjorie Weiss, whose completion of her Ph.D. inspired me to do the same, as did her words of encouragement.

Steven Rost and Andrea Eis, for their examples of the pursuit of excellence through lives of constant growth and contribution.

Susan and Roger Bratt, for their understated yet ever-present interest in my studies.

Audrey Hill, whose example of selfless giving inspires me to do better.

Dr. Ron Koger, who still sees students on a daily basis as a college vice-president, for his understanding of what really matters.

Joyce Smith, who always sees what is possible and works tirelessly toward its realization.

Edward Benyas, whose life is a testament to the value of what matters.

J. Thomas Black, for his interest in this work and his inspired ability to provide the right idea at the right time.

The members of the Metro Detroit College Fair, for their constant support of my work and my life.

To my family, who always understands:

My parents, Richard and Ila O'Connor, for stressing the value of education in word and deed, for being there whether things went well or not, and for modeling the value of the power of love.

My brother, Brian O'Connor, for demonstrating the importance of caring, wanting to do more, finding a way to achieve, and never giving up.

My late brother, Charles Josef Jennings, for demonstrating the importance of the search for self.

My children, Leland and Lily O'Connor, for crawling into their father's lap at the computer, even when he says he's busy.

My wife, Dianne O'Connor, who never stops believing, and whose vision inspires me each moment of my life.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

Managerial theorists have long recognized the importance of the element of support in the relationship between managers and workers. Argyris (1957) identified the importance of managerial support in helping workers achieve a sense of personal satisfaction, which, once realized, strengthens the commitment of workers to improving performance at the workplace. The importance of this relationship served as the bedrock of Likert's (1961) work in producing his System 4 theory of interdependent teamwork and the principle of supportive relationships, wherein managerial support is viewed as the single most important element in maintaining and developing a worker's "sense of personal worth and importance" (p. 103). This sense of worth, in turn, improves the worker's contributions on the job (Likert, 1967).

These vital managerial theories have proven to be helpful in studying the relationship between school administrators and the teachers they supervise. Administrative support has been identified as central to the success of a wide variety of school programs, including literacy education (Lickteig, 1995), school library programs (Oberg, 1996), and the overall emotional and physical health,

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job satisfaction, and professional longevity of general and special educators (Littrell, 1994). In a Rand study (1978), administrative support was identified as highly valued by teachers in school settings across the United States, emphasizing the importance of building administrators in creating an atmosphere of mutual respect and support that motivates teachers to make even greater contributions to the success of the school and the adoption of new programs.

Specific to guidance, support by the principal has been found to make a difference in the success of counselor-consultants in schools (Mayer, 1983), as well as to middle school practitioners (Vaught, 1995). Sutton and Fall (1995) discovered that administrative support of counselors was a strong predictor of high self-efficacy of counselors, a trait that ultimately leads to improved job performance. Principal support was found to be key to the implementation of successful counseling programs by Hayslip and Carr (1990), Perry (1991), and Morgan (1990), who cautioned, "Make sure you have the support of your administration because if you do not the task will be impossible" (p. 165). A joint study by the College Board and the National Association of College Admission Counselors (1994) indicated that principal involvement in a team approach to counseling can improve the effectiveness of a school's guidance program. Counselors considered this support to be so important that the ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Student Services (1998) published a book written by counselors explaining how principals can support specific elements of school guidance programs.

Background of the Problem

Although administrative support is seen to be vital to the health—and, ultimately, the success—of school counseling programs, the current body of knowledge of what constitutes administrative support of counseling programs is fragmented. Much of the current literature emphasizes the importance of administrative support through qualitative remarks that assume its importance based on professional experience (Hayslip & Carr, 1990; Murray, 1995a; Vaught, 1995). Such remarks provide counselors and administrators with a general sense of the value of administrative support, but these insights, even when taken together, do not provide a comprehensive view of administrative support. This incomplete definition makes further study and understanding of administrative support and its relationship to other key variables difficult to achieve, thus limiting the efforts of researchers, administrators, and counselors to discuss, operationalize, quantify, and change existing levels of administrative support in schools.

Similarly, efforts to quantify administrative support that have been reported in the current literature offer limited definitions of administrative support that shed light on only parts of the construct. Mayer (1983) operationalized administrative support through the variables of attendance at meetings with counselor consultants, accessibility, and praise of teachers who support counseling initiatives. Sutton and Fall (1995) operationalized principal support as broad statements contained in a larger school climate survey. Sattes and Miller (1989) operationalized principal support by asking counselors and

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principals open-ended questions about how administrators provide leadership and resources to counselors. As is the case with the qualitative contributions to the literature, these efforts offer useful insights into the nature of administrative support, but they leave the construct of administrative support itself fragmented and difficult to build on.

Statement of the Problem

As applied to the relationship between school administrators and school counselors, managerial theory suggests that administrative support is important to the success and growth of school counseling programs. The current literature on administrative support of counseling programs provides insights into some of the components of administrative support, but these insights and partial measures of administrative support vary greatly in definition, scope, and structure. Taken as a whole, these efforts to describe and measure administrative support of school counseling programs have left the literature with a fragmented definition of the construct.

The incomplete nature of the current definition of administrative support of school counseling programs has significant consequences. Without a comprehensive definition of administrative support, researchers, administrators, and counselors lack a common starting point from which to understand administrative support. This lack of understanding leads to limited awareness of administrative support, which in turn makes discussion and measurement of administrative support arduous, if not impossible. The absence of discussion

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and measurement of administrative support constrains efforts to measure current levels of administrative support, handicapping any efforts to improve the level of such support. This significantly burdens any effort to change current levels of administrative support and help counseling programs become more effective and successful. In sum, there is a lack of knowledge about what constitutes the construct of administrative support of school counseling programs, and this lack of knowledge ultimately limits both the efforts of administrators to increase the support they give to school counselors and consequently the effectiveness of school counseling programs.

Purpose of the Study

The researcher's purposes in this study were (a) to provide a clear definition of administrative support of counseling programs and (b) to develop and test a valid, reliable, credible, and comprehensive instrument with which to measure the multiple facets of administrative support of school counseling programs. To accomplish these purposes, the research was conducted in two phases.

In the first phase of the study, through a review of literature in the area of administrative support, and through several series of focus-group interviews with practicing counselors, the researcher constructed a comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs. In the second phase, this definition was operationalized through the construction of a valid and reliable instrument designed to measure administrative support. This instrument was

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then cross-validated with measures of school climate and job satisfaction, on which administrative support has been found or suggested to have an impact. This cross-validation was completed in order to measure and confirm the validity and reliability of the newly created instrument.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in the first phase of the study:

1. What are the components of administrative support of counseling programs, as viewed in the literature?
2. What are the components of administrative support of counseling programs, as viewed by counseling practitioners?
3. What similarities and differences exist between the components of administrative support as viewed in the literature and as seen by counseling practitioners?
4. Based on the reviews and comparisons of the existing body of literature and the views of counseling practitioners, what constitutes a working definition of administrative support of counseling programs?

The following research questions were answered in the second phase of the study:

5. Are the components of administrative support, as defined in phase one of the study, confirmed by a factor analysis of the instrument designed to measure administrative support of counseling programs?

6. Does the instrument contain a high degree of reliability in measuring administrative support of counseling programs?

7. Is there a strong, positive correlation between this measure of administrative support of counseling programs and other instruments used to evaluate the support-related measures of school climate and counselor job satisfaction?

Conceptual or Substantive Assumptions

The following assumptions served as the underpinnings for the rationale and design of this study:

1. Administrative support of counseling programs is something that school counselors value.

2. Administrative support of counseling programs is a construct that can be defined in both broad and specific terms.

3. Administrative support of counseling programs is a construct that, although not fully articulated in the literature, is understood by practicing counselors.

4. Administrative support of counseling programs influences the motivation and behavior of counselors.

5. The motivation and behavior of counselors influence the effectiveness of counseling programs.

6. Administrative support is central to the effectiveness of a school counseling program.

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7. A more comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs will lead to improved methods of measuring and assessing administrative support of counseling programs.

8. Improved methods of measuring and assessing administrative support of counseling programs will increase awareness and understanding of the importance of administrative support of counseling programs.

9. Increased awareness and understanding of the importance of administrative support of counseling programs will provide greater focus to the development of plans to improve the level of administrative support of counseling programs.

10. The development and implementation of plans to improve administrative support of counseling programs will increase the likelihood of increasing current levels of administrative support of counseling programs.

11. Increasing current levels of administrative support of counseling programs will lead to more successful counseling programs.

12. The relationship between the level of administrative support of a counseling program and the success of that program is nonlinear.

13. Factors other than administrative support influence the success of school counseling programs.

14. School counselors are the most appropriate persons to evaluate the degree of administrative support of school counseling programs.

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Rationale and Theoretical Framework for the Study

The basis of the importance of principal support can be found in the work of a number of educational and organizational researchers. Argyris (1957) pointed to the importance of developing a supervisor-employee relationship in which support of the employee by the supervisor leads to the fulfillment of the basic personal needs of the employee. In turn, this fulfillment results in improved job satisfaction and greater contribution to the organization by the employee.

The importance of support of workers by their supervisor was the basis of Likert's (1961) ground-breaking work in developing the managerial system known as System 4, a participative, teamwork-oriented method of leadership and management that relies on interdependence, trust, and mutual respect. Likert's work showed that companies and organizations embracing a System 4 style of management created an atmosphere that provided greater support to workers; these same companies and organizations were also the leaders in their respective industries in terms of productivity and profitability.

From his studies, Likert identified supportive leadership as one of the key causal variables that ultimately affects the productivity of an organization. Improvement in these causal variables leads to improvement in what Likert called intervening variables, such as favorable attitudes toward the leader, open and accurate communication, and high subordinate motivation. Improvements in these intervening variables, according to Likert, then augment the end-result

variables, including enhanced productivity and quality of work, and reduced turnover and grievances.

From this research, Likert developed the principle of supportive relationships, which emphasizes the need for managers to lead in a way that is viewed as supportive by all other members of the organization, especially those who are supervised by the manager. In taking these actions, the manager not only supports the employees, but also promotes the mission and goals of the organization by inspiring employees to make greater contributions to the workplace, thereby improving its effectiveness.

The same approach to support-based management is prevalent in organizational theory today. Leaders of the quality and empowerment movements in business, including Drucker (1999) and Welch (as cited in Slater, 2000), have emphasized the importance of understanding and meeting the needs, values, and goals of employees in improving the quality of both the workplace and the work product. Bennis and Goldsmith (1997) echoed this theme, stressing the need for organizations to place employees at the center of the workplace by giving meaning to their work. In addition, Wheatley's (1999) work on chaos and complexity theory placed the importance of relationships at the center of effective leadership, a theme that relates directly to Likert's ground-breaking work.

In presenting the principle of supportive relationships, Likert emphasized the importance of measuring a wide variety of variables, including causal variables such as managerial support, in order to effect organizational change.

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Among the variables Likert (1961) cited as being important to measure was "the extent to which members of the organization feel that the atmosphere of the organization is supportive and helps maintain each individual's sense of personal worth" (p. 193).

As shown in Figure 1, the role of administrative support of counseling programs becomes clear when managerial theory is applied to a school setting. When a building administrator demonstrates support of the school's counseling program (identified as a causal variable in Figure 1), the school counselor views this support as an endorsement of his or her work and, as Argyris (1957) and Likert (1961) would suggest, an endorsement of the counselor as well. This affirmation, according to management theory, results in a change in the intervening variables, including more favorable attitudes toward the principal by the counselor, more open and accurate communication between the principal and the counselor, and higher motivation on the part of the counselor. The change in these intervening variables can be measured in part with instruments designed to assess job satisfaction and school climate. Improvement in these intervening variables heightens the counselor's commitment to the workplace and the profession, which, according to managerial theory, would improve the counselor's level of contribution to the organization. This improvement would lead to enhanced results for the organization, such as the development of new counseling services, increased student and parent satisfaction with the school's counseling program, and a decrease in turnover and grievances filed by counselors.

Causal Variables	Intervening Variables	End-Result Variables
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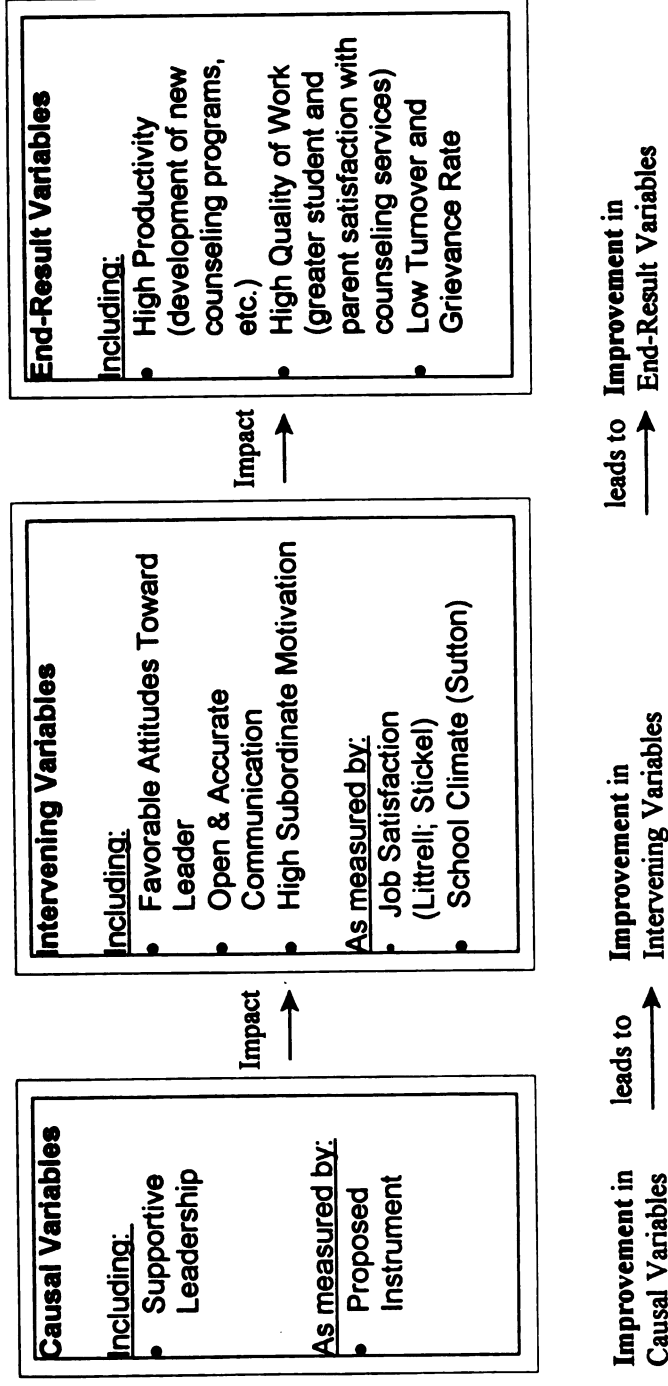


Figure 1: Role of administrative support in effectiveness of counseling programs (based on Likert unless otherwise noted).

Management theory suggests that administrative support of counseling programs is a causal variable that affects the success of those programs. Hence, knowing more about the specific nature of administrative support of counseling programs—and, according to Likert, being able to measure the degree to which such support is present—is important. Likert (1961) identified the following key steps for improving the presence of any kind of variable—causal, intervening, or resultant. A valid, reliable instrument is used to measure the current level of the variable. The results of this measurement are then analyzed and discussed. This discussion leads to the development of action plans that, if successfully implemented, would be expected to change the level of the variable and improve the results for the organization. Once these plans are implemented, another measurement of the variable occurs, and the cycle repeats itself.

These steps toward improving a variable can easily be applied to school settings. If a comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs (a causal variable) can be constructed, a valid, reliable measure of administrative support of counseling programs can be developed from that definition. The instrument can then be used to measure the current level of administrative support of counseling programs. The results of this measurement would then be analyzed and discussed; from this discussion, principals and counselors could create action plans designed to improve the elements of administrative support that need improvement, according to the instrument.

Once these plans are activated, administrative support of counseling programs is measured a second time, and the process begins again.

Importance of the Study

The primary importance of this study lies in the creation of a comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs and in the creation of a single instrument to measure the facets of administrative support of counseling programs. Through the creation of this definition and instrument, administrators and counselors will be provided with both a common language that can be used to discuss this important concept in consistent and specific terms, and a tool that can be used in a wide variety of situations to determine how much support school administrators are giving the counseling program. This detailed information can then be used to initiate dialogue for the development of action plans for improving administrative support of counseling programs in specific ways.

This study is also significant in that the insights of current counselor practitioners were used in developing the construct of administrative support. Unlike many studies measuring administrative support, in this research the issues used to define administrative support were identified with the help of counselors in the initial phase of developing the instrument, rather in the field-testing component of instrument development.

Counselors were involved in the initial phase for two reasons. First, because the literature contains only partial definitions of administrative support,

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counselor input into the development of the definition of administrative support of counseling programs was deemed necessary to create a comprehensive definition of the construct. Developing this comprehensive definition at the outset was deemed vital to strengthening the subsequent steps of the study.

Second, because counselor input was gathered in the early stages of developing the definition of administrative support of counseling programs, the researcher hoped that the definition and the instrument developed from that definition would be better rooted in the experiences of counselors currently in the field, thereby producing a more realistic picture of what administrative support means to counselors. This more realistic picture not only would strengthen the instrument's construct validity, but it might also increase acceptance of the instrument within the counseling community. Such acceptance would increase the likelihood of the instrument's being used as a tool for measurement, discussion, and improvement of administrative support of counseling programs.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined in the context in which they are used in this dissertation.

Administrative support. Those professional actions executed or endorsed by the building principal or the principal's agent to support counseling programs. A majority of the studies on administrative support define that support as coming from the principal, in large part because the principal is seen as the leader of the

school administrative team. At the same time, it is likely that administrative decisions regarding counseling programs may come from an assistant principal or another school official; this is especially true in larger high schools, where an assistant principal often is assigned to serve as an administrative liaison with the counseling department. To have a design that captures the greatest possible number of activities and attitudes of administrators, the definition of administrative support used for this study included administrators acting on behalf of or in concert with the building principal.

Job satisfaction. The degree of pleasure and success derived by counselors from their work, as measured by the short form of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire.

School climate. The quality of the school environment for counselors, as measured by the School Climate Survey (Sutton & Fall, 1995).

School counseling programs. The services offered by one or more full-time school employees contracted to serve as a school guidance counselor(s) at the public high school level.

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

Although this research will strengthen the existing body of literature on administrative support of counseling programs, some delimitations to the study should be noted. First, the investigation was delimited to counseling programs in public high schools.

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Second, although in the second phase of this study the researcher measured the presence of administrative support, he did not measure the outcome of that support—the effectiveness of the guidance program itself. Whereas many writers have strongly suggested that greater levels of administrative support lead to more effective programs, an examination of the varied measures used in schools to assess the effectiveness of counseling programs, the audiences evaluating school counseling programs, and the methodological complications of creating a single reliable measure of effectiveness was beyond the scope of this study. Given the recognized importance of administrative support to counseling success as implied in the literature, it is possible that the results of this study, if they suggest a valid measure of administrative support, could serve as part of the foundation of a future study analyzing the influence of administrative support on the effectiveness of counseling programs.

Finally, it should be recognized that this study was undertaken to provide a clear definition of administrative support of counseling programs, and to develop a valid, reliable instrument with which to measure the current level of administrative support. The researcher did not intend to outline a comprehensive process for overcoming the obstacles that can prevent administrators from lending greater support to counseling programs. The instrument developed in this study will provide counselors and administrators a snapshot of the current level of administrative support, but it will not explain how that level of support came into existence, or what will be necessary to alter that

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level of support. Having a comprehensive definition of administrative support and knowing the current level of support are but the first steps in developing a comprehensive strategy that will lead to increased administrative support of counseling programs. This study was undertaken to contribute to those crucial first steps.

Procedures

The study began with a comprehensive review of the literature on administrative support of school counseling programs. A series of content analyses of the results of this review served as the basis for compiling a set of common elements, phrases, and ideas that were used to describe aspects of administrative support.

A series of focus groups was then held with practicing high school counselors to gain their perspective on administrative support of counseling programs. A content analysis of the counselors' responses was performed, and the results were blended with the outcomes of the final content analysis of the literature review to create a comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs.

This comprehensive definition was used as the basis for creating an instrument designed to measure the level of administrative support of school counseling programs. After field testing the instrument and modifying it where necessary, the researcher surveyed high school counselors using the new instrument; the School Climate Survey (SCS), used to measure school climate;

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and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), used to measure job satisfaction. These two additional measures were used to cross-validate the new instrument.

A factor analysis and a correlation analysis were conducted on counselors' responses to the surveys. A factor analysis was conducted on the items in the new instrument, to determine whether the components of administrative support, as defined in phase one of the study, were confirmed by the subjects' responses on that instrument. A reliability measure was used with the new instrument to determine the consistency of that instrument in measuring administrative support. Responses on the new instrument were correlated to those on the SCS and the MSQ to determine the strength and direction of the relationship of the last two instruments to the new instrument. The results were used in answering the research questions and provide the basis for continued exploration of this important topic.

Summary and Overview

Because of the increasing challenges and pressures facing students today, school guidance programs need to offer effective services, in the best interests of the students, their families, and their communities. Because administrative support is widely recognized as being crucial to the development of effective school counseling programs, it is both surprising and problematic that the current literature lacks a comprehensive understanding of the nature of administrative support of counseling programs.

The researcher's aim in this study was to expand the knowledge of what administrative support of counseling programs consists of and how it can be measured. In the first phase of this study, the body of current literature was reviewed (as discussed in Chapter II), and a content analysis was performed on the ideas and concepts used in the literature to describe and study administrative support. The results of the content analyses of the literature and the first round of focus groups were compared and combined to create a general definition of administrative support of counseling programs.

In the second phase of the study, this general definition was operationalized through the development of an instrument designed to measure administrative support of counseling programs. The specific procedures used in phases one and two of the study are explained in Chapter III. The results are presented and discussed in Chapter IV. In Chapter V, the findings are discussed, and they are related to new questions to consider in the area of administrative support of counseling programs. Recommendations for practice and for further research also are presented, as are the researcher's reflections on the study.

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The researcher's purposes in this study were (a) to provide a clear definition of administrative support of counseling programs and (b) to develop and test a valid, reliable, credible, and comprehensive instrument with which to measure the multiple facets of administrative support of school counseling programs. This chapter contains a review of the literature related to administrative support of school counseling programs. The review is divided into three sections. The first section is a review of literature from the fields of management and organizational theory addressing the importance of supervisors' support of employees. The second section contains a review of literature from the fields of human services, including writings addressing administrative support in areas other than counseling. Literature on administrative support of school counseling programs is reviewed in the third section.

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Management and Organizational Theory

The Importance of Administrative Support to Organizations

Many theoretical constructs affirming the importance of administrative support of school counseling programs can be found in management and organizational theory. In Personality and Organization, Argyris (1957) analyzed the numerous studies had been done in the fields of management theory and human relations theory. In conducting this review, he detailed the conflict that exists between a hierarchically structured organization's need for employees who are passive and obedient, and individual employees' need to find personal fulfillment through autonomy and self-actualization. Argyris contended that the organization's need to have control over the professional lives of its employees is at great odds with employees' needs, as individuals, to have control over their work and their lives.

After detailing the many implications of these conflicting viewpoints, Argyris (1957) claimed that "management actions can decrease the degree of incongruence between the individual and formal organization" (p. 237), thereby helping to resolve the conflict. By acting as the mediator between the demands of the organization and the demands of employees, managers can create workplace atmospheres that both provide employees with opportunities to demonstrate autonomy and self-actualization, and generate a level of productivity that allows the organization to grow and prosper. Argyris referred to this kind of management as "reality-oriented leadership" or "employee-centered

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leadership" (p. 237), a managerial style that emphasizes the importance of administrative support of employees.

This mediating approach toward management that bases the success of an organization in the fulfillment of employees' needs is at the core of Likert's work. In his book New Patterns of Management (1961), Likert presented the findings from a series of sample interviews and controlled field studies undertaken to analyze the management practices of companies as they related to the firms' productivity, turnover, and rates of employee motivation and job satisfaction. Likert found that the companies with the most success were those that engaged in a management approach that not only took the needs of employees into consideration, but actually engaged the employees in the decision-making processes of management itself. Likert named this approach the "collaborative" management system and later renamed it System 4, indicating the highest level of teamwork possible in an organization's management structure.

One of the concepts inherent in the implementation of System 4 is Likert's (1961) principle of supportive relationships, which states:

The leadership and other processes of the organization must be such as to ensure a maximum probability that in all interactions and in all relationships within the organization, each member, in light of his background, values, desires, and expectations, will view the experience as supportive and one which builds and maintains his sense of personal worth and importance. (p. 103).

As a result of his research, Likert concluded that management actions such as positive and empathic responses to employee concerns create a work

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atmosphere that is supportive rather than punitive, and responsive rather than reactive. Likert saw management actions as among the causal variables that can affect what he called intervening variables, such as the employee's attitude toward the supervisor, or the strength of communications between the employee and the supervisor. Improvement in these intervening variables, according to Likert, leads to improvement in the end-result variables, such as higher productivity, lower absenteeism and turnover rates, and improved productivity. In sum, Likert discovered that the key to a successful organization is, in part, the use of managerial interactions that affirm the needs, values, and goals of employees, which in turn enhance the communication between supervisors and employees and strengthen the commitment of employees to the organization. This improved commitment leads employees to make even greater contributions to the organization, helping the organization realize greater success, growth, and profit, all due to an increase in the causal variable of administrative support.

Likert's model of causal, intervening, and end-result variables was supported in a study by Dossett, Cella, Greenburg, and Adrian (1983), who evaluated the roles of participation in goal setting and leader support in productivity. In the experimental design, subjects experienced different levels of supervisor support and varying degrees of influence in setting goals for completion of assigned tasks. The results indicated that the subjects who felt the most positive about their experience in the study were those in a group supervised by someone who was supportive and allowed subjects to participate in selecting the productivity goal. However, the most productive unit in the

experiment had been led by someone who was supportive and established a high production goal without consulting the subjects at all.

Dossett et al. (1983) concluded that this study suggested that leader support did not directly affect output. It may be, the authors suggested, that leader support may encourage employees to set high goals for themselves, thus indirectly leading them to greater levels of productivity, but the results did not indicate that support and productivity had a direct cause-and-effect relationship. This conclusion supported Likert's assertions regarding the role of administrative support as a causal variable that influences an intervening variable (in this case, employee goal setting), which in turn affects an end-result variable (in this case, productivity). Although the relationship between administrative support and productivity is indirect, the level of support ultimately affects the level of productivity and is therefore important to the organization.

Likert's principle of supportive relationships is a fundamental component of many of the managerial theories used today. Leaders of the total quality movement of managerial theory, including General Electric chairman Jack Welch (Slater, 2000) and Peter Drucker (1999), have recognized the importance of understanding the needs of the employee. "[The employees] need to know the organization's mission, and to believe in it," wrote Drucker (p. 20), who added that the way to create this awareness is to understand what employees want, what their values are, and what their goals are.

This same emphasis on understanding and involving employees in the workplace has been echoed by leaders of the empowerment theory of

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management, including Warren Bennis, who stressed the importance of placing employees at the center of the success of the workplace by giving their work meaning (Bennis & Goldsmith, 1997). This same idea was articulated by chaos-theory author Margaret Wheatley (1999), who embraced Likert's principle of supportive relationships when she said that "relationships are a growing theme in today's leadership thinking" (p. 164).

The Benefit of Administrative Support to Employees

Whereas Argyris, Likert, and current theorists have pointed to the advantages of administrative support to the goals of the organization, a study by Fairhurst and Chandler (1989) indicated the benefit of administrative support to the power of employees within the organization. In a business setting, the authors conducted an ethnographic study of power as it related to the closeness of supervisor-employee relationships. Fairhurst and Chandler concluded that employees with personal ties to their supervisors were more inclined to express their opinions and have their opinions heard by the supervisors. In addition, employees with close ties were able to present more persuasive arguments for their viewpoints when discussing issues with their supervisors, whereas those employees who were more distant from their supervisors were more likely to receive the full brunt of the supervisors' authority. These findings suggest that employees who receive administrative support (as measured by the closeness of their relationship to the supervisor) have greater influence in the decision-making processes used by their supervisors. Conversely, those employees who

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receive less support from their supervisors are more likely to remain on the periphery of the organization's decision-making structure.

The Importance of Measuring Administrative Support

In addition to stressing the importance of supervisors' demonstrating support to their employees, Likert (1967) advocated the measurement and evaluation of all variables affecting the organization. Likert asserted that, in measuring any variable, including the causal variable of administrative support, a cycle of improvement could be developed, based on the measurement of the variable. After a valid, reliable measurement of the variable was obtained, the results of the measurement could be assessed and evaluated. Discussion would ensue in an effort to account for the current level of the variable, and this discussion would serve as the basis for the development of action plans designed to affect the variable in a positive way. These action plans would then be implemented, and the variable would be measured again following the implementation of the action plan, leading to the start of a new cycle of evaluation, all based on the ability to measure the current level of a variable in a reliable and valid manner.

Summary

The importance of administrative support of employees was introduced by both Argyris and Likert, who emphasized the importance of such support, not only as a tool to help employees of an organization realize personal fulfillment, but also as a key ingredient to help the organization realize increased

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productivity. These benefits were confirmed in later studies. Fairhurst and Chandler (1989) demonstrated the greater organizational influence that can be wielded by an employee who receives appropriate administrative support, and Dossett et al. (1983) showed the role of administrative support as a variable that indirectly leads to increased productivity for the organization.

Given the importance of administrative support, Likert emphasized the need to create valid, reliable instruments with which to measure the variables that affect the health and success of an organization—variables like administrative support. The development and use of such instruments is a vital step in creating a basis for discussions and action plans that will lead to improved levels of these variables, thereby leading to greater organizational success.

The findings discussed in this section established the importance of administrative support and of knowing more about the theoretical underpinnings of such support. This knowledge is necessary in order to create an appropriate instrument to measure the level of administrative support within an organization. Measurement of administrative support is important because it is the starting point of a process that can ultimately lead to higher levels of administrative support, employee satisfaction, and organizational productivity.

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Administrative Support in Human Services, Including Education Programs Other Than Counseling

Studies of Support in Human Services Other Than Education

Since the introduction of the principle of supportive relationships in 1961, Likert's work has served as the basis of management theories and studies in a wide variety of organizational settings, including many areas of human services. In a study of a social work agency, Kahn (1993) emphasized the need for administrators to provide support to those directly involved in giving care to clients. In a six-month qualitative study, Kahn observed the patterns and directions of support among directors, administrators, and social workers in one agency. The purpose of making these observations was to determine what kinds of support, or what Kahn referred to as caregiving, were needed in a human service organization to maintain organizational effectiveness and avoid burnout among caregiving professionals. Kahn followed up these observations with individual interviews of all of the personnel who participated in the study, as a means of clarifying the feelings participants were experiencing as a result of the interactions he had observed.

Kahn's (1993) findings supported Likert's principle of supportive relationships. He concluded that "the implications for the administration of caregiving organizations include establishing connections between administrators and caregivers that allow not simply for the exchange of information and resources but for emotional expression and support" (p. 562). Among the qualities Kahn cited as essential for administrators to demonstrate in

caregiving environments were "empathy, considerateness, and validation"

(p. 562).

Likert's work also has been used in studies of the association between supervisor-employee relationships and employee job satisfaction. In one such study, Bonsutto (1993) developed a training module for supervisors of child-care workers. The training module, which included role-playing exercises, was designed to improve the supervisors' support skills. Using a pretest/intervention/posttest methodology, Bonsutto found a significant increase in job satisfaction among workers after their supervisors had received the training. The findings from this study, combined with those from Kahn's research, affirm the utility of Likert's theory of supportive relationships (and therefore the importance of administrative support) in human service settings.

Literature in Education Framing the Concept of Administrative Support

In addition to literature on administrative support in the field of human services, a wide body of literature exists on the specific topic of administrative support in schools, which has served to establish the boundaries and underpinnings of the construct. Likert's principle of supportive relationships was affirmed in an essay by Selander (1986). In describing the development of decision-making teams of administrators and teachers in his high school, Selander, a principal, expressed satisfaction with his newly discovered ability to work more closely with staff in a school environment that was rich in collegiality and mutual support. Although he mentioned counseling just briefly and indirectly

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("We are also looking at our support services from a different angle," p. 3), Selander confirmed the validity of Likert's assertion that an organization is more effective when the needs of its members are given a high priority.

Other contributions to the literature, including two studies by Blase (1987a, 1987b), have provided more specific insights into the construct of administrative support. In part one of the first study, Blase used a case study approach to determine the elements that contributed to teachers' perspectives toward work. Once administrative leadership had been identified as one of these elements, Blase conducted additional interviews in part two of that study to determine what teachers considered to be effective leadership practices of high school administrators. In the second study, the researcher interviewed teachers to determine what they considered to be ineffective leadership practices of high school administrators.

The results of Blase's (1987a) study indicated nine "task-related themes" to which principals must be attentive in demonstrating leadership: accessibility, consistency, knowledge/expertise, clear and reasonable expectations, decisiveness, goals/direction, follow-through, ability to manage time, and problem-solving orientation (p. 594). In addition, he identified five "consideration-related themes": support in confrontations/conflict, participation/consultation, fairness/equitability, recognition, and willingness to delegate authority" (p. 594). Blase concluded by asserting that the presence of these elements would lead to open, inviting atmospheres in schools, where principals would be viewed as effective (or supportive), whereas the absence of these

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elements would create closed, noncommunicative schools, where principals would be judged to be ineffective (or not supportive).

Administrative Support and School Climate and Effectiveness

Several studies on administrative support have indicated that such support has an effect on overall school climate and school effectiveness. In a study related to administrative support, Lyman (1987) identified elements that lead to improved trust in an administrator-teacher relationship. Stating that teachers need to be viewed as “managers” of their own classrooms (p. 2), Lyman contended that supervisors must demonstrate qualities such as confidentiality, sincerity, consistency, integrity, and a sense of teamwork in the activities of supervision (pp. 2-5). Lyman emphasized honesty, positive feedback, frequent communication, and gratitude as key elements of the supervisory process. He also stressed the importance of the administrator’s demonstrating these qualities first, as a model for teachers to follow.

Based on this model, Lyman (1987) conducted a survey of elementary teachers to identify what administrators did to create an atmosphere of trust. Common qualities that respondents mentioned included providing a strong orientation for teachers who were new to the building, establishing a good building tone, demonstrating concern, using good communication skills such as listening and giving feedback, spending time with teachers, and supporting teachers—although Lyman did not define any of these constructs, including support. Based on the results of this survey, Lyman developed a 12-step staff

development program designed to build trust in a school. These steps followed the same pattern as Likert's process of measuring and improving the presence of a variable in an environment.

With regard to school effectiveness, Hoy, Tarter, and Witkoskie (1992) conducted a survey among elementary schools in New Jersey to determine what relationships, if any, existed among the concepts of supportive leadership, teachers' trust in the principal, collegiality among teachers, trust in colleagues, and school effectiveness. Using reliable and valid instruments to measure each of these constructs, Hoy et al. found that supportive leadership directly affected the teachers' trust in the principal and collegiality among teachers. These two factors, in turn, influenced trust in colleagues, which in turn affected school effectiveness. These findings differed from the authors' hypothesis that supportive leadership would have a direct influence on school effectiveness. At the same time, the findings gave some support to Likert's notion that the causal variable of administrative behavior (in this case, principal support) indirectly affects the end-result variable (in this case, school effectiveness).

The importance of administrative support as it relates to school effectiveness was also confirmed in an article describing changes in the evaluation methods of teachers in Anchorage, Alaska. Fenton and Nancarrow (1989) were able to observe three different modes of teacher evaluation as the school district moved toward a cooperative evaluation method that replaced a checklist method of evaluation, which had led to either too much or too little administrative involvement. In comparing the method of teacher evaluation with

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the level of communication between teacher and evaluator, and the level of innovative teaching practices demonstrated in the classroom after teacher evaluation was completed, it was found that the cooperative evaluation method—the method that included the highest degree of administrative support—elicited more classroom innovation and higher teacher-evaluator communication than did the authoritative method or the laissez-faire method.

Another reflective piece on the importance of administrative support to school effectiveness and climate came from Leslie (1989), who showed how a school district in Oregon improved its teachers' level of job satisfaction. Based on the Likert-like premise that "principals must seek out ways to give teachers a sense of their own importance and expertise" (p. 22), Leslie identified four tools that the district had used in its successful effort to increase satisfaction: effective use of the district office and school board, use of research to create a picture of what mattered to teachers, clear and consistent articulation of what was expected of teachers and how they would be evaluated, and wide and varied forms of communication and recognition (pp. 19-20). Manifestations of these elements of administrative support (a causal variable in the Likert model) made a significant difference in raising teachers' satisfaction (an intervening variable in the Likert model).

Administrative Support and the Vitality of Teachers

In addition to its effect on school climate and effectiveness, administrative support has been shown to have an influence on the efficacy of teachers. In a

survey measuring rates of teacher efficacy, student achievement, and student-teacher interaction, Ashton, Webb, and Doda (1983) found that teachers with high efficacy maintained high academic and behavioral expectations for students and preserved a supportive classroom atmosphere. In discussing the results of their survey, the authors suggested that principal support may have played a role in the level of efficacy experienced by teachers.

Hipp (1996) investigated the relationship between teacher efficacy and administrative support. Through telephone interviews, direct observation, field studies, and quantitative survey data, she studied the influence principals had on teacher efficacy in 10 middle schools identified as being involved in major change initiatives. The findings indicated that principals played a significant role in teacher efficacy, a role based on the principals' demonstration of five key factors: modeling behavior, inspiring group purpose, providing contingent rewards, holding high performance expectations, and providing support (p. 25). The last factor, providing support, was said to consist of the principals' respect for teachers' knowledge of the subject matter, respect for the decisions teachers made, principals' participation in student discipline, principals' modeling of risk taking or innovation, and strong personal support of teachers (pp. 19-22). Hipp also identified several factors that limited the role of the principal in teacher efficacy. These included excessive workload for the principal, budget cuts, people's loss of trust in public education, and "negative environmental indicators" that Hipp did not define further.

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Corroborating these findings, Littrell, Billingsley, and Cross (1994) showed the effect that principal support can have on the careers and lives of teachers. After conducting a literature review, Littrell et al. defined principal support in terms of four key factors: emotional support, instrumental support, informational support, and appraisal support. Using a questionnaire method, the researchers conducted a survey of general and special educators to measure these four key factors of administrative support in terms of how much support the subjects were currently receiving and how important that support was to them. Subjects were also given surveys measuring personal stress, school commitment, health, job satisfaction, and desire to stay in teaching. The authors constructed items measuring the four factors of support; the other measures were based on existing instruments. Results of the survey showed that the measures of school commitment, health, desire to remain in the job, and job satisfaction were all affected by at least one key factor of administrative support, with emotional support being identified overall as the most important kind of administrative support needed by teachers. Noting that the current levels of administrative support were lower than the levels of support teachers thought they needed, the authors concluded that principals would do well to create positive school environments centered on mutual trust in order to increase the levels of administrative support.

The results of the study by Littrell et al. were supported by the findings of a study by Singh and Billingsley (1996). Measuring many of the same variables used in the study by Littrell et al., Singh and Billingsley found a strong

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relationship between job satisfaction and the desire to stay in teaching. They noted that "the strongest influence on job satisfaction was principal support" (p. 44). In this study, educators recommended that principals demonstrate greater support by offering feedback and problem-specific suggestions to educators and by seeking suggestions from educators in a collaborative fashion (p. 45). These conclusions, combined with the results of the studies by Ashton et al. (1983), Hipp (1996), and Littrell et al. (1994), reinforce Likert's point that administrative support influences intervening variables (such as efficacy and job satisfaction), leading to positive changes in end-result variables (such as stress, commitment to the school, and desire to remain in teaching).

Administrative Support of Specific Academic Programs

Thus far, the writer has reviewed literature concerning the importance of administrative support to an entire organization (a human services agency or a school), or to the entire group of caregivers (or teachers) who work there. In addition to these studies of administrative support at a macro organizational level, many contributions to the literature on administrative support have focused on the importance of administrative support of a specific school program or department. These contributions also shed further light on specific elements, or underpinnings, of administrative support.

In a Rand study prepared for the United States Department of Education, Berman and McLaughlin (1978) looked at federally funded programs in schools and tried to determine what factors in the school setting contributed to the

successful implementation of these programs and the continuation of the programs after supporting federal resources were no longer available. Of the seven factors identified in the study, principal leadership was the factor of greatest significance in the eyes of the authors, who identified "moral support" (p. viii) as the key element the principal could contribute in creating a school environment that was positive and receptive to change. Berman and McLaughlin also identified the principal's aggressiveness in pursuing district funding to replace federal funding as pivotal. "All told," the authors concluded, "the principal aptly merits the title of "gatekeeper of change" (p. viii).

In another study analyzing the results of two case studies that measured administrative support of grant-funded projects, Arends (1982) identified four supportive administrative behaviors that affected the success of the programs: promoting the project through verbal statements to a wide variety of audiences, providing grant participation with a sense of clarity and steadiness as the project is introduced to the school environment, defending the project from those opposed to it, and giving something of value (personnel, supplies, and so on) to those involved in the project (pp. 82-86). Arends concluded his study by suggesting that, in administrative training programs, potential administrators be reminded that the proper execution of basic administrative tasks, combined with words of encouragement, goes far to create an atmosphere of support.

With regard to specific academic departments, Tyler (1987) conducted a study of administrative support of special educators. Based on a review of the existing literature on special education, as well as interviews with special

education teachers, she developed a survey instrument designed to measure the attitudes of special education teachers, special education supervisors, and building principals regarding the level of support special education teachers should receive from administrators, and the level of support those teachers were currently receiving from administrators. The results of the study indicated that special education teachers evaluated the current level of administrative support much lower than did either the special education supervisors or the building principals; no other differences among groups were discovered. When asked how administrators could improve their current levels of support, special education teachers identified greater solicitation of teacher input and stronger listening skills as two key areas in which growth could occur.

Billingsley, Gersten, Gilmar, and Mowant (1995) summarized several studies concerning special educators' perceptions of administrative support. In concluding that special educators thought that building administrators had a powerful effect on special education programs, the authors identified four barriers that prevented principals from supporting special education programs more fully. These barriers were principals' lack of understanding of what special educators do, principals' failure to recognize special education teachers' challenges and successes, limited principal assistance with day-to-day issues such as discipline, and principals' lack of interest in involving special education teachers in long-range planning of the special education program (p. i). The keys to removing these barriers, according to the authors, were improved respect of the teachers by the principal, strong communication skills on the part

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of the principal, and meeting teachers' needs, all of which can be viewed as demonstrations of administrative support.

Schetz and Billingsley (1992) conducted telephone interviews with speech pathologists and asked them to give examples of how principals provided support. In addition, subjects were asked to give ideas on how they, as principals, would support speech pathologists, and to explain what support meant to them. Using interrater verification, the authors found four key elements of support: adequate working conditions and resources, advocacy of the speech program, promotion of staff development, and direct assistance with programmatic and day-to-day concerns (pp. 154-156).

Mayer, Butterworth, Komoto, and Benoit (1983) studied the effect that administrative support can have on school consultants. A group of school consultants instituted programs designed to reduce vandalism in several schools. Once the programs had been introduced, the researchers measured the degree to which each program was implemented, the costs of vandalism experienced by each school, and the degree of principal support of the program. Principal support was measured by the number of meetings the principals attended at workshops that were part of the program, overall accessibility of the principals as evaluated by the school consultants, and principals' praise of teachers who had actively implemented the program in their classrooms. Data were gathered from nine schools. The results indicated that buildings where principals' support of the consultants' efforts was high experienced greater teacher involvement in the program and greater reductions in school vandalism.

As a result of the study, Mayer et al. concluded that principal support was key to effecting school change.

In assessing administrative support of English programs, Stewig (1986) discussed the need for teachers of English (rather than school administrators) to be in charge of redesigning the curriculum. Stewig also stressed the importance of basing curricular changes on data and core competencies, rather than on whims or instinct. With regard to administrative support, Stewig acknowledged the need for teachers involved in changing a curriculum to "seek out avenues of influence which will enable them to have an effect on public opinion" (p. 77). The author cited two specific areas in which administrators' professional assistance is helpful. First, administrators must help English departments cope with the influx of large numbers of teachers who are neither credentialed nor experienced in teaching English, but are compelled to do so during times of layoffs or teacher shortages. Second, administrators can support English programs by revitalizing experienced teachers who may have allowed complacency to set in, which could be a barrier to the introduction of new approaches or content in the curriculum.

Voss (1989) developed an instrument to assess the current practices and desired levels of performance in a science department. As part of that assessment, he also evaluated administrative support. Through the study, Voss identified the need for administrative support in the areas of teacher assignment, evaluation of teaching staff, budgeting, and support of working conditions.

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Oberg (1996) reviewed the results of three qualitative studies on administrative support of school library programs. Taken as a group, the schools involved in the studies had library programs that had experienced widely varied degrees of success and effectiveness. In analyzing the studies, Oberg identified three elements of effective administrative support. First, principals worked directly with teachers in promoting the library program, including in-service activities that involved the teachers with the library. Second, the principals modeled support of the library by making supportive statements about the library, by spending time in the library, and by taking students they might have been working with to the library. Third, the principals allocated appropriate funding for library materials and staffing, and for in-service training for librarians. Oberg emphasized the need for librarians to educate principals about the importance of school libraries. Two effective ways of doing this were to create good lines of communication with the principal and to work with the principal to create long-term goals for the library program.

In yet another academic area, Lickteig, Parnell, and Ellis (1995) measured principals' support of literacy programs by analyzing the written statements made by teachers in Nebraska who had nominated their principals for a literacy award. After categorizing the statements made by the teachers, the authors assigned the following attributes to the "ideal" principal:

Places the development of literacy as a priority; inspires faculty and children to do their best; provides moral support; provides support through acquisition of books and materials and through inservice opportunities; offers leadership through special events celebrating literacy; becomes involved with children; becomes involved in

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professional reading associations; is available; is a good listener; offers encouragement. (p. 306)

Summary

The literature in this section confirmed the groundwork laid by Likert's principle of supportive relationships. From social work agencies to schools in general to specific departments and programs in schools, administrative support has been viewed as a necessity in maintaining many of the vital elements of a human services organization. These elements include teacher/caregiver effectiveness, school/organizational climate, teacher efficacy, teacher health, teacher commitment, and program vitality.

In addition, many of the contributions to the literature have demonstrated the benefits of being able to measure the level of a particular variable in an organization. By using accepted instruments to measure constructs such as stress, job satisfaction, school climate, program longevity, and administrative support, it is possible to evaluate the direction and strength of the relationships between and among these constructs. As these measurements are taken and analyzed, it is possible to gain a clearer understanding of each construct (including administrative support), in terms of how one variable affects other variables and the specific underpinnings of each variable.

Finally, these contributions to the literature have both reinforced the common conclusion as to the importance of administrative support to human services organization and to schools, and offered useful insights into the nature of the underpinnings of the construct of administrative support. Using a variety

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of qualitative and quantitative research techniques, personal reflection, and professional opinion, the authors whose works were reviewed in this section furnished a wide array of perspectives and conclusions on the nature of administrative support, varying from intuitive frameworks for administrative support to specific, research-based conclusions on the nature of administrative support. These contributions are helpful in expanding the dimensions of the construct of administrative support.

Administrative Support of Counseling Programs

The Importance of Support

Within the area of administrative support in educational settings, a strong body of literature exists on the specific topic of administrative support of counseling programs in schools. In their study, Sattes and Miller (1989) contacted school counselors in a six-state area and asked them to identify exemplary school counseling programs; counselors could use their own judgment in deciding what made a program exemplary. The researchers contacted the schools that the counselors had recommended, and they interviewed counselors and principals of some of those schools in an effort to determine what factors had led to the success of the counseling programs at their schools. When asked to identify the relevance of school administrators' support of the counseling program, 93% of the counselors who were interviewed saw "working closely" with the principal as "very important" (p. 18). In addition, 85% of the principals who were interviewed saw themselves as supportive of

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their schools' programs, and 58% saw themselves as the overseers of the counseling programs.

Bloom and Davidson (1998) compiled a list of positive and negative administrative behaviors that affect school counselors and school counseling programs. Based on their observations and experiences as educators, the authors stressed the importance of communication, evaluation, availability of resources, inclusion in the larger school community, and focus on professional counseling activities as tools a principal can use to demonstrate support of counseling programs.

Writers of a guide issued by the University of Tennessee emphasized the need to have strong administrative support when creating a comprehensive career center (Tennessee State Department of Education, 1990). Designed as a manual for counselors to use when developing or updating a career program, the guide spoke to the need for administrators who would provide direct support for the center through the budgeting process. Although this was seen as the key element of support, the manual also suggested that it would be helpful if the administrator had an understanding of the needs counselors would have in developing, supplying, staffing, and evaluating the center.

In an essay addressing the many needs of counselors, Aubrey (1973) called for a reevaluation of the purpose and function of the school counselor. In making this proposal, Aubrey identified seven topics counselors should emphasize if a revitalization of counseling is to occur. These topics were recognition of counselors, counselor autonomy, counselor flexibility, accessibility

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to students, ownership by counselors of the counseling program, appropriate physical space and facilities for counseling, and counselors teaming with teachers. This list provides counselors with a framework for study, and it gives administrators a framework with which to build a program of administrative support of counseling programs.

Supporting Aubrey's assertion that the role of the school counselor is often unclear and subjective, Murray (1995a) suggested that the root of good communication lies in the development of a strong, clear definition of the counselor's role in the school on which both the principal and the counselors agree. This agreement should be reinforced through regularly scheduled meetings between the principal and counselors, and through the development of a long-term strategic plan for the counseling program. Such activities would lead to increases in administrative support.

Administrative Support and a Comprehensive Guidance Plan

The strategic planning approach to counseling programs was at the heart of a comprehensive guidance program model introduced by Gysbers and Henderson (1988). After conducting survey research indicating that school counselors were often engaged in more paperwork and quasi-administrative activities than service to students, the authors identified four key areas of school counseling services: guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support. They encouraged counselors to use these four services as the foundation for a comprehensive guidance program, one that is

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built with the advice and support of a counseling advisory committee. Gysbers and Henderson recommended that this committee should include teachers, parents, students, other student support personnel, community agency representatives, and school administrators.

In a later article, Drier and Gysbers (1993) concluded that administrative involvement is essential in providing the support and resources that counseling offices need in order to serve students and their communities. These findings confirmed the results of a summary of 30 years of research on effective guidance programs by Borders and Drury (1992), who advocated strong lines of communication between principals and counselors, if only to help counselors avoid being given duties unrelated to counseling (p. 495). Drier and Gysbers's findings also supported the conclusions reached by Sears (1993), who advocated counselor leadership in the development of effective counseling programs. Sears specifically encouraged administrators to support counselors by giving them time to develop components of the counseling program, use methods of evaluation, and access professional development opportunities.

Gysbers's concept of a group approach to developing comprehensive guidance programs was supported in a study by Dassance and Tulloch (1983), who discussed the benefits of educators' working in teams in order for institutions to achieve goals related to counseling at community colleges. With regard to administrative support, the authors pointed out the benefits of working with school administrators, who "play the major role in the establishment of priorities throughout the budgeting process" (p. 50).

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The advantages of a planned counseling program were affirmed in a report by the Utah State Board of Education (1992). After observing other states adopt the Gysbers program as a statewide model for school counseling programs, the Utah Board of Education based the design of its new statewide guidance curriculum on the Gysbers model as well. In the model, the Board of Education cited three benefits as enticements for school administrators to properly implement and support the program: The model provides a structured counseling program with specific guidance content, it provides a means for measuring the effectiveness of the guidance program, and it enhances the community's image of the guidance program. These benefits, then, serve as examples of the end-product variables that can be affected if a planned counseling program is implemented with a high level of the causal variable of administrative support.

Administrative Support and Role Congruence

In studying administrative support of counseling programs from a different perspective, Stickel (1988) investigated the degree of congruence between principals and counselors with regard to their perceptions of the school counselor's role. As a measure of congruence, Stickel used the Counselor Role Inventory to survey principals and counselors. Each group was asked to respond to the instrument in two ways. First, subjects were asked to respond based on their perceptions of the counselor's **actual role** in their school; second,

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subjects were asked to respond based on their perceptions of what the counselor's role should be.

Stickel (1988) discovered a high level of congruence between counselors and principals regarding the counselor's current role, confirming the findings from a study by Ibrahim, Helms, and Thompson (1983). The greatest disagreement was with how much paperwork counselors were expected to do. In the entire study, the greatest difference was found between counselors' perceptions of what their role should be and principals' perceptions of what the counselors' role should be. The counselors reported a wide gap between current practice and the ideal role, whereas principals thought the current practice nearly approximated the ideal role. These findings mirrored the results of a study by Frank (1986) of principals and counselors in Iowa.

In the same study, Stickel (1988) measured counselor burnout and job satisfaction to determine whether a relationship existed between counselor-principal role congruence and either burnout or job satisfaction. Using the Maslach Burnout Inventory to measure burnout and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire to measure job satisfaction, Stickel found no relationship between congruence and burnout, but discovered a mild relationship between level of congruence and job satisfaction.

Administrative Support and Communication

In her conclusions, Stickel (1988) suggested that the overall findings pointed to a need for improved communication—a clear manifestation of

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administrative support of counseling programs—between counselors and principals, and a need for counselors and administrators to create a clear set of mutual expectations of the counselor’s role. These suggestions were supported in articles by Bryant (1991), who emphasized the importance of principals’ understanding the philosophical framework and functions of counselors, and by Studer and Allton (1996), who suggested that differences in perceptions of administrative support stem from differences in perceptions between counselors and principals concerning the purpose of the counseling program, the uses of counselor confidentiality, counselors’ advocacy for students, and the use of discipline (pp. 54-55).

Other writers have emphasized the importance of communication as an indication of administrative support of counseling programs, and have stressed the importance of counselors’ taking the lead in seeking out administrative support. In advocating the development of strategic plans for counseling programs, Murray (1995a) stressed the importance of good communication between administrators and counselors. This recommendation is pivotal if counselors wish to avoid the creation of a crisis-driven mentality toward counseling by school administrators and by the school community at large. In response to the wide body of literature on the importance of school counseling programs, Gerler (1992) supported the importance of counseling programs but emphasized that it is the duty of counselors to document and communicate the effectiveness of their programs to the public in general and principals in particular. Snyder and Daly (1993) pointed out the importance of having

counselors lead the process of changing counseling programs, as opposed to having administrators invoke changes.

In their summary of research on effective counseling, Andersen and Reiter (1995) concluded that counselors should not be satisfied with the level of support administrators offer, but should develop strategies for gaining administrative support of their programs. The authors pointed to two specific communication activities that would advance efforts to improve support: Counselors should update administrators on research in the counseling field, and counselors should have an interest in developing innovative counseling activities for students (p. 42).

The benefits of counselors' taking the lead in establishing strong channels of communication with administrators were set forth in a study by Eddy, Richardson, and Allberg (1982). The authors first described the significant cumulative losses that counseling programs experience when counselors are asked to engage in noncounseling tasks, such as filing, administering discipline, and filling in for a teacher in an emergency. The authors then cited six case studies in which counselors either successfully deflected attempts to add noncounseling duties to their assignments, or convinced administrators to reduce the existing levels of noncounseling duties that were part of their assignments. These cases, concluded the authors, bolstered the argument for counselors' development and use of persuasive communication skills when explaining their function and service to administrators. Such proactive

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communication would result in a strengthening of demonstrated administrative support for the counseling program.

Administrative Support of Counseling Programs and School Location

Findings from two studies on administrative support of counseling programs indicated that geography might play a role in the degree of administrative support given to counseling programs. In a survey of counselors who served as the only counselor in a school building, Sutton (1988) found that these “isolated” counselors reported receiving more support from administrators and staff than did counselors who worked in buildings with several counselors. Sutton suggested that this situation might have resulted from the isolated counselors’ experiencing more frequent contact with teachers and administrators.

Two years later, Sutton and Southworth (1990) conducted a study to determine whether perceptions of administrative support among counselors in rural schools in Maine differed from those of counselors in urban schools in the state. The survey results indicated that differences in perceptions did exist, as counselors in the rural schools reported having better relationships with their administrators than did their urban counterparts. The authors suggested that these higher levels of support—which they defined as trust, acceptance, cooperation, and principals’ knowledge of the counseling role—may have arisen out of necessity because the geographic isolation of rural counselors and

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The results of Sutton and Southworth's study also indicated that this closer relationship between counselors and administrators in rural schools led to a greater degree of counselor autonomy, greater innovation in the counseling program, greater willingness to take risks, and greater job satisfaction—all intervening variables that are affected by the degree of administrative support of counseling programs. In contrast to other studies, the authors also found that levels of stress were higher among rural counselors, even though they felt more support from their administrators. The authors suggested that this difference might have been due to the absence of ancillary counseling resources for students in rural areas, thus leaving school counselors with a feeling that they must “do it all.”

Administrative Support of Counseling Programs and Counselor Efficacy

Studying a concept closely related to the intervening variable of job satisfaction, Sutton and Fall (1995) examined the relationship between counselor efficacy and school climate. Hypothesizing that counselor efficacy played an important role in the productivity and effectiveness of school counseling programs, the authors modified existing survey instruments to measure counselor efficacy and school climate. The instrument they used to measure school climate, the School Climate Survey (SCS), was a modified version of an instrument designed by Coladarci to measure school climate

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among teachers. When Coladarci used it, the SCS revealed two subelements to the construct of school climate: administrative support and support of teachers in the building. In analyzing their results, Sutton and Fall concluded that "counselor self-efficacy may be related to school climate" (p. 335). The results of the study indicated that both collegial support and administrative support were important in the development of strong counselor self-efficacy.

Administrative Support of Counseling Programs and Evaluation

The importance of administrative support of counseling programs also was addressed in two articles on the proper method of evaluating a counseling program. In a manual designed to assist counselors with the evaluation of counseling programs, Johnson and Whitfield (1991) provided counselors with a list of questions designed to help in evaluating the degree of administrative support given to the counseling program. These questions centered on the issues of principals' awareness of the goals and results of the counseling program, provision of budget and resources for counseling programs, garnering teacher support of counseling activities, and use of counselors' expertise in schoolwide issues and programs.

Keene and Stewart (1989) shared professional insights into the importance of administrative support of the evaluation of counseling programs. After reviewing the appropriate procedures for evaluation, the authors identified several barriers to effective evaluation that exist in schools. Among those barriers was a lack of resources given to counselors to interpret the results of

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evaluation instruments after the instruments had been distributed and collected. This lack of support led to a lack of support in creating action plans for improving counseling programs, a crucial step in Likert's process of improving a variable.

Summary

As was the case with the literature in the previous two sections, the literature on administrative support of counseling programs underscored the importance of administrative support to the health and vitality of both an organization (in this case, counseling programs) and the employees of that organization (in this case, counselors). In a variety of articles and research studies, administrative support of counseling programs has been shown or suggested to be vital to constructs such as counselor efficacy, long-range planning of comprehensive guidance programs, evaluation of counseling programs, principal-counselor congruence concerning the role of a counselor, and effectiveness of the counseling program.

As was the case with the literature discussed in the other two sections of this review, some writers addressing administrative support of counseling programs have emphasized the point Likert raised concerning the importance of being able to measure the level of a variable (administrative support) in order to develop plans to raise the level of that variable. Researchers who have measured administrative support of counseling programs have found that relationships existed between administrative support and the number of counselors in a given school (Sutton & Southworth, 1990), and between

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administrative support and counselor self-efficacy (Sutton & Fall, 1995). In addition, the ability to measure administrative support of counseling programs has been seen as important to the evaluation of those programs (Johnson & Whitfield, 1991). The use of these measures confirmed the role of authentic measurements in defining, measuring, and improving levels of administrative support of counseling programs.

Finally, as was the case with the literature related to administrative support of human services programs and school programs other than counseling, the conclusions researchers have reached concerning administrative support of counseling programs represent valuable contributions to the underpinnings of the construct of administrative support. From improved communication to the need for autonomy to appropriate levels of budgeting, these findings provide insights into the elements of administrative support of counseling programs, insights that have come from both professional experience and research-based conclusions. These insights constitute a rich foundation for further studies on administrative support of counseling programs.

Chapter Summary

The literature reviewed in this chapter strengthened the view that administrative support is vital to the success of counseling programs. Overall, the writers affirmed the role of administrative support as a causal variable that affects a wide number of intervening variables, such as school climate, job

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satisfaction, and counselor efficacy. These variables, in turn, lead to increased levels of the end-product variable of improved counseling programs.

The literature addressing the importance of administrative support of counseling programs contains an array of opinions on the underpinnings and effect of administrative support. The literature also contains the results of research confirming the importance of administrative support as a concept, but providing no insight into the underpinnings of administrative support. Hence, there is a need to advance the efforts to define and measure administrative support of counseling programs. This can be done by synthesizing the valuable but untested insights of professionals and using the results of that synthesis to develop underpinnings of the construct of administrative support of counseling programs.

If these underpinnings can be used to develop an instrument that is a valid and reliable measure of administrative support of counseling programs, that instrument can be used not only to confirm the relationship between the causal variable of administrative support and a variety of intervening variables, but also to provide data-based support of the intuitions of educators regarding how levels of administrative support can be improved. The present study was undertaken to advance the literature in just that way.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Introduction

The researcher's purposes in this study were (a) to provide a clear definition of administrative support of counseling programs and (b) to develop and test a valid, reliable, credible, and comprehensive instrument with which to measure the multiple facets of administrative support of school counseling programs. To accomplish these purposes, the research was conducted in two phases.

The methods that were used in carrying out the two parts of the study are described in this chapter. The purpose of part one of the study was to construct a comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs by conducting a thorough review of the literature in the area of administrative support, and by conducting a series of focus groups with practicing counselors to ascertain their perceptions of administrative support. The purposes of the second part of the study were to operationalize the definition created in part one of the study through the creation of an instrument designed to measure administrative support, and to cross-validate this new instrument with measures of other factors that are affected by administrative support.

Defining Administrative Support of Counseling Programs

Literature Searches

The first step in this part of the study was to conduct several literature searches to review a broad range of materials related to administrative support of school counseling programs. A literature review was conducted through the databases of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) and Dissertation Abstracts. The keywords used in these searches included "administrative support of counseling programs," "administrative support," "principal support," and "counseling programs." Additional searches were made on these databases using keywords pertaining to school improvement programs because it is commonly believed that administrative support is a key ingredient in school improvement.

In addition to these searches, the researcher contacted several professional education associations to determine what literature, if any, their staffs were familiar with in the area of administrative support, and to determine what literature these associations had published in this area. Associations contacted included the American School Counselors Association (ASCA), the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). In addition, the editors of the study Stacking the Odds (Snyder & Spindel, 1996), produced by the Indiana Youth Institute, were contacted to obtain their recommendations of sources for potential information.

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Because the relationship between school administrators and counselors could be viewed in a broader context as the relationship between a supervisor and workers, it was also necessary to research the theoretical underpinnings of the broader areas of managerial support, managerial theory, organizational psychology, organizational development, organizational theory, and human motivation. To aid in this search, the researcher asked professors of business and psychology at Oakland Community College in Royal Oak, Michigan, for their recommendations of relevant historic and current literature in those areas that might relate to the topic of administrative support of counseling programs.

The searches yielded literature of many different formats, including quantitative studies, qualitative studies, and articles reflecting personal opinions and professional experience. No article was excluded because of its format, as the researcher thought that reviewing literature using different approaches would create a richer picture of the existing body of literature on administrative support of counseling programs.

Content Analysis of the Literature

Once the above-mentioned searches had been conducted, the researcher read each piece of literature relevant to administrative support of counseling programs. A content analysis of each piece was then conducted, using Krippendorff's (1989) description of content analysis as a guide. In completing each content analysis, the researcher summarized the general themes and concepts of each piece of literature, as well as the specific ideas, phrases, and

keywords presented by the author(s) that, according to the frame of reference developed in that piece, were relevant to the concept of administrative support of counseling programs. In addition, for articles in which a writer(s) discussed any kind of research method that had been used to address the topic of administrative support of counseling programs, the type of method was noted, as were the procedural steps and the results of the research.

By using the content analysis of each piece of literature as the basis of comparison, the researcher discovered the ways in which the many theoretical frameworks of administrative support had been developed, and realized the specific concepts, ideas, examples, and research methods that had been used in expanding and developing those frameworks. This comparison of articles also created a history of the development of the construct, indicating those elements of the construct that had been advanced through adaptation, replication, and clarification; those elements that had been introduced and not advanced; and those aspects that have yet to be investigated and defined.

Creation of the Final Definition

Once each piece of literature was read, a final definition of administrative support of counseling programs was created. As was the case in doing the content analysis of each article, the guiding principle used in developing this definition was to consider the individual frames of reference presented by the authors of the individual articles. Based on a comparison of the topics and concepts presented in each article, the final definition included the concepts

most frequently presented in the literature at all levels, from the common elements of the broad theoretical framework of the construct, to similarities of specific examples demonstrating the construct. This definition also included elements of administrative support that were unique to one article but were either so new or so strongly presented that their inclusion was vital to a comprehensive view of the construct. This was done to give the most complete view possible of the construct of administrative support of counseling programs, as currently substantiated in the literature.

Creation of a Counselor-Based Definition

After the literature review was completed, a series of focus groups with high school counselors was convened. The purpose of the focus groups was to elicit ideas from counselors who were currently involved in school counseling programs regarding the meaning of administrative support, and to gather specific examples of administrative support experienced by practitioners. The perspectives presented by the counselors would be used in developing the final definition of administrative support of counseling programs, and this definition would serve as the basis of an instrument designed to measure administrative support. Because this instrument was going to be field tested in the second part of the study, counselor input into the definition of administrative support of counseling programs was viewed as essential to the creation of an instrument that would be viewed by the counseling community as an authentic barometer of administrative support of counseling programs. These insights would also

promote the creation of an instrument that would have greater construct validity when field tested.

To select participants for the focus group, the researcher drew a simple random sample of 60 high school counseling offices from a master list of all public high schools in Genesee, Macomb, Oakland, Wayne, and Washtenaw counties in Michigan (referred to hereafter as the greater Detroit area). This list was drawn from the 1999 Michigan Education Directory.

The researcher then contacted the high schools contained in the random sample in the order in which they had been selected. When calling the high schools, the researcher asked to speak to the head or chair of the counseling department. This request often led to the call's being transferred to the school's counseling office, where it was then transferred to the counseling department chair. In schools where there was no department chair, the counseling office secretary directed the call to an available counselor. If a counselor was unavailable to take the call, the researcher left a message with the counseling office secretary and then called the next high school on the list. Offices that had not returned messages by the time all 50 schools had been contacted were called a second time.

When speaking to the school counselor, the researcher identified himself, explained the purpose of the call, and invited the counselor to attend a focus group. A formal script provided the framework of the researcher's remarks, but he departed from the script to answer any questions the counselors asked, to respond to remarks the counselors made, or to keep the counselors engaged in

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the conversation. If the counselor declined the invitation to attend the focus group, the researcher inquired whether another counselor might be interested in participating. Depending on the counselor's response to this inquiry, the call was either terminated or transferred to another counselor.

In all, 16 counselors agreed to participate in the first round of focus groups. Confirmation letters were sent to these counselors, along with directions to the location of the focus group meeting. The focus groups were scheduled for late weekday afternoons in three geographically diverse locations in the greater Detroit area. One focus group was held on Wednesday, December 9, 1998, at the Bloomfield Township Public Library in Bloomfield Hills; the second on Monday, December 14, 1998, at the Holly Schools Administration Center in Holly; and the third on Tuesday, December 15, 1998, at the Alfred Noble Library in Livonia. Of the 16 counselors who agreed to attend, 12 actually appeared for one of the three focus groups. Participants represented school districts of diverse geographic and socioeconomic backgrounds, and schools of different sizes. Each participant was given an introduction to the purpose of the focus group and was asked to sign a participation waiver before the session began. All participants complied with this request.

The questions the researcher asked in the focus groups were based on the results of the review of literature on administrative support of counseling programs. The questions were broad in scope, to provide a minimal framework for the construct the participants would complete by sharing their professional insights into and experiences with administrative support during the discussion.

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In addition, these questions were minimal by design, in order to create an atmosphere of discussion that was as free from preconceived notions as possible. This neutral environment allowed for a free exchange of ideas among participants and did not require the discussion to follow the concepts of administrative support as established in the literature.

Where appropriate during the focus groups, the researcher asked additional questions in order to clarify, redirect, or summarize points that had been raised during the sessions. These additional questions were used to facilitate the discussion based on the content of the discussion itself, and not on the concepts contained in the literature on administrative support or on the researcher's opinions. During the focus groups, the researcher took notes on the points being discussed; no other recordings of the discussions were made. At the conclusion of each focus group, the researcher thanked the counselors for their participation and sent them each a follow-up letter of appreciation at their respective high schools.

The researcher analyzed the notes he had taken during the three focus groups for common themes and ideas. As in the literature review, the common components of specific examples, general ideas, and broad concepts were noted. This content analysis served as the basis for creating a definition of administrative support of counseling programs as viewed by high school counselors. Similar to the creation of the definition of administrative support of counseling programs based on the literature review, this definition was created by identifying the common elements of support that had been identified by many

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focus-group participants, as well as elements of support that may have been articulated by only one participant, but were viewed as relevant when reviewing the focus-group notes as a whole. Such inclusion resulted in a broad definition of administrative support, varying in both levels of specificity (from broad constructs to specific examples) and in practitioners' viewpoints (from ideas commonly shared to those expressed by only a few).

Creation of the Final Definition

Next, the researcher compared the definition of administrative support constructed from the literature review to the definition constructed from the comments of focus-group participants. The elements common to both definitions of administrative support were identified, as were those that had been identified in only one of the two definitions and yet seemed vital to the creation of a comprehensive definition of administrative support. These elements were combined to create a final definition of administrative support that included a broad theoretical framework with five key components as underpinnings. Supporting descriptions of each component were also included to make the definition easier to understand and apply in schools.

Operationalizing the Definition of Administrative Support of Counseling Programs

Development of the Counseling Assessment Questionnaire

Once a final definition of administrative support of counseling programs was constructed from the definitions based on the literature review and the focus

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groups, the second part of the study was initiated through the development of an instrument designed to measure the presence of the components included in the final definition constructed in the first part of the study. Using Likert's (1961) principle of supportive relationships as a basis for decision, the researcher determined that the instrument should measure administrative support of counseling programs as perceived by those intended to receive that support—the school counselors.

Because perception of support is viewed as a subjective evaluation based on a combination of data and affect, it was determined that the instrument should contain a series of statements constructed to measure the degree to which counselors felt the presence of each component of administrative support in their schools. Statements were constructed for each component of the final definition of administrative support of counseling programs; the number of statements developed for each concept depended on the number of statements the researcher thought was necessary to obtain a complete measure of the concept. As a whole, the statements were designed to measure the presence of both the broad concepts presented in the final definition and the supporting descriptions used to clarify each concept. In many cases, the wording of the statements was based on the phrases and wording presented in the literature, by focus group participants, or both.

To develop an instrument that would accurately measure the presence of administrative support of counseling programs, a Likert-type response scale was incorporated into the instrument. Subjects completing the instrument would be

asked to respond to each item by indicating the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement, using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree* (1) through *Neutral* (3) to *Strongly Agree* (5).

Field Testing the Instrument: A Second Series of Focus Groups

To field test the new instrument, the researcher conducted a second series of focus groups. Using the same methods of random selection and contact that were used in selecting participants for the first series of focus groups, the researcher invited high school counselors to attend one of two focus groups. These focus groups were also held late in the afternoon on weekdays; one was held on Monday, March 29, 1999, at the Royal Oak Public Library in Royal Oak, and the other was held on Tuesday, March 30, 1999, at the Oakland Intermediate School District (Oakland Schools) offices in Waterford. The process used to select participants for the second round of focus groups was independent of the one used to select participants for the first round. Six counselors agreed to attend one of the focus groups, and they were sent confirmation letters and directions. One of these counselors had also participated in the first round of focus groups.

Although six counselors agreed to participate in the second round of focus groups, three actually did so. After being introduced to the purposes of the focus group, each counselor signed a participation waiver and was then asked to review the statements concerning administrative support of counseling programs and the broad concepts of support the statements were intended to

measure. Participants also were asked to comment on the clarity of each statement and to evaluate the comprehensive nature of the instrument as a whole. The researcher gave directions to facilitate the review process and clarified ideas or questions that participants raised. The researcher also took notes during the discussions. At the conclusion of each focus group, participants were thanked, and letters of appreciation were sent to them at their respective high schools.

The researcher then reviewed the comments and suggestions made by participants in the second round of focus groups. Based on these comments, minor changes were made in the statements for purposes of clarity. A question was added in order to measure more fully a specific component of the definition of administrative support.

Creation of the Questionnaire Packet

The modified statements served as the core of the experimental instrument, the Counseling Assessment Questionnaire (CAQ). Six open-ended questions were added to the CAQ to give respondents an opportunity to expand on their answers, and to provide normative data on the number of years they and their principals had worked in education individually and as a team. The CAQ was then combined with the statements used in Sutton and Fall's (1995) School Climate Survey and the short version of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) to constitute the questionnaire packet that would be mailed to study participants.

Sutton and Fall (1995) used the SCS to measure school climate in a study that indicated a relationship between school climate and counselor self-efficacy. The SCS used in Sutton and Fall's study was an adaptation of a school climate survey that Coladarci constructed to measure teachers' perceptions of school climate. Both Sutton and Fall and Coladarci identified two subscales within the SCS, one of which measured administrative support and the other staff support; neither subscale was broken down into smaller components. Sutton and Fall evaluated the two subscales of the SCS for internal consistency, using Cronbach's alpha. The alpha coefficient for the administrative support subscale was .91, and the alpha coefficient for the staff support subscale was .90.

The SCS was included in this study to cross-validate the CAQ because Sutton and Fall (1995) had discovered a link between administrative support and school climate. Because a high positive correlation was discovered in the Sutton and Fall study, finding a similar correlation between the CAQ and the SCS in this study would suggest that the CAQ was a valid measure of administrative support.

Stickel (1988) used the long version of the MSQ in affirming the relationship between counselor job satisfaction and administrative support. Designed to measure job satisfaction in 20 categories, the MSQ was developed through field testing statements on job satisfaction with subjects from a wide variety of vocations. The field testing revealed two subscales on the MSQ— intrinsic satisfaction and extrinsic satisfaction. Median Hoyt reliability coefficients for the short version of the MSQ were .86 for the intrinsic satisfaction

subscale, .80 for the extrinsic satisfaction subscale, and .90 for general satisfaction.

In addition to a long version of the MSQ, a short form was also constructed, consisting of one item from each of the 20 categories; this short form was developed for use when time constraints prohibited using the long form of the instrument. The short version of the MSQ was used in the current study to avoid having a packet of instruments that would take participants too long to complete.

Because employee job satisfaction is an integral component of Likert's (1961) principle of supportive relationships, finding a high positive correlation between the CAQ and the MSQ in this study would suggest a strong relationship between administrative support of counseling programs and counselor job satisfaction. Such a correlation would also suggest that the CAQ was a valid measure of administrative support of counseling programs.

Field Testing the Questionnaire Packet

To determine the length of time counselors would need to complete the questionnaires in the packet, a third series of focus groups was conducted. The counseling department heads of two high schools in the greater Detroit area agreed to allow the researcher to conduct timings on the packet as part of their respective department meetings. At each of the meetings, the researcher introduced himself and gave a brief description of the purpose of the study. Each of the counselors involved signed a participation waiver and then

completed the packet, with the department head noting the time each participant finished writing.

Ten counselors participated in these focus groups, each of which was held during the regular school day. At one focus group, a counselor was called away from the meeting during the timing and was unable to complete the materials. The researcher called this participant several days after the focus groups were held to gain his insights into the questionnaire packet. As the timings were being completed and after they were concluded, the researcher asked the participants for feedback on the statements and formats used on the instruments. This feedback was sought, in part, to supplement the feedback provided in the second set of focus groups, which were not as well attended as the researcher had hoped. Feedback was provided, and the researcher thanked the participants. The department heads were also sent letters of thanks for the participation of their department members. Based on the feedback from the third series of focus groups, a minor change was made in the explanation of one of the steps of the Likert response scale used on the CAQ.

Conducting the Survey

Population sample. After the field testing was completed, questionnaire packets were prepared and mailed to every high school counselor in every public high school in the greater Detroit area. This population was selected in part because of its geographic proximity to the researcher, but primarily because of the diverse socioeconomic conditions that exist in the region and the wide

variety of school sizes in the area. Any sample taken from this population would be likely to contain representation from small, medium, and large schools, and from schools in rural, urban, and suburban settings, resulting in a testing of the instrument in a rich array of school counseling programs, with data coming from counselors working under vastly different circumstances. Names of the high school counselors were generated from lists provided by local intermediate school districts or directly by the high schools, which the researcher telephoned. Due to confidentiality policies, the names of the counselors at two high schools were unavailable. Counselors at those schools received packets addressed to "Counselor."

A total of 711 questionnaire packets were sent by first-class mail; each packet contained a letter of introduction, the questionnaire packet itself, and a postage-paid, return-mail envelope (the questionnaire packet is contained in Appendix A). The entire population was included in the sample because a large number of completed questionnaire packets was needed to conduct the factor analysis and the cross-validation of the CAQ, and it was impossible to predict the return rate.

Participants were given an opportunity to receive a summary of the survey results by providing the researcher with their names and mailing addresses. If participants provided this information, the researcher immediately separated it from the survey upon receipt of the packet, in order to ensure participant confidentiality. Two weeks after the initial mailing, a reminder postcard was sent to those counselors whose packets had not been returned.

Analysis of Survey Data

Factor analysis. Participants' responses to the scaled items in the questionnaire packets were entered on a computer spreadsheet. Data entry was completed by the researcher, who verified the accuracy of the data entry by reviewing each page of raw data with the corresponding entries in the spreadsheet for proper alignment. Once completed, this spreadsheet was converted to a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) file for analysis.

The researcher then conducted a confirmatory factor analysis on responses to the items on the CAQ in order to test the hypothesis that administrative support of school counseling programs has five key components or underpinnings. Using squared multiple correlations as estimates for the measure of communality, initial Eigenvalues were calculated and analyzed, as was the corresponding Scree plot. Five factors were then extracted and subjected to Varimax rotation to clarify which items contributed to each factor. Loadings on these five rotated factors were reviewed to determine the items that loaded on one or more of the five factors at a level of .4 or higher. These same procedures were conducted for analysis of four factors and three factors, in order to evaluate the appropriateness of using a five-factor analysis.

Reliability. Using Cronbach's alpha, reliability measures were calculated on the CAQ as a whole and on each of the five factors derived in the confirmatory factor analysis to determine whether the instrument was consistent in its measurement of administrative support of counseling programs. Reliability

measures were also calculated on the SCS and MSQ and their respective subscales because it was of interest to compare the degree of reliability of the instruments as they were used in this scale to the measures of reliability reported by the developers of the instruments.

Cross-validation. Because the SCS is a measure of school climate, and strong administrative support has been viewed in the literature as a necessary component of strong school climate (Sutton & Fall, 1995), a two-tailed correlation test was conducted between the SCS and the CAQ. This test was completed using the Pearson product moment correlation with $p \leq .01$. A strong, positive correlation between the two instruments would show that the quality of the school climate is better in a school where administrative support of counseling programs is strong, thus confirming the findings in the literature. Two-tailed correlation tests also were conducted between the subscale for administrative support of the SCS and the subscales and total scale of the CAQ. These tests also were conducted using the Pearson product moment correlation, with $p \leq .01$. Strong positive correlations on these tests would confirm the validity of the items on the CAQ to measure administrative support of school counseling programs as a whole and to confirm the validity of the subcategories of the construct as well.

A two-tailed correlation test also was conducted between the CAQ and the MSQ, using the Pearson product moment correlation, with $p \leq .01$. Because administrative support is considered to be vital to employees' job satisfaction (Likert, 1961) and specifically that of school counselors (Stickel, 1988), a strong,

positive correlation between these two instruments would show that the MSQ, an established measure of job satisfaction, and the CAQ, an experimental measure of administrative support of counseling programs, confirm the findings established in the literature. Like the correlation between the CAQ and the SCS, a strong, positive correlation between the CAQ and the MSQ would affirm the validity of the CAQ as a measure of administrative support of counseling programs.

Based on the literature review and the focus groups conducted in part one of this study, the researcher expected that both of these correlations would indicate strong, positive relationships between the CAQ and the SCS, and between the CAQ and the MSQ. Such relationships would confirm the utility of the CAQ as a measure of administrative support of school counseling programs.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY FINDINGS

Introduction

The researcher's purposes in this study were (a) to provide a clear definition of administrative support of counseling programs and (b) to develop and test a valid, reliable, credible, and comprehensive instrument with which to measure the multiple facets of administrative support of school counseling programs. The findings of the study as they relate to the research questions are presented in this chapter. To answer the first research question, the components of administrative support of counseling programs, as defined in the literature, are presented. Next the components of administrative support of counseling programs, as defined by counseling practitioners, are presented, to answer Research Question 2. The components of these two definitions are then compared and contrasted to answer the third research question. The answers to the first questions were synthesized to create a comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs, which is presented to answer the fourth research question.

To answer the remaining research questions, the results of statistical tests of an instrument designed to measure administrative support of counseling

programs are presented. First, the steps taken to create and field test the instrument are reviewed. Then the results of the confirmatory factor analysis of the instrument are presented, to answer the fifth research question. The sixth research question is answered by presenting the reliability measures of the new instrument. Research Question 7 is answered by presenting the correlation measures of the new instrument, which were used to cross-validate the new instrument with instruments that are currently being used to evaluate support-related measures of school climate and counselor job satisfaction.

Findings From Part One

Content Analysis of the Literature

Research Question 1: What are the components of administrative support of counseling programs, as viewed in the literature?

To answer this question, the researcher conducted a content analysis of the literature on administrative support of counseling programs. The purpose of this content analysis was to determine the components of administrative support of counseling programs presented in the literature. These components served as the elements of a literature-based definition of administrative support of counseling programs.

As described in Chapter III, a series of literature searches was undertaken to establish a body of writings representing all facets of administrative support of counseling programs present in the literature. As a result of these searches, 67 pieces of literature related to administrative support of counseling programs were located and reviewed. Of these 67 pieces, 35

were articles from professional journals, 21 were monographs of reports or conference papers, 5 were educational guides, 4 were books, and 2 were doctoral dissertations. With regard to content, 4 of the pieces of literature were from the area of organizational and management theory, 28 were from the areas of administrative support of human service agencies and administrative support of school programs other than counseling, and 35 were from the area of administrative support of counseling programs. Of the 67 pieces of literature that were located, 66 were primary sources.

The main themes of each piece of literature were analyzed and summarized. As described in Chapter III, the main themes of each piece were determined in part by the number of times a theme was used in a given piece, and in part by the emphasis a theme received in a certain piece. For example, the theme of counselor efficacy was mentioned throughout an article by Sutton and Fall (1995) as a variable that is strongly affected by administrative support of counseling programs; as a result, this theme was considered a major theme. This same article briefly mentioned the relationship between administrative support of counseling programs and counselor perception of school climate, but emphasized this point in the discussion section of the article as relevant to the findings of the research conducted in the study. Whereas the theme of counselor efficacy as an outcome of administrative support of counseling programs was referred to throughout the article, the theme of counselor perception of school climate as an outcome of administrative support of counseling programs received enough emphasis in the discussion section of the

article to be considered a second major theme. As a result, both self-efficacy and counselor perception of school climate were viewed as main themes from this article that contributed to a literature-based definition of administrative support of counseling programs.

The major themes of each piece of literature were then compared, contrasted, and sorted into categories. The categories were intended to clarify the components of administrative support of counseling programs and to serve as distinct elements for a literature-based definition of the construct. Therefore, the categories were designed to be exhaustive and mutually exclusive. Because the purpose of the content analysis was to determine how many components of administrative support of counseling programs existed in the literature, no a priori number of categories was assigned.

As a result of the categorization of the major themes of each piece of literature, the content analysis revealed a definition of administrative support of counseling programs that had three components: administrative support of program implementation, administrative support of counselors as individuals, and administrative support of resource allocation. The content analysis also revealed subcategories of administrative support of counseling programs within each of these three components. (See Figure 2.)

The component of administrative support of program implementation contained four subcategories; listed in order of emphasis as presented in the literature, they are (a) administrative assistance with problem solving, (b) administrative knowledge of counseling programs, (c) strong internal

communication with counselors, and (d) strong communication with audiences external to the counseling program. The component of administrative support of counselors as individuals had two subcategories: (a) support of counselors as people and (b) support of counselors as professionals. The component of administrative support of resource allocation had two subcategories: (a) administrative support through the budgeting process and (b) administrative support through allocation of non-budget-based resources.

Component	Subcategories
Administrative Support of Program Implementation	• Administrative assistance with problem solving • Administrative knowledge of counseling programs • Strong internal communication with counselors • Strong communication with audiences external to the counseling program
Administrative Support of Counselors as Individuals	• Support of counselors as people • Support of counselors as professionals
Administrative Support of Resource Allocation	• Administrative support through the budgeting process • Administrative support through allocation of non-budget-based resources

Figure 2: Components and subcategories of administrative support of counseling programs as revealed by a content analysis of the literature.

Administrative support of program implementation. Of the three components of administrative support of counseling programs evidenced in the literature, administrative support of program implementation was the most prevalent. The premise underlying this component is that the best way for administrators to demonstrate support of the counseling program is to be actively and appropriately involved in the delivery of counseling services to students. This appropriateness is demonstrated by administrative assistance with problem solving, knowledge of school programs, and effective internal and external communication. .

A significant part of this component of support is a willingness to help educators solve problems. From their study of special educators, Billingsley et al. (1995) concluded that a large element of administrative support involved offering assistance to special educators in resolving day-to-day issues that arose in the classroom. This same troubleshooting approach was emphasized by Blase (1987a), who identified a problem-solving orientation as an important task-related theme in effective leadership. Although neither of these studies suggested that teachers would like to have the principal solve problems for them, the principal's willingness to develop an understanding of the daily problems faced by teachers and to offer suggestions on how to resolve the problems lends an air of genuineness to the administrative support of a given program.

If they are to serve as legitimate resources to teachers, administrators must possess a strong knowledge of any given program. Blase (1987a)

emphasized the necessity of knowledge and expertise in an effective school leader. Similarly, a study of speech pathologists by Schetz and Billingsley (1992) indicated that administrators' knowledge of what speech pathologists did was a key element in the demonstration of administrative support.

The importance of an administrator's knowledge of programs applies in the realm of counseling, as well. In their study of rural counselors in Maine, Sutton and Southworth (1990) identified principals' knowledge of the counselor's role as a vital part of the support rural counselors received from their principals. Further, Stickel's (1988) study of role congruence indicated a relationship between a principal's understanding of the role of the counseling program and counselors' job satisfaction, underscoring the need for strong administrative awareness of the purposes of counseling.

Johnson and Whitfield (1991) affirmed this need for principals to understand the goals and results of counseling programs as being part of an effective evaluation of counseling services. This same need was stated by Bryant (1991) and Studer and Allton (1996), who saw the knowledge of what counselors do as essential to effective support.

The literature also pointed out the importance of strong communication between educators and administrators. Fenton and Nancarrow (1989), Lyman (1987), and Stickel (1988) each suggested that strong communication is a good avenue for creating administrative knowledge of a program and a good channel to use in building on that understanding, once it is established.

For communication to be successful, internal communication, or communication between the principal and the educators involved with the program, must occur on a variety of levels. In identifying the ways in which administrative support could be improved, special educators frequently identified the importance of their being included in the development of long-range plans for the school (Billingsley et al., 1995). Frequent communication between teacher and evaluator was identified as an integral element of the success of a new evaluation program studied by Fenton and Nancarrow (1989), and Leslie (1989) identified the importance of variety in communication methods in increasing teachers' satisfaction.

In discussing the promotion of trust between teachers and administrators, Lyman (1987) identified the communication skills of listening and giving feedback as essential. In addition, Stickel's (1988) study of counselor congruence emphasized communication between counselors and principals as a strong part of creating greater agreement between the two groups concerning the appropriate role of counselors and counseling programs.

Each of these references pointed to a specific component of communication that was viewed as important to the development of a mutually supportive relationship between counselors and administrators. Taken as a whole, in these references the role of communication between administrators and educators—in this case, counselors—was viewed as being at the heart of supporting the implementation of counseling programs.

In addition to effective internal communication, the literature emphasized the role of external communication or communication about the importance of a school program or department to audiences other than those directly involved in the day-to-day implementation of the department. Promotion of a program's goals and achievements to other teachers, central office administrators, and school board members is viewed by those involved with the program as a strong endorsement of the program. This endorsement strengthens the importance of the program in the eyes of external audiences, which in turn increases the value of the program in the eyes of those involved with the program, as well.

Support for the value of external communication was offered by Arends (1982), who concluded that principals' verbal support of a program was one of four key administrative behaviors influencing the success of the program. Schetz and Billingsley (1992) identified advocacy of speech programs as one of the four key aspects of administrative support of speech pathologists. In addition, Oberg (1996) noted that school librarians felt supported by administrators who communicated the importance of the library program to classroom teachers.

With respect to administrators communicating the value of counseling programs to external audiences, Mayer et al. (1983) identified promotion of counseling programs with classroom teachers as one of three measures of administrative support. Another way to communicate the value of counseling to external audiences was identified by Bloom and Davidson (1998), who listed inclusion of counseling in the larger school community as an element of

administrative support of counseling programs. In their discussion of the evaluation of counseling programs, Johnson and Whitfield (1991) cited the principal's ability to communicate with classroom teachers and garner their support of counseling activities as an important component of the evaluation of counseling programs.

Communication of the importance of counseling programs, both to those involved in the delivery of counseling services and to external audiences, has been viewed as a key component of administrative support of the implementation of counseling programs. Writers have pointed out that this communication can be effective only if administrators first develop a strong knowledge of what counselors do. This knowledge base, combined with good communication between counselors and administrators, gives administrators a good understanding of how to apply their expertise on a regular basis in order to make the implementation of counseling services more effective. Combined, these four subcategories constitute a component that represents the importance of knowledge-based administrative support of counseling programs that articulates the importance of counseling and is of practical use to counselors on a daily basis.

Administrative support of counselors as individuals. The second strongest component of the literature-based construct of administrative support of counseling programs concerned the support given to counselors as individuals. A variety of themes used in the literature conveyed a need for administrators to help employees feel a sense of success and contribution in the

workplace. Part of this sense of success is rooted in counselors' personal realization of a greater degree of self-expression in the vocational part of their lives. Another aspect of this sense of success is the importance of administrators respecting counselors' professional contributions to the productivity and effectiveness of the organization. Although the literature evidenced greater emphasis on the need for personal recognition than professional recognition, both subcategories convey the importance of administrators recognizing the worth of counselors as a way of conveying the worth of counseling.

The importance of personal support was strongly conveyed in the literature from the fields of management and organizational theory. Maslow identified the desire for this kind of support as the need for self-actualization, a need viewed by Wiles and Lovell (1975) as essential to the success of management theory. This theme was also prevalent in the work of Argyris (1957), who based his theory of reality-centered management on the importance of organizations' helping employees achieve their personal goals in order for organizations to succeed. Empirical support for the value of the personal side of administrative support was provided by Dossett et al. (1983), who found that subjects in an experiment preferred a more personal management style over a more task-oriented, aloof style of management. These findings were corroborated by the ethnographic research of Fairhurst and Chandler (1989), who concluded that employees who had personal relationships with their

employers were likely to contribute more of their own opinions and insights when discussing work-related issues.

This theme of personal support was also evident in the literature on support of human service organizations and schools. In Kahn's (1993) study of support at a social work agency, the words *emotional expression*, *empathy*, *considerateness*, and *validation* (p. 562) were used to convey the personal component that administrative support must contain. Leslie (1989) described the need for administrators to "give teachers a sense of their own importance" (p. 22), and Hipp (1996) identified strong personal support of teachers as a key element of administrative support. In a study of the effect of administrative support on educators' job satisfaction, Littrell et al. (1994) identified emotional support as the element of support that teachers viewed as most important.

The importance of administrators' respect for the work of counselors as professionals was also presented in different ways. Aubrey (1973) identified the need for counselors to experience a sense of respect as evidenced by professional autonomy. This finding was supported in a study by Sutton and Southworth (1990), in which rural counselors reported greater autonomy and closer relationships to their administrators than did urban counselors. Sears (1993) emphasized this same theme of autonomy, encouraging administrators to give counselors the opportunity to take the lead in program innovation and evaluation.

Andersen and Reiter (1995) also touched on the issue of professional respect. They encouraged counselors to update administrators on research in

the counseling field and to develop innovative counseling activities for students. Improvements in these two professional areas, the authors concluded, would lead administrators to have greater respect for the professional efforts of counselors, an increase the authors equated with an increase in administrative support.

As presented in the literature, the themes of self-actualization, validation, autonomy, and respect point to a component of administrative support of counseling programs that transcends the mere advocacy of the counseling program. These smaller themes introduce a part of administrative support that encourages the employee as an individual to contribute to the vitality and utility of the organization in ways that draw upon the employee's personal reserves of ability, interest, perspective, and enthusiasm. These subcategories also reflect the importance of administrators' acknowledging the contributions counselors make to school communities through the execution of their duties in a knowledgeable and professional manner. Combined, these two subcategories recur in the literature with such frequency that their inclusion as an element of the construct of administrative support of counseling programs is essential.

Administrative support of resource allocation. In addition to the components of support of program implementation and support of counselors as individuals, the third component of administrative support of counseling programs evidenced in the literature was administrative support of resource allocation. Whereas support of program implementation provides a hands-on element to the construct, and support of counselors as individuals lends an

effective element to the construct, support of resource allocation serves as a more practical component of support because the other two components cannot exist if adequate resources—either budget-based or nonfinancial—are not provided for counseling programs at the outset.

In the literature, the need for administrative support of resource allocation was centered on the topic of the school budget. Berman and McLaughlin (1978) concluded that one of the primary reasons federally funded programs were maintained after federal resources were no longer available to fund them was principals' assertiveness in garnering district funds to keep the programs going. Voss (1989) identified proper budgeting and support of working conditions as areas valuable to support of school science programs. Appropriate funding was also recognized as valuable to school librarians (Oberg, 1996) and teachers of literacy (Lickteig et al., 1995). Also, Johnson and Whitfield (1991) emphasized the importance of evaluating the appropriateness of the counseling budget when evaluating a counseling program.

In addition to budgets, support of resource allocation had other, less prevalent dimensions in the literature. Arends (1982) identified the need for administrators to give something of value, such as personnel, supplies, and prime office space, to a grant-funded program in order for the program to succeed. Aubrey (1973) cited the need for appropriate physical space and counseling facilities in counseling programs. Availability of resources also was emphasized by Bloom and Davidson (1998) in their appraisal of administrative

support, and by the Tennessee State Department of Education (1990) in its guidelines for the development of an effective career center.

Drier and Gysbers (1993) stressed the importance of resource allocation in providing support of comprehensive guidance programs, as did Sears (1993), who saw support manifested in the allocation of time for program development and review, and access to professional development opportunities. This same kind of resource allocation was emphasized by Keene and Stewart (1989), who stressed the need for administrators to allocate time to counselors to analyze the results of an evaluation of counseling services. Counselors need this time to develop plans for improvement, based on the results of the evaluation.

From budgetary needs to physical space to time for reviewing the effectiveness of counseling services, counseling programs need administrative support to secure the resources to develop and maintain effective, modern, productive counseling services. Although administrative support of resource allocation received the least attention in the literature, its value to counseling programs is significant enough to view it as the third component of the construct of administrative support of counseling programs.

Summary of the content analysis of the literature. The literature reviewed from the fields of management and organizational theory, human resource agencies, schools in general, school departments, and counseling departments represented a wide array of opinions, interests, and empirical approaches in viewing the importance of administrative support and its manifestations in organizations. At the same time, these different views constituted a body of

common ideas, phrases, findings, and insights that formed three components of administrative support: (a) support of program implementation (as demonstrated in administrative assistance with problem solving, administrative knowledge of counseling programs, strong internal communication with counselors, and strong communication with audiences external to the counseling program); (b) support of counselors as individuals (as demonstrated in administrative support of counselors as people and support of counselors as professionals); and (c) support of resource allocation (as demonstrated in administrative support through the budgeting process and administrative support through allocation of non-budget-based resources). Because these components were designed to be exhaustive and mutually exclusive, they represent a complete, literature-based definition of administrative support of counseling programs.

Content Analysis of Focus Groups

Research Question 2: What are the components of administrative support of counseling programs, as viewed by counseling practitioners?

To answer this question, a series of focus groups was conducted with high school counselors in the greater Detroit area. The purpose of these focus groups was to obtain ideas about and examples of the components of administrative support of counseling programs from those currently involved in delivering counseling services in schools.

The researcher presented questions to the focus groups that were broadly framed on the literature-based definition of administrative support of counseling programs (see Appendix B). The researcher took notes during each

of the focus group discussions, writing down the main point of each response to every question. To allow maximum freedom in the discussion, no attempt was made to summarize or classify responses at any time during the focus groups. At the end of the series of focus groups, the researcher reviewed his notes from each of the three meetings for clarity.

The researcher then conducted a content analysis of the notes taken during the focus groups, to create a definition of administrative support of counseling programs as viewed by counseling practitioners. The steps taken in this content analysis were similar to those taken in conducting the content analysis of the literature addressing administrative support of counseling programs. The main themes of the focus groups were determined, in part, by the number of times a theme was presented or affirmed by focus group participants, and in part by the emphasis a theme was given when presented by a focus group participant. For example, many focus group participants stressed the importance of administrators' communicating the value of the counseling programs to teaching faculty; as a result, this idea was viewed as a main theme. At the same time, one counselor placed heavy emphasis on the importance of administrative support as respect for the counselor as a professional; as a result, this idea was also viewed as a main theme, even though no other focus group participant emphasized the idea as strongly as that counselor had.

The major themes of the focus groups were then sorted into categories. As was the case with the content analysis of the literature, the categories created in this content analysis were formed to be mutually exclusive and

exhaustive. Whereas the questions given to focus group participants were based on the results of the content analysis of the literature, no a priori number of categories was assigned during the content analysis of the notes from the focus groups.

The categorization of major themes that were present in the notes from the focus groups revealed a definition of administrative support of counseling programs that had three components: administrative support of program implementation, administrative support of counselors as individuals, and administrative support of resource allocation. As was the case with the previous content analysis, this content analysis also revealed subcategories of administrative support of counseling programs within each of these three components. Presented in order of their emphasis in the focus group notes (and shown in Figure 3), the component of administrative support of program implementation contained three subcategories: (a) administrative assistance with problem solving, (b) strong internal communication with counselors, and (c) strong communication with audiences external to the counseling program. The component of administrative support of counselors as individuals had two subcategories: (a) support of counselors as professionals and (b) support of counselors as people. The component of administrative support of resource allocation had two subcategories: (a) administrative support through allocation of non-budget-based resources and (b) administrative support through the budgeting process.

Component	Subcategories
Administrative Support of Program Implementation	• Administrative assistance with problem solving • Strong internal communication with counselors • Strong communication with audiences external to the counseling program
Administrative Support of Counselors as Individuals	• Support of counselors as professionals • Support of counselors as people
Administrative Support of Resource Allocation	• Administrative support through allocation of non-budget-based resources • Administrative support through the budgeting process

Figure 3: Components and subcategories of administrative support of counseling programs as revealed by a content analysis of the focus group notes.

Administrative support of program implementation. Focus group participants placed the greatest emphasis on the component of administrative support of program implementation. Several counselors mentioned how administrators encouraged them to get involved in their schools' weekly homeroom periods in order to advance the goals of the counseling curriculum with respect to academic advising and career counseling. Other counselors recognized the risks principals accepted when helping counselors organize and present schoolwide counseling activities, including informational assemblies and programs with motivational speakers. Noting the amount of criticism principals

received from classroom teachers about such programs, counselors remarked about the irony that teachers supported pep assemblies but lacked enthusiasm for counseling activities.

Other counselors mentioned the value of administrators' offering specific strategies for meeting the demands of a counseling workload. One counselor described the sense of validation the counselors received from their principal when the principal told the counselors to block out one half-day each week to complete paperwork related to counseling. Another counselor was grateful for the time the principal hired extra clerical help in order to free up the counselor's time to tend to students' needs. Another counselor pointed out how something as simple as administrative approval of a regular candy sale run by the counseling department led to the purchase of computer equipment that greatly enhanced students' abilities to search and apply for college scholarships.

Many of the discussions generated in the focus groups centered on the importance of communication between counselors and administrators. One counselor emphasized the importance of principals' demystifying the role of counselors and debunking myths of what counselors do. On this same theme, another counselor expressed appreciation for the number of times the principal visited the counseling center each day just to see what was happening. The counselor viewed these visits as acts designed to open the lines of communication between counselors and the principal.

Several counselors thought that administrators and counselors could work more closely together on matters of student discipline, where counselors would

intervene with students before a situation required disciplinary action. Other counselors thought it was important for administrators to ask advice from the counselors about how administrators should complete **their** tasks, as counselors hold a unique place in the school community. These examples show the creativity that can be generated between counselors and administrators when strong internal communication is established and maintained.

Counselors participating in the focus groups viewed principals' contact with external groups as being just as important as communication with counselors. One counselor saw this communication as needful to protect counselors from the ill will of the faculty. Several other counselors supported this idea, noting that teachers have no idea what counselors do, especially as it relates to scheduling. Another counselor expressed the hope that myths held by teachers about the nature of counseling work would one day be dispelled, as many teachers believe counselors always deal with just one issue at a time.

In an example of strong support through external communications, one counselor noted that, when a principal presented statistics at an all-school faculty meeting on the number of students counselors had seen during class registration week, the teachers responded by giving the counselors a standing ovation. Such recognition is rare but exhilarating, according to one counselor.

The above-mentioned examples given by the focus group participants demonstrate the power that is evident when administrative support is focused on improving the delivery of counseling services. This hands-on approach to support was clearly valued by the counselors, who gave numerous examples of

what a difference such support makes, through its presence as well as its absence.

Key to the component of administrative support of program implementation is the role of communication. Focus group participants saw the need for counselors and principals to work together in creating effective channels of communication with each other, and for principals to communicate the value of counseling programs to a wide variety of external audiences. Although it was not often stated, it was apparent that focus group participants saw administrative understanding of the role and duties of counselors as the basis of strong communications.

Administrative support of counselors as individuals. Second to the need for administrators to support counselors in the implementation of counseling programs, counselors mentioned the need for demonstrated trust and respect of counselors as professionals to exist among counselors and administrators. When asked to rate the importance of trust on a scale from 1 to 10, one counselor responded with an answer well above 10, suggesting that, for them, trust was the key element in administrative support of counseling programs.

Counselors in other focus groups echoed this sentiment, emphasizing the importance of trust in creating a work atmosphere in which creativity and program development were encouraged. Other counselors mentioned counselor competence as a prerequisite to administrative trust, suggesting that counselors must first show administrators they are capable before administrators can extend trust to them.

Whereas trust and respect were frequent topics of discussion in the focus groups, the topic of personal support rarely arose. One counselor articulated the value of emotional support, and another stressed the value of being viewed as a person by the administrator, no matter what. In general, however, focus group participants seemed to view the importance of validation as more of a professional issue than a personal one. When asked whether support of counselors was more important than support of programs, one counselor remarked that support of the program was support of the counselor. Another counselor noted that validation was nice when it came, but it was not necessary in order for him to do his job.

Overall, focus group participants spent much more time discussing how administrators could help counseling programs succeed than how administrators could support counselors as individuals. When support of counselors was mentioned in the focus groups, the discussion was usually within the context of how administrators could help counselors do their jobs better; one counselor expressed the opinion that support of the program was support of the counselor and vice-versa. Very little discussion of the personal component of administration was mentioned. When it was brought up, such support was viewed as a positive, but not necessary, element in the component of administrative support of counselors as individuals.

Administrative support of resource allocation. Many counselors in the focus groups underscored the importance of administrators supporting counseling programs through the allocation of proper budgeting, staffing, and

physical space. Although the counselors tended to view this kind of administrative support as less important than any other aspect of support, some emphasis was given to the importance of resources as they related to creating a positive atmosphere for counseling programs.

When providing specific examples of the kinds of support needed in this area, most counselors spoke of the need for appropriate physical space to run small-counseling-group activities. Items such as telephones, voice mail, computers, bulletin boards, and private offices that did not have to be shared with other student service personnel (e.g., school nurses) were also mentioned. However, the importance of these resources almost always was directly connected to their value in improving counseling services; few, if any, counselors spoke of the need to have more things merely for the sake of having them.

Many counselors did mention the importance of administrative support of the physical appearance of the counseling area. One counselor noted that the counseling area was usually the place most frequently visited by all kinds of people—teachers, students, parents, and visitors—and yet that area generally received the hand-me-down supplies and furnishings. Other counselors mentioned the strategic importance of locating all of the counselors together in one building. This unified department had to be located outside the bounds of the administrative offices, however, because students shy away from dropping in to the principal's office.

Administrative support of resource allocation was viewed as important by the counselors who participated in the focus groups. Whereas some counselors stressed the importance of having strong budgets (and autonomy over them), other counselors emphasized the need for good basic supplies, new furniture, and freshly painted walls. In either case, counselors recognized the value of having administrative support in procuring these necessities and saw the significance this element had in defining administrative support of counseling programs.

Summary of content analysis of focus groups. Many elements of administrative support of counseling programs were discussed in the focus groups, but practicing school counselors placed the greatest importance on administrative support of program implementation. Examples of this direct assistance included making suggestions concerning time management and hiring clerical staff to allow counselors greater latitude in serving students.

Within this component of program implementation, focus group participants saw communication as a key subcategory. This communication included internal communication with counselors in order for administrators to develop and demonstrate a better understanding of what counselors did. Communication also included having administrators express the importance of the counseling program to external audiences, most notably classroom teachers in the same building.

Demonstration of trust and respect of school counselors was viewed as the next most important component of administrative support of counseling

programs. Counselors in the focus groups tended to downplay the importance of administrative support of counselors as individuals, but they emphasized the importance of building an atmosphere of trust and respect for counselors as a way of showing respect for the counseling program.

Finally, the focus group participants recognized the value of administrative support in securing appropriate supplies, budget, and physical space for counseling programs. Although this area of support was viewed as the least important of all the components, relative emphasis was placed on the importance of creating an inviting physical environment in the counseling office so that students would feel welcome to come in and use the services offered by the counseling department.

Synthesis of the Content Analyses

Research Question 3: What similarities and differences exist between the components of administrative support as viewed in the literature and as seen by counseling practitioners?

To answer this question, a synthesis was created of the content analysis of the literature on administrative support of counseling programs and the content analysis of the notes from the focus groups with counselors regarding the same construct. The purpose of this synthesis was to compare and contrast the components and subcategories that were presented in each content analysis and to review the relative emphasis each component and subcategory received in the content analyses.

In creating the synthesis, all components and subcategories presented in both content analyses were reviewed. The emphasis given to each component and subcategory in one content analysis was compared to the emphasis that component or subcategory received in the other content analysis. From this comparison emerged the patterns of similarities and differences needed to answer the third research question.

The synthesis of the content analyses revealed the existence of three common components of administrative support of counseling programs. Both the content analysis of the literature and the content analysis of the notes from the focus groups contained the components of administrative support of program implementation, administrative support of counselors as individuals, and administrative support of resource allocation.

All but one of the subcategories of the three components were present in both content analyses. For the component of administrative support of program implementation, the three common subcategories were (a) administrative assistance with problem solving, (b) strong internal communication with counselors, and (c) strong communication with audiences external to the counseling program. The component of administrative support of counselors as individuals had two common subcategories: (a) support of counselors as people and (b) support of counselors as professionals. The component of administrative support of resource allocation had two common subcategories: (a) administrative support through the budgeting process and (b) administrative support through allocation of non-budget-based resources. The subcategory of

administrative knowledge of counseling programs, which was present in the component of administrative support of program implementation in the content analysis of the literature, was not present in the content analysis of notes from the focus groups.

Although all but one of the subcategories were common to both content analyses, several were given greater emphasis in one of the analyses; some were given equal weight in each analysis. For the component of administrative support of program implementation, the content analyses of the literature and the focus group notes indicated strong emphasis on the need for administrators to demonstrate support of counseling programs by offering assistance with the implementation of those programs. What Blase (1987a) saw as a problem-solving orientation was clearly supported by several examples given in the focus groups. From offering assistance with handling paperwork to supporting a counseling department candy sale, counselors valued the assistance of administrators in fine-tuning counseling delivery systems for maximum efficiency and success.

With regard to communication with counselors, participants in the focus groups confirmed the content analysis of the literature in emphasizing the value of communication in counseling programs. Just as the literature conveyed the importance of communication between counselors and principals, counselors in the focus groups stressed the need for frequent communication from administrators on everything from touching base to see how a counselor's day

was going, to engaging in active listening in order to understand what counselors did and what their needs might be.

Whereas communication with counselors was given equal value in the two content analyses, focus group participants gave more weight than the literature did to the value of external communication with teaching faculty. In explaining the importance of having teachers understand what counselors do, focus group participants emphasized the role of the administrator in affirming the work of counselors to the classroom faculty and in defending the work of counselors to the faculty during times of controversy.

The value of administrators' communications with other external audiences also was cited in both content analyses. Articulation of the importance of counseling programs to central office administrators and school board members was seen as important in both analyses. Even more important to counselors in the focus groups was the "backing up" of counselors' decisions by administrators when parents sought administrative assistance in resolving an issue.

Another difference between the two content analyses was discovered in the subcategories of the component of administrative support of counselors as individuals. As mentioned under the content analysis of the focus group notes, participants in the focus groups placed considerably less value on personal support or validation than was evidenced in the literature. Most of the focus group participants' references to administrative support of counselors were made in the context of administrative support of the implementation of the

counseling program. Many focus group participants saw support of counselors and support of counseling programs as the same thing.

Because of this close link between administrative support of the counselor as an individual and administrative support of program implementation, focus group participants referred to the more professional concepts of trust, respect, and awareness more often than did the literature. Although authors such as Lyman (1987) did mention trust in their writings, the concept of support of the counselor as a professional was much more prevalent in the focus groups. At the same time, the concept of affective support for the counselor as an individual was mentioned more frequently in the literature. In comparing the results of the two content analyses, the contrast between administrative support of the counselor as an individual and administrative support of the counselor as a professional was the most profound.

The two content analyses indicated modestly different views of the importance of the subcategories of the component of administrative support of resource allocation. In the literature, the primary importance of this component was a reminder of the power the building principal holds over the purse strings of the counseling department. In contrast, counselors who participated in the focus groups saw the strength of this component as an opportunity to engage the principal in creating an inviting atmosphere in the counseling department through the acquisition of fresh supplies, appropriate physical space, and updated furnishings. As a result, the two subcategories of support through the

budgeting process and support through allocation of non-budget-based resources received opposite emphases in the two groups.

The content analysis of the literature revealed three components that were viewed as exhaustive elements of the construct of administrative support of counseling programs: (a) administrative support of program implementation, (b) administrative support of the counselor as an individual, and (c) administrative support of resource allocation. These same three components were identified in the content analysis of the notes from the focus groups.

Regarding the subcategories within each component, only two subcategories received equal weight in both content analyses. Within the component of administrative support of program implementation, the subcategories of strong internal communication with counselors and administrative assistance with problem solving were given similar value.

The value given to each of the remaining six subcategories differed in each content analysis. Within the component of administrative support of program implementation, communication with audiences external to the counseling program (especially teaching faculty) received greater emphasis in the notes from the focus groups than in the literature. Within this same component, the literature emphasized the need for administrative knowledge of counseling programs; this need was given so little attention in the focus groups that it did not merit recognition as a subcategory.

Within the component of administrative support of counselors as individuals, the literature placed greater emphasis on the subcategory of support

for the counselors as people, whereas the focus groups emphasized the subcategory of support of counselors as professionals almost to the exclusion of the subcategory of support for the counselors as people. Within the component of administrative support of resource allocation, the literature emphasized administrative support through the budgeting process, whereas the focus groups gave greater weight to the administrator's support through allocation of non-budget-based resources.

Comprehensive Definition of Administrative Support

Research Question 4: Based on the reviews and comparisons of the existing body of literature and the views of counseling practitioners, what constitutes a working definition of administrative support of counseling programs?

To answer this question, the answers to the first three research questions were reviewed and compared. This was done to reconsider the major components and subcategories of administrative support of counseling programs presented in the literature and in the focus groups.

The researcher first examined the synthesis created to answer the third research question to determine whether each component appeared in both of the two content analyses with enough frequency and emphasis to be considered essential to the definition of administrative support of counseling programs. The researcher reconsidered the results of the content analyses to confirm the review of the synthesis.

The researcher also reviewed the synthesis to determine whether a subcategory appeared in each of the two content analyses with enough

frequency and emphasis to stand as a separate component in the final definition of administrative support of counseling programs. If the combined findings of the two content analyses yielded a series of major themes for a subcategory of a component that were distinct from both the other subcategories within that component and the remaining components, the content analyses were reviewed to confirm those major themes. Where a subcategory was removed from an component in order to create a new component, the remaining subcategories of the component were reviewed and the component was retitled.

Two of the three components of administrative support of counseling programs discovered in the content analyses were divided and retitled. As shown in Figure 4, the component originally titled administrative support of program implementation was divided into two components: (a) administrators communicate with counselors and (b) administrators communicate the value of counseling with others. The component originally titled administrative support of resource allocation was divided into two components: (a) administrators support counseling programs and the work of counselors and (b) administrators provide physical space and technology for counselors. The component of administrative support of the counselor as an individual was retained in its entirety in the final definition of administrative support of counseling programs; it was renamed administrators support counselors through demonstrations of autonomy and trust.

Within the component of administrative support of program implementation, the literature recognized the importance of administrators'

knowledge of counseling programs as a prerequisite for good communication, whereas the topic was barely recognized in the focus groups. Because this subcategory had very little recognition in one content analysis and only moderate recognition in the other content analysis, it would have been difficult to include administrative knowledge of counseling programs as a subcategory of the final definition. As a result, it was discarded as a subcategory.

Component From Content Analyses	Related Component(s) in Working Definition
Administrative Support of Program Implementation	• Administrators communicate with counselors • Administrators communicate the value of counseling with others
Administrative Support of Resource Allocation	• Administrators support counseling programs and the work of counselors • Administrators provide physical space and technology for counselors
Administrative Support of Counselors as Individuals	• Administrators support counselors through demonstrations of autonomy and trust

Figure 4: Components of working definition of administrative support of counseling programs.

When administrative knowledge of counseling programs was eliminated as a subcategory, the component of administrative support of counseling programs had three remaining subcategories: (a) administrative assistance with

problem solving, (b) strong internal communication with counselors, and (c) strong communication with audiences external to the counseling program. In reviewing the synthesis of the content analysis, the subcategories of administrative assistance with problem solving and internal communication with counselors were seen to be integrally related. At the same time, the content analysis of the literature gave minor support to the subcategory of communication with audiences external to the counseling program, whereas the content analysis of the focus group notes gave this subcategory significant support and clear identification as a category separate from strong internal communication with counselors.

The results of the review of the synthesis led to division of the three remaining subcategories of the component of administrative support of program implementation into two new components. Administrative communication with counselors was created to represent the emphasis internal communication was given in the synthesis of the content analyses; this new component also included the subcategory of administrative assistance with problem solving, a subcategory that was closely related to internal communication in the synthesis. The subcategory of external communication was retitled administrators communicate the value of counseling to others and was identified as a component separate from administrative communication with counselors, as suggested in the synthesis.

The synthesis indicated that the subcategories of the component of administrative support of resource allocation received opposite levels of

emphasis in the two content analyses. Whereas the content analysis of the literature highlighted the importance of administrative support through the budgeting process, the content analysis of the focus group notes evidenced very little recognition of this role. At the same time, although the focus group notes stressed the importance of involving the administrator in securing non-budget-based resources that would make the counseling atmosphere more inviting and open, this same subcategory was given only modest support in the literature.

These sharp differences in recognition led the researcher to divide the two subcategories into two separate components. From the subcategory of administrative support through the budgeting process, a new component was created, emphasizing administrative support of counseling programs and the work of counselors. This component emphasized the literature-based importance of administrators supporting counselors through the purchase of items (clerical support, professional development opportunities, and so on) that would help them execute their professional duties.

The subcategory of administrative support of non-budget-based resources was retitled administrators provide physical space and technology for counselors. This new component emphasizes the importance of administrators supporting counseling programs by providing a feeling for counseling that is current and updated. Although many of the things needed to maintain this feeling—paint, furniture, computers—are budget based, the emphasis of this component is on administrators supporting the atmosphere under which counseling services are provided within the school.

The remaining component of administrative support of counseling programs, administrative support of counselors as individuals, was included in the final definition with a minor alteration. The content analysis of the literature showed strong support for the subcategory of administrative support of the counselor as a person, but the content analysis of the focus group notes showed almost no mention of this subcategory. In addition, the literature-based content analysis evidenced little emphasis on the subcategory of administrative support of the counselor as a professional, whereas the content analysis of the focus group notes gave this subcategory significant emphasis.

In reviewing the notes from the content analyses, the researcher realized that many of the same words had been used to describe both personal support and professional support. These words—respect, recognition, affirmation—suggest that both the literature and the focus groups may have valued the same construct, but labeling this construct as either personal or professional might have created a dichotomy that did not accurately convey the nature of the construct. As a result, the component of administrative support of counselors as individuals (and its corresponding subcategories) was retained; it was renamed administrators support counselors through demonstrations of autonomy and trust.

In synthesizing the content analyses of the literature review and notes from the focus groups of high school counselors, and in reviewing the answers to the first three research questions, the researcher identified the following five

components as essential in creating a comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs:

1. Administrators support counseling programs and the work of counselors. This component addresses part of the theme of administrative support of budget-based resource allocation. For administrators to support counseling programs, they must first provide counselors with the tools necessary to perform their duties. These "tools" can include such things as clerical support, time, professional development, and opportunities to implement schoolwide counseling presentations.

2. Administrators communicate with counselors. In the synthesis of the content analyses of the literature review and the focus group notes, the role of communication and problem solving between administrators and counselors was strongly emphasized. This emphasis was so great that it seemed as if administrator-counselor communication was the only component present in the component of administrative support of program implementation. Therefore, it seemed necessary to give communication with counselors a more prominent role in the final definition.

3. Administrators communicate the value of counseling with others. As was the case with communication with counselors, the role of external communication was also strongly emphasized in the synthesis of the content analyses. Specifically, the importance of administrative communication with classroom teachers regarding the importance of the counseling program was a strong common theme in the focus group discussions with high school

counselors. As a result, the researcher made communication with others a component of its own.

4. Administrators provide physical space and technology for counselors. This component is the second part of the theme of administrative support of resource allocation. Whereas the first component emphasizes the role of the administrator as the keeper of the budget, this component addresses the need for administrators to help counselors create a fresh, inviting atmosphere in the counseling office. Because part of keeping current involves the introduction of new technologies, technological support was included in this component.

5. Administrators support counselors through demonstrations of autonomy and trust. This component is a mixture of the theme of personal support of counselors (from the content analysis of the literature) and the theme of support of the counselor as a professional (from the content analysis of the focus group notes). Taken together, the words *autonomy* and *trust* suggest the importance of administrative support for the counselor as both a person and a professional. These words also provide ample room for individual interpretation of this component, a need that was valued by focus group participants in particular.

Development of the Instrument

In part two of the study, the researcher developed an instrument with which to measure administrative support of counseling programs. As a means of

introducing the findings that will be used in answering Research Questions 4 through 7, the steps taken to develop the instrument are described in the following paragraphs.

Using the five components that were included in the working definition of administrative support of counseling programs, items were developed for a questionnaire designed to measure the presence of these components in school counseling programs. In developing the items for the instrument, the researcher used two key criteria as guides. First, if a component in the working definition included one or more subcategories, items were designed to measure those subcategories. Second, if the synthesis of the literature indicated that a component or a subcategory of a component was given greater emphasis in the content analyses than the other components and subcategories, more items were designed to measure the presence of that component or subcategory.

In developing the wording for items, the researcher included key phrases and concepts that he had discovered in the content analyses of the literature and the focus groups. A first draft of the items was created; these items were then compared to the content analyses to determine whether they accurately reflected the findings of those analyses. After minor revision, these items were accepted as the first version of the instrument (see Appendix C). In this version of the instrument, seven items addressed the component of support of counseling programs and the work of counselors, eight addressed the component of communication with counselors, four addressed the component of

communication of the value of counseling with others, three addressed physical space and technology, and six addressed autonomy and trust.

Field Testing the Instrument

As described in Chapter III, public high school counselors from the greater Detroit area were selected at random and asked to field test the first version of the instrument. Of the six counselors who initially agreed to participate, three counselors representing three different public school districts participated in the field testing of the instrument.

Participants in the focus groups that field tested the instrument were provided with brief descriptions of the five components of administrative support of counseling programs (see Appendix C). Based on those definitions and on their own experiences as high school counselors, participants were then asked to review each item for clarity and relevance. They were also asked to evaluate the number of items addressing each component, to ensure that the breadth of a component was adequately covered. The researcher took notes during the review times and the ensuing discussion periods. He reviewed those notes after the conclusion of all field tests to make changes in the instrument.

Focus group participants' responses to the instrument were very positive. With one exception, counselors thought the items on the instrument represented a comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs, and they agreed that the items on the instrument were clear. One participant suggested that another item be added to those measuring the component of communication with counselors. This item would address the degree to which

principals used counselors' professional resources. This suggestion, along with some proposals for minor changes in the wording of certain items, were incorporated into the next draft of the instrument.

In addition to these recommendations, one counselor suggested that each item referring to "the principal" be changed to refer to "the administrator" because some counseling programs reported to an administrator other than the building principal. This change was not incorporated into the instrument because it would have eliminated the leadership dimension that is unique to a building principal. Although the definition of administrative support used in this study included support by the principal or the principal's agent, this component of principal leadership was viewed as an important component in the literature on administrative support. Thus, the researcher thought it would be inappropriate to eliminate that component of leadership at that point in the study.

Another focus group participant asked whether he should respond to the items on the instrument from the viewpoint of a counselor or from the viewpoint of an administrator. The investigator directed him to respond from his viewpoint as a counselor because the purpose of the study was to measure administrative support of counseling programs as viewed by counselors.

Field Testing the Questionnaire Packet

Minor changes were made to the instrument, which was now titled the Counseling Assessment Questionnaire (CAQ). This new draft of the CAQ was combined with the School Climate Survey (SCS) and the Minnesota Satisfaction

Questionnaire (MSQ) to create the questionnaire packet that would be used in the survey. As described in Chapter III, this questionnaire packet was field tested to determine the amount of time study participants would need to complete the packet. This field testing also provided an additional opportunity to review the items on the CAQ for clarity and breadth. The researcher took notes throughout the field testing; these notes served as the basis for changes that were made to the CAQ after the field testing was complete.

Ten public high school counselors from two school districts participated in this round of field testing. The amount of time field study participants needed to complete the questionnaire packet varied from 13 minutes to 25 minutes. Participants from both field test focus groups made comments on specific items as they were completing the forms. These comments generally affirmed the quality of an item on one of the instruments (e.g., "That's a good question!").

At the end of each focus group, participants broke into spontaneous discussions with their colleagues about how they had responded to the instruments. These discussions then gravitated toward the quality of administrative support their counseling departments were currently receiving, and ideas about how the level of administrative support could be improved.

One participant suggested a modification to the explanation of the response scale on the CAQ. In explaining the degree of agreement assigned to each number on the Likert scale used in the CAQ (e.g., "5 means you strongly agree with the statement"), the description associated with a response of 3 was "You are neutral towards this statement." The participant thought that some

counselors might think that levels of administrative support were strong in one area one day but weak in that same area another day. He suggested that the explanation of response 3 be changed to read, "You are neutral towards this statement, or you sometimes agree and sometimes disagree with this statement." This suggestion was incorporated into the draft of the CAQ that was mailed out as part of the survey.

Analysis of Survey Data

Rate of return. A total of 711 questionnaire packets were sent by first-class mail to all public school counselors in the greater Detroit area. Each packet contained a letter of introduction, the questionnaire packet itself, and a postage-paid, return-mail envelope. Two weeks after the initial mailing, a reminder postcard was sent to those counselors whose packets had not been returned.

Of the 711 packets that had been sent out, 338 were returned, for a return rate of 47.5%. Of the packets that were returned, four were returned after the data analysis had been conducted and two were returned empty. All of the remaining 332 packets contained responses to the CAQ, 331 contained responses to the SCS, and 319 contained responses to the MSQ.

Factor analysis.

Research Question 5: Are the components of administrative support, as defined in part one of the study, confirmed by a factor analysis of the instrument designed to measure administrative support of counseling programs?

Table 1 contains the initial eigenvalues that were calculated from the results of the survey, using squared multiple correlations as estimates of the measure of communality. Using a five-factor solution, 74.8% of the total variance was explained; the fifth factor had an eigenvalue of .882 and explained slightly more than 3% of the variance. The scree plot of the CAQ for the maximum number of potential factors is shown in Figure 5.

Table 1: Total variance explained, five-factor analysis of the CAQ.

Component	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	16.537	57.025	57.025
2	1.580	5.449	62.474
3	1.534	5.291	67.765
4	1.153	3.975	71.740
5	.882	3.040	74.780

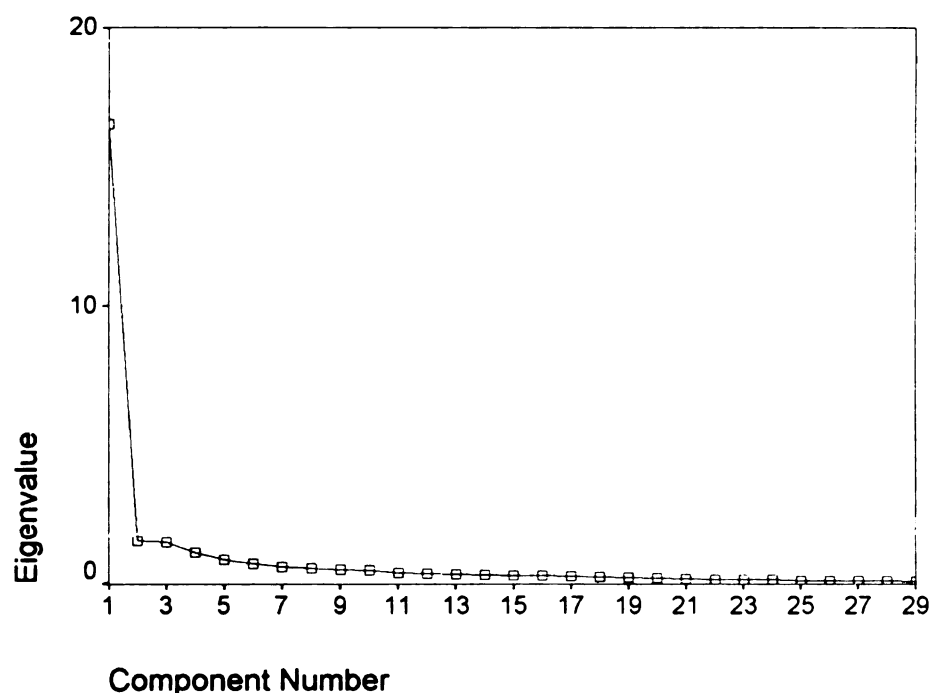


Figure 5: Scree plot of CAQ components.

Five factors were then extracted and subjected to varimax rotation to clarify the items contributing to each factor. Loadings on these five rotated factors were reviewed to determine the items that loaded on one or more of the five factors at a level of .4 or higher. The results of the varimax rotation are shown in Table 2. Of the 29 items on the CAQ, each item loaded on at least one factor at a level of .4 or higher. In addition, only 4 of the 29 items on the CAQ loaded on two factors at levels of .4 or higher, and no item loaded on more than two factors at levels of .4 or higher.

The predicted loadings and actual loadings of the items are shown in Table 3. Items 1 through 5 were expected to load on one factor (programs), Items 6 through 13 were expected to load on a different factor (communications with counselors), and Items 14 through 20 were expected to load on a third factor (communication with others). The results of the factor analysis indicated that Items 1 through 4 loaded on one factor, Items 5 through 7 loaded on a second factor, and Items 8 through 20 loaded on a third factor. The actual loadings matched the predicted loadings for Items 21 through 23 (physical space/technology) and Items 24 through 29 (autonomy/trust).

These same procedures were followed for an analysis of four factors, in order to evaluate the appropriateness of using a five-factor analysis. As shown in Table 4, a four-factor analysis explained 71.7% of the variance.

Table 2: Rotated component matrix, five-factor analysis.

CAQ Item	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
1	.365	.162	.741	.178	.250
2	.386	.202	.748	.173	.230
3	.296	.236	.757	.165	.208
4	.178	.176	.682	.105	.088
5	.210	.312	.347	.098	.562
6	.366	.057	.215	.119	.738
7	.326	.242	.161	.128	.760
8	.681	.148	.332	.178	.359
9	.623	.331	.228	.229	.341
10	.700	.231	.281	.139	.326
11	.682	.408	.189	.066	.225
12	.601	.547	.226	.109	.271
13	.715	.391	.214	.115	.223
14	.743	.301	.237	.149	.228
15	.772	.241	.232	.125	.241
16	.675	.330	.374	.203	.198
17	.783	.296	.213	.210	.175
18	.705	.383	.223	.241	.160
19	.725	.306	.221	.229	.168
20	.628	.387	.288	.192	-.004
21	.162	.197	.157	.758	.113
22	.138	.093	.142	.865	.042
23	.225	.177	.120	.725	.127
24	.316	.587	.296	.279	.254
25	.350	.605	.442	.223	.120
26	.326	.759	.092	.215	.118
27	.304	.822	.154	.158	.143
28	.496	.704	.212	.109	.134
29	.360	.751	.230	.094	.152

Table 3: Predicted loadings and actual loadings of CAQ items, five-factor analysis.

Factor	Predicted Loading (Item Nos.)	Factor	Actual Loading (Item Nos.)
Support of Counseling Programs and the Work of Counselors	1-5	3	1-4
Communicate With Counselors	6-13	5	5-7
Communicate the Value of Counseling With Others	14-20	1	8-20
Provide Physical Space and Technology	21-23	4	21-23
Demonstrations of Autonomy and Trust	24-29	2	24-29

Table 4: Total variance explained, four-factor analysis of the CAQ.

Component	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	16.537	57.025	57.025
2	1.580	5.449	62.474
3	1.534	5.291	67.765
4	1.153	3.975	71.740

The results of a varimax rotation using a four-factor solution are shown in Table 5. Of the 29 items on the CAQ, each item loaded on at least one factor at a level of .4 or higher. In addition, 8 of the 29 items on the CAQ loaded on two factors at levels of .4 or higher (as compared to 4 of the 29 items when using a five-factor analysis), and no item loaded on more than two factors at levels of .4 or higher.

Table 5: Rotated component matrix, four-factor analysis.

CAQ Item	Factor			
	1	2	3	4
1	.389	.199	.748	.186
2	.396	.246	.745	.182
3	.303	.267	.760	.172
4	.154	.207	.662	.113
5	.387	.250	.495	.088
6	.629	-.051	.398	.107
7	.588	.161	.366	.113
8	.738	.210	.364	.184
9	.664	.378	.331	.233
10	.737	.298	.308	.146
11	.667	.481	.199	.073
12	.600	.594	.262	.113
13	.695	.471	.218	.124
14	.729	.389	.234	.159
15	.766	.333	.229	.135
16	.647	.414	.363	.214
17	.744	.399	.191	.221
18	.660	.472	.207	.251
19	.687	.400	.203	.240
20	.517	.494	.226	.207
21	.166	.201	.177	.758
22	.123	.108	.138	.867
23	.232	.189	.139	.725
24	.329	.587	.353	.278
25	.295	.638	.447	.229
26	.274	.773	.128	.215
27	.258	.828	.196	.157
28	.434	.751	.223	.114
29	.315	.770	.262	.096

As shown in Table 6, the actual loadings in a four-factor analysis approximated the predicted loadings; the items measuring the factors of communication (administrators communicate with counselors and administrators communicate the value of counseling with others) loaded on the same factor.

Table 6: Predicted loadings and actual loadings of CAQ items, four-factor analysis.

Factor	Predicted Loading (Item Nos.)	Factor	Actual Loading (Item Nos.)
Support of Counseling Programs and the Work of Counselors	1-5	3	1-5
Communicate With Counselors	6-13	1	6-20
Communicate the Value of Counseling With Others	14-20		
Provide Physical Space and Technology	21-23	4	21-23
Demonstrations of Autonomy and Trust	24-29	2	24-29

A comparison of the four- and five-factor analyses of the CAQ provided strong support for the presence of five components of administrative support of counseling programs. The additional component introduced in the five-factor analysis contained three items, each with a loading of .5 or more. In addition, the five-factor analysis reduced the number of items that loaded on more than one component from eight to four. Although the initial eigenvalue of the fifth factor was less than 1.0, this could have been a result of the small number of

items measuring the fifth factor, rather than the strength of the component itself.

Thus, the factor analysis confirmed the existence of five components of the construct of administrative support of counseling programs.

Although the factor analysis of the CAQ confirmed the presence of five components for administrative support of counseling programs, it only partially confirmed the presence of the five specific components identified in part one of the study. Items representing two of the original components—administrators provide physical space and technology and administrative support as shown by autonomy and respect—all loaded as predicted. Items representing the remaining three components—administrators support the work of the counseling program and the work of counselors, administrators communicate with counselors, and administrators communicate with external audiences—also loaded as predicted, with the exception of Items 5 through 7, which created a new factor that had not been discovered earlier in this study. In addition, the remaining items measuring two components—administrators communicate with counselors and administrators communicate with external audiences—combined to load on a common factor.

Based on these differences, the researcher decided to reconsider the nature of the five components. After analyzing the results of the factor loadings and reviewing the content analyses used to create the original definition of administrative support of counseling programs, the definition of administrative support of counseling programs was reconstructed to read:

Administrative support of counseling programs comprises those actions taken by administrators that demonstrate:

Program and logistical support (Items 1-4 on the CAQ). Through the budgeting process, the administrator supplies the resources necessary for complete implementation of all facets of a traditional counseling curriculum, including counseling curriculum development, program implementation, and program evaluation.

Encouragement of program growth (Items 5-7). The administrator gives the counseling program the ability to expand beyond the parameters of the traditional counseling curriculum by encouraging the use of schoolwide counseling activities for delivery of some counseling services and counselor participation in professional development activities in order to stay abreast of new trends in the field.

Engaged advocacy (Items 8-20). The administrator demonstrates awareness and consideration of the needs and purposes of the counseling program by creating broad avenues of communication with counselors that are used on a regular basis, and by keeping the counseling program in mind while completing a variety of routine administrative tasks, including meetings with external audiences, execution of everyday problem-solving skills, and communication with external audiences.

Capital allocations (Items 21-23). The administrator dedicates appropriate capital resources to counseling in the areas of physical plant and

technology, resulting in work areas for counseling that are fresh, updated, functional, and welcoming.

Affirmation (Items 24-29). The administrator trusts the judgment and abilities of the counselor as evidenced by the autonomy the principal provides the counselor and by the tenor of the work relationship between the administrator and the counselor.

Although the factor analysis required that the five components be modified, the new components still represent the most significant themes identified in the content analyses of the literature review and the focus group notes. The need for budgetary support is the key aspect of the component called program and logistical support. The need for administrators to understand counseling programs is a key aspect of the component of engaged advocacy, as are good internal and external communication. The need for administrators to assist in the development of a positive atmosphere for counseling is the emphasis of the component of capital allocation. The need for administrators to respect counselors as professionals and as individuals is the foundation of the new component of affirmation.

Of all of the new components, only encouragement of program expansion includes aspects that were not emphasized in either the literature or the focus groups. Although professional development and schoolwide counseling activities such as assemblies and workshops were mentioned in both the literature and the focus groups, their presence in either content analysis was not strong enough to merit consideration as an independent component. The

presence of this component in the factor analysis of the data suggests that this area of administrative support of counseling programs deserves closer scrutiny in future studies.

Reliability.

Research Question 6. Does the instrument contain a high degree of reliability in measuring administrative support of counseling programs?

Reliability measures of the CAQ were calculated using Cronbach's alpha. These measures were calculated on the instrument as a whole and on each of the five factors derived in the confirmatory analysis. These measures were taken to determine whether the instrument was consistent in its measurement of administrative support of counseling programs.

The reliability measures of the CAQ and its five factors are shown in Table 7. The reliability value of the CAQ as a whole was .97. The reliability values of the subscales of the CAQ ranged from a low of .77 to a high of .97. All of these measures of reliability fell within the high range of Cronbach's alpha; it can therefore be concluded that the CAQ and its subscales are highly reliable.

Table 7: Reliability of the CAQ.

Total Instrument	Program and Logistical Support	Encouragement of Program Growth	Engaged Advocacy	Capital Allocations	Affirmation
.97	.88	.77	.97	.79	.93

Reliability of the SCS and the MSQ. Reliability measures of the SCS and the MSQ and their subscales were also calculated to confirm the reliabilities of

the instruments reported by their developers. As shown in Table 8, the reliability of the entire SCS as measured in this study was .95; the reliability of the entire SCS was not reported by Sutton and Fall (1995). For the SCS subscale of administrative support, the reliability measure from this study was .94, compared to the reliability measure of .91 reported by Sutton and Fall. For the subscale of staff support, the reliability measure from this study was .90, compared to the reliability measure of .90 reported by Sutton and Fall.

Table 8: Reliabilities of the MSQ and the SCS.

MSQ			SCS		
Total	Extrinsic	Intrinsic	Total	Admin. Support	Affect
.96	.88	.96	.96	.94	.90

Cross-validation of the CAQ.

Research Question 7. Is there a strong, positive correlation between this measure of administrative support of counseling programs and other instruments used to evaluate the support-related measures of school climate and counselor job satisfaction?

Using the Pearson product moment correlation with $p \leq .01$, the CAQ was cross-validated with both the SCS and the MSQ. The SCS was used as a cross-validation instrument because administrative support has been viewed as a key element of school climate in the literature (Sutton & Fall, 1995). The MSQ was used as a cross-validation instrument because administrative support has been seen in the literature to be vital to the job satisfaction experienced by school counselors (Stickel, 1988). A strong, positive correlation between the CAQ and

the SCS, and between the CAQ and the MSQ, would support the findings reported in the literature and confirm the utility of the CAQ as a measure of administrative support.

The results of the cross-validation of the CAQ and its subscales with the SCS and its subscales are shown in Table 9. The Pearson product moment correlation between the CAQ and the SCS was .87, which was significant at $p \leq .01$. The correlation values of the subscales of the CAQ and the SCS ranged from .41 to .91; all of the correlation values of the subscales were significant at $p \leq .01$. Of the 18 correlations presented in Table 9, 6 were in the range of .40 to .60 (indicating a modest relationship), 8 were in the range of .61 to .80 (indicating a strong relationship), and 4 were in the range of .81 to 1.00 (indicating a very strong relationship).

Table 9: Correlations of the CAQ and the SCS.

Instrument and Subscale	Instrument and Subscale		
	SCS Total	SCS Administrative Support	SCS Affect
CAQ Total	.87	.91	.67
CAQ Program & Logistical Support	.69	.71	.55
CAQ Encouragement of Program Growth	.66	.70	.50
CAQ Engaged Advocacy	.86	.91	.66
CAQ Capital Allocations	.51	.53	.41
CAQ Affirmation	.75	.78	.58

The results of the cross-validation of the CAQ and its subscales with the MSQ and its subscales are shown in Table 10. The Pearson product moment correlation between the CAQ and the MSQ was .55, which was significant at $p \leq .01$. The correlation values of the subscales of the CAQ and the MSQ ranged from .19 to .74; all of these values were significant at $p \leq .01$. Of the 18 correlations presented in Table 10, 10 were in the range of .40 to .60 (indicating a modest relationship) and 4 were in the range of .61 to .80 (indicating a strong relationship).

Table 10: Correlations of the CAQ and the MSQ.

Instrument and Subscale	Instrument and Subscale		
	MSQ Total	MSQ Intrinsic	MSQ Extrinsic
CAQ Total	.55	.43	.74
CAQ Program & Logistical Support	.44	.33	.65
CAQ Encouragement of Program Growth	.45	.36	.55
CAQ Engaged Advocacy	.53	.42	.72
CAQ Capital Allocations	.27	.19	.41
CAQ Affirmation	.53	.46	.66

Chapter Summary

The content analyses of the literature and the focus groups revealed the same three broad components of administrative support of counseling programs, but each analysis emphasized different subcategories of these components.

These differences were taken into account when synthesizing the two analyses by using some of the subcategories as separate components, creating a working definition of administrative support of counseling programs that had five components. The instrument based on this working definition was modified only slightly after two field testings.

The five components identified in the confirmatory factor analysis of the CAQ largely agreed with the five factors identified in the working definition of administrative support of counseling programs created in the first part of the study. The modest changes made to the components as a result of the factor analysis (and the subsequent renaming of the components) reflected the integration of two components that were previously separate, and the introduction of a new component.

The reliability measures of the CAQ and its subscales show an instrument that is highly reliable. In addition, the strong, positive correlations between the CAQ and the SCS, and between the CAQ and the MSQ, confirmed the strong relationships between administrative support and school climate and between administrative support and counselor job satisfaction. As a result, the utility of the CAQ as a measure of administrative support of school counseling programs was confirmed by the findings of this study.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, AND REFLECTIONS

Introduction

The procedures and results of parts one and two of the study are summarized and discussed in this chapter. After the findings have been summarized, their significance is examined. The theoretical implications for administrative support of counseling programs are discussed, and the utility of the study findings in the daily work of school counselors and building administrators is presented. The evaluative implications of the study also are discussed, including the merits of the CAQ as a tool for evaluating and improving current levels of administrative support of counseling programs.

The chapter continues with a discussion of how the results from this study can be used as the basis for further study of the construct of administrative support of counseling programs. Questions for further research that arose after examining the findings of this study also are presented. The researcher's reflections are presented as a conclusion to the chapter.

Summary of the Study

Purpose and Need for the Study

The researcher's purposes in this study were (a) to provide a clear definition of administrative support of counseling programs and (b) to develop and test a valid, reliable, credible, and comprehensive instrument with which to measure the multiple facets of administrative support of school counseling programs. Articles on the topic of administrative support of counseling programs contained a variety of opinions on the importance of support, as well as examples of how such support can be demonstrated, but these articles offered only partial views of the construct. Although these opinions were often based on the authors' years of experience as administrators or counselors, the writings lacked empirical confirmation of the authors' opinions and judgments.

The literature also included studies indicating a relationship between administrative support and factors such as job satisfaction, school climate, and counselor self-efficacy. These studies offered some empirical support for the importance of administrative support of counseling programs, but the theoretical basis of the instruments used to measure administrative support offered little insight into the specific elements of the construct of administrative support itself. Because these studies presented the construct of administrative support of counseling programs in broad contexts, the instruments developed for those studies could not be used to measure any of the specific elements of the construct. As a result, these studies led to a better understanding of the importance of administrative support of counseling programs but did not

advance the understanding of what specific elements exist within the construct itself.

Because the reflective essays were too specific in their references to administrative support of counseling programs, and because the references in the research studies were too broad, the literature lacked a comprehensive definition of the facets or elements of the construct of administrative support of counseling programs. Because of the absence of such a definition and the concomitant lack of an instrument to measure all of the elements of such support, counselors and administrators are deterred from discerning the level of administrative support of counseling programs in their schools.

Knowledge of the level of administrative support of the counseling program is important because such knowledge promotes discussion, goal setting, and implementation of strategies to increase administrators' support of these programs. Such strategies ultimately support efforts to improve counselors' commitment to school counseling programs, which in turn increases the effectiveness of those programs. Because developing a valid, reliable instrument with which to measure administrative support of counseling programs would ultimately increase efforts to improve counseling programs, this study was undertaken to create such an instrument.

Major Findings

In this section, each research question is restated, followed by a discussion of the findings pertaining to that question.

Research Question 1: What are the components of administrative support of counseling programs, as viewed in the literature?

To answer this question, a content analysis of the literature related to administrative support of counseling programs was conducted. The central themes and ideas of 67 pieces of literature were analyzed and summarized. These main themes were determined in part by the number of times a theme was used in a given piece and in part by the emphasis a theme received in a particular piece. The major themes were then compared, contrasted, and sorted into categories.

As a result of the categorization of the major themes of each piece of literature, this content analysis revealed a definition of administrative support that contained three components; subcategories within each component also were identified. The three identified components (and their respective subcategories) were as follows:

Administrative support of program implementation. This component centered on the importance of administrators demonstrating support by providing appropriate, practical assistance to counselors in completing the work of the counseling office. This component, the strongest of the three components presented in the literature, emphasized the need for principals to be accessible to counselors and take a hands-on approach to helping counselors achieve success with their work.

Administrative support of program implementation had four subcategories (listed here in the order of their significance in the literature). Administrative

assistance with problem solving referred to an administrator's willingness to work with counselors in finding solutions to problems that arise when implementing the counseling curriculum. Administrative knowledge of counseling programs emphasized the need for an administrator to understand the school's counseling department and the work of counselors. Strong internal communication with counselors stressed the importance of having multiple, effective avenues of communication between administrators and counselors. Strong communication with audiences external to the counseling program emphasized the need for administrators to promote the value of counseling to audiences not directly involved with the day-to-day operations of counseling.

Administrative support of counselors as individuals. Whereas the element of administrative support of counseling programs showed the need for administrators to support the counseling department, this second component emphasized the need for administrators to support the counselors themselves. Administrators manifest this kind of support by helping counselors feel valued and respected by administrators, and by viewing them as making a difference in the work of both the counseling program and the school in general.

The component of administrative support of counselors as individuals contained two subcategories. Support of counselors as people emphasized the need for principals to appreciate and articulate the worth of the personal qualities counselors bring to their work. In identifying and valuing the individual attributes each counselor demonstrates at school, the administrator helps the counselor realize a sense of personal achievement at the workplace. Support of

counselors as professionals identified the importance of administrators recognizing the professional competence and expertise of counselors. By acknowledging counselors' ability to complete their work effectively and by recognizing when counselors go above and beyond what is normally expected of them, administrators demonstrate respect for counselors' knowledge, judgment, and professional insights.

Administrative support of resource allocation reflected the importance of administrators supplying counselors and counseling programs with adequate materials to complete their work. This third component of administrative support of counseling programs received the least amount of attention in the literature, but it is fundamental to the existence of the other two components of administrative support because it would be difficult to provide hands-on support or affirmation to counselors if a counseling program lacked appropriate staffing, materials, or physical space.

The component of administrative support of resource allocation had two subcategories. Administrative support through the budgeting process emphasized the importance of the principal offering direct financial support of the counseling program. By allocating monies for appropriate levels of counselors, counseling support staff, and program materials, administrators reinforce their philosophical support of counseling programs through the dedication of tangible fiscal resources, which all members of a school community, including counselors, view as precious. Support of nonfinancial resources stressed the importance of administrators providing institutional

materials to the counseling program that are not directly related to the budgeting process. For example, in assigning the counseling department to a physical space that is properly sized, conveniently located, and appointed with updated furnishings, administrators help counselors create a department that is open and inviting to members of the school community, especially students.

Research Question 2: What are the components of administrative support of counseling programs, as viewed by counseling practitioners?

After the content analysis of the literature review was completed, a series of focus groups with high school counselors was conducted to gain the perspective of practicing counselors on the components of administrative support of counseling programs. A random sample of public high school counselors who worked in the greater Detroit area was invited to participate; 12 counselors participated in one of the three focus groups that were held in this series. The researcher posed broad questions based on the findings from the literature review on administrative support of counseling programs as guidelines for the focus group discussions.

The researcher conducted a content analysis on the notes he had taken during the focus groups. Using the same steps taken in conducting the content analysis of the literature review, the researcher established the main themes and ideas presented in the focus groups. He then constructed a definition of administrative support of counseling programs based on the content analysis of the focus group notes. This definition contained the same three components of administrative support of counseling programs that had been identified in the

content analysis of the literature on support. However, the subcategories identified in the content analysis of the focus group notes differed in both number and relative importance from those identified in the content analysis of the literature review.

For the component of **administrative support of program implementation**, only three subcategories were identified: administrative assistance with problem solving, strong internal communication with counselors, and strong communication with audiences external to the counseling program. The subcategory of administrative knowledge of counseling programs that emerged from the content analysis of the literature review received very little attention in the three focus groups and thus could not be considered a subcategory.

Of the three subcategories of administrative support of program implementation presented in the focus groups, the subcategory of administrative assistance with problem solving was discussed most frequently. At the same time, the remaining two subcategories—strong internal communication with counselors and strong communication with audiences external to the counseling program—received more attention in the focus groups than they did in the literature review.

For the component of **administrative support of counselors as individuals**, focus group discussions contained the two subcategories of support of counselors as professionals and support of counselors as people. Focus group participants placed much greater emphasis on the need for

administrative support of counselors as professionals, citing the importance of counselors receiving trust and autonomy from administrators in order for them to be successful in their work. The subcategory of support of counselors as people received mild recognition in the focus groups. Although a few participants saw such support as important, many others viewed personal support as something that was valued when it was demonstrated, but not essential to their work as counselors.

For the component of **administrative support of resource allocation**, the subcategories of administrative support through allocation of non-budget-based resources and administrative support through the budgeting process were apparent in the focus group discussions. Participants in those discussions placed greater emphasis on administrative support of nonfinancial resources, citing the need for administrators to help counselors create a warm atmosphere in the counseling office through the allocation of appropriate physical space and furnishings.

Research Question 3: What similarities and differences exist between the components of administrative support as viewed in the literature and as seen by counseling practitioners?

To answer this question, the researcher synthesized the definitions of administrative support of counseling programs based on the content analyses of the literature review and the focus group notes. In the first part of this synthesis, the strength and frequency of the components and subcategories of each content analysis were compared and contrasted.

In this first part of the synthesis, several similarities were discovered. Both content analyses had revealed the same three components of administrative support of counseling programs: administrative support of program implementation, administrative support of counselors as individuals, and administrative support of resource allocation. In addition, nine identical subcategories were found in the two content analyses. For the component of administrative support of program implementation, the three common subcategories were administrative assistance with problem solving, strong internal communication with counselors, and strong communication with audiences external to the counseling program. The component of administrative support of counselors as individuals had two common subcategories: support of counselors as people and support of counselors as professionals. The component of administrative support of resource allocation had two common subcategories: administrative support through the budgeting process and administrative support through allocation of non-budget-based resources.

The synthesis also showed that two of the subcategories were given equal value in the two content analyses. Under the element of administrative support of program implementation, the subcategories of administrative assistance with problem solving and strong internal communication with counselors were given high value in both content analyses.

Several differences between the two content analyses also were revealed in the synthesis. The subcategory of administrative knowledge of counseling programs, which was present in the component of administrative support of

program implementation in the content analysis of the literature, was not apparent in the content analysis of the focus group notes. In addition, focus group participants gave more weight to the subcategory of strong external communication, especially communication with teaching faculty.

For the component of administrative support of counselors as individuals, focus group participants placed much more importance on the subcategory of administrative support of counselors as professionals than did the literature. The focus group participants also gave much less consideration than did the literature to the importance of administrative support of counselors as people.

For the component of administrative support of resource allocation, the literature placed more emphasis on the subcategory of administrative support through the budgeting process than the focus groups did. In contrast, the focus groups gave much more emphasis to the subcategory of administrative support through allocation of non-budget-based resources than was evidenced in the literature.

Research Question 4: Based on the reviews and comparisons of the existing body of literature and the views of counseling practitioners, what constitutes a working definition of administrative support of counseling programs?

Because several subcategories received different degrees of importance in the two content analyses, the synthesis of the content analyses led to a realignment of the relative importance of the subcategories and to the creation of new components of administrative support of counseling programs that better reflected this realignment of subcategories. Through the synthesis of the

content analyses, a final working definition of administrative support of counseling programs was created that contained five components with no subcategories:

Administrators support counseling programs and the work of counselors. This component addressed part of the theme of administrative support of budget-based resource allocation. For administrators to support counseling programs, they must first provide counselors with the tools necessary to execute their duties.

Administrators communicate with counselors. The synthesis of the two content analyses strongly emphasized the role of communication and problem solving between administrators and counselors. This emphasis was so great that it seemed as if administrator-counselor communication was the only element present in the component of administrative support of program implementation. Based on this synthesis, it seemed necessary to give communication with counselors a more prominent role in the final definition.

Administrators communicate the value of counseling with others. As was the case with communication with counselors, the role of external communication also was strongly emphasized in the synthesis of the content analyses. Specifically, the importance of administrators' communication with classroom teachers regarding the importance of the counseling program was a strong common theme in the focus group discussions with high school counselors. As a result, communication with others was made a component of its own.

Administrators provide physical space and technology for counselors. This component was the second part of the theme of administrative support of resource allocation. Whereas the first part emphasized the role of administrators as keepers of the budget, this one addressed the need for administrators to help counselors create a fresh, inviting atmosphere in the counseling office. Because part of keeping current involves introducing new technologies, technological support was included in this element.

Administrators support counselors through demonstrations of autonomy and trust. This component was a mixture of the theme of personal support of counselors (from the content analysis of the literature) and the theme of support of the counselor as a professional (from the content analysis of the focus group notes). Taken together, the words “autonomy” and “trust” suggest the importance of administrative support for the counselor as both a person and a professional. These words also provided ample room for individual interpretation of this element, a need that was valued by focus group participants in particular.

Development of the Instrument

The final working definition served as the basis for part two of the study, in which an instrument was developed to measure administrative support of counseling programs. Using the content analyses as guides, the researcher constructed items for the instrument that reflected the tone and frequency of each of the five components in the working definition. In some cases, items

were constructed using key words or phrases that were frequently used in the literature on administrative support, the focus groups, or both.

This instrument was field tested with a second series of focus groups made up of high school counselors, who were asked to review the instrument for its theoretical comprehensiveness and for item clarity. Based on the results of these field tests, minor wording changes were made to the instrument, and an additional item was developed for the component of communication with counselors.

The newly developed instrument, the Counseling Assessment Questionnaire (CAQ), was then combined with cross-validating measures contained in the School Climate Survey (SCS) and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) to serve as the questionnaire packet for the survey component of the study. The questionnaire packet was field tested with a third series of focus groups, consisting of 10 high school counselors, in order to evaluate the comprehensiveness of the CAQ and to determine the amount of time needed for counselors to complete the questionnaire packet. Comments from these focus groups led to changes in the instructions for completing the CAQ.

Survey Results

Research Question 5: Are the components of administrative support, as defined in phase one of the study, confirmed by a factor analysis of the instrument designed to measure administrative support of counseling programs?

The questionnaire packet was distributed to 711 public high school counselors in the greater Detroit area; 338 of the packets were returned, for a response rate of 47.5%. The results of the survey were used to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis of the CAQ. Using the initial eigenvalues calculated from the survey, the researcher found that a five-factor solution explained 74.78% of the total variance, whereas a four-factor solution explained 71.7% of the variance. Five factors were then extracted and subjected to varimax rotation to clarify the items contributing to each factor. Each of the 29 items on the CAQ loaded on at least one factor at a level of .4 or higher, and 4 of the 29 items loaded on two factors at a level of .4 or higher. In comparison, when four factors were extracted and subjected to varimax rotation, each item loaded on at least one factor at a level of .4 or higher, but 8 of the 29 items loaded on two factors at a level of .4 or higher. Because the five-factor solution explained a greater percentage of the total variance than did the four-factor solution, and because the loadings of a five-factor analysis provided greater clarity than did the loadings of a four-factor analysis, the analysis confirmed the existence of five components in the construct of administrative support of counseling programs.

Although the factor analysis confirmed the presence of five components in the construct of administrative support of counseling programs, the factor loadings showed that only the items measuring two of the five a priori components of administrative support of counseling programs loaded exactly as predicted. As a result, the wording of the items designed to measure the remaining three a priori components were reviewed, as were the factor loadings.

These steps were taken to identify the central themes or ideas that best represented the newly discovered loadings.

Based on the reviews of the items and factor loadings, the titles and content of three of the five components of the construct of administrative support of counseling programs were reconfigured. Based on these changes, the five components of administrative support of counseling programs were identified as:

Program and logistical support. Through the budgeting process, the administrator supplies the resources necessary for complete implementation of all facets of a traditional counseling curriculum, including counseling curriculum development, program implementation, and program evaluation.

Encouragement of program growth. The administrator gives the counseling program the ability to expand beyond the parameters of the traditional counseling curriculum by encouraging the use of schoolwide counseling activities for delivery of some counseling services and counselors' participation in professional development activities to stay abreast of new trends in the field.

Engaged advocacy. The administrator demonstrates awareness and consideration of the needs and purposes of the counseling program by creating broad avenues of communication with counselors that are used on a regular basis, and by keeping the counseling program in mind while completing a variety of routine administrative tasks, including meeting with external audiences, executing everyday problem-solving skills, and communicating with external audiences.

Capital allocations. The administrator dedicates appropriate capital resources to counseling in the areas of physical plant and technology, resulting in workplaces for counseling that are fresh, updated, functional, and welcoming.

Affirmation. The administrator trusts the judgment and abilities of the counselor, as evidenced by the autonomy the principal provides the counselor and by the tenor of the work relationship between the administrator and the counselor.

Research Question 6: Does the instrument contain a high degree of reliability in measuring administrative support of counseling programs?

Survey data also were used to calculate the reliabilities of the CAQ, the SCS, the MSQ, and the subscales of each of the three instruments. Using Cronbach's alpha, reliability of the CAQ was measured at .97, and reliabilities of its subscales ranged from .77 to .97, indicating a high level of reliability. Reliabilities of the SCS and the MSQ were .95 and .90, respectively; reliabilities of their subscales ranged from .88 to .96. These values also indicated high levels of reliability for both instruments and were consistent with the values reported by the developers of the instruments.

Research Question 7: Is there a strong, positive correlation between this measure of administrative support of counseling programs and instruments used to evaluate the support-related measures of school climate and counselor job satisfaction?

Data from the survey were used to cross-validate the CAQ, first with the SCS and then with the MSQ. The Pearson product moment correlation for the CAQ and the SCS (total instruments) was .87. The correlations of the subscales of the CAQ and the SCS ranged from .41 to .91. All of these correlations were

significant at $p < .01$. Because a relationship between administrative support of counseling programs and school climate was found in previous studies, the high correlation between the CAQ and the SCS confirmed the utility of the CAQ for measuring administrative support of counseling programs.

The Pearson product moment correlation for the CAQ and the MSQ (total instruments) was .55, and the correlations of the subscales of these instruments ranged from .19 to .74. All of these correlations were significant at $p < .01$.

Because a relationship between administrative support of counseling programs and job satisfaction was found in previous studies, the high correlation between the CAQ and the MSQ also confirmed the utility of the CAQ for measuring administrative support of counseling programs.

Implications of the Findings

The answers to the research questions posed in this study provide significant insights into the construct of administrative support of counseling programs. These insights have important theoretical, practical, and evaluative implications for the field of education. These implications are discussed in the following pages.

Theoretical Implications

The comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs created in part one of this study is an important theoretical contribution to the literature. Before this study, most of the theoretical basis of administrative support of counseling programs was presented through reflective pieces by

educators. These pieces emphasized only certain aspects of administrative support of counseling programs and left the reader without a comprehensive view of the construct. Conversely, the remaining literature addressing administrative support of counseling programs presented the construct in terms that were too broad. In this latter group of literature, administrative support of counseling programs was recognized as important, but the specific elements of the construct were not articulated.

In using a content analysis to synthesize the existing literature on administrative support from the fields of organizational theory, management theory, human service agencies, and education (for schools in general and for counseling programs in particular), the researcher combined the individual essays, opinions, and studies presented in the literature to create a construct of administrative support of counseling programs that has both a strong theoretical framework (from the broad-based literature) and a comprehensive level of specificity (from the personal-opinion and essay-based literature). When the literature was combined with the results of focus group discussions with high school counselors on administrative support of counseling programs, a final definition was achieved that has a strong theoretical foundation and a rich pragmatic tone. Through a combination of these elements a definition of administrative support of counseling programs was created that advances the theory of the construct in terms of size, scope, and realism.

This enriched view of administrative support of counseling programs also contributes to the literature a theoretical framework for future exploration of the

construct that is simultaneously more flexible and more directive. By establishing a framework for the construct of administrative support of counseling programs, this study gives researchers and practitioners a starting point from which to view the construct. At the same time, the components presented in the definition of administrative support of counseling programs provide researchers and practitioners the option of studying individual aspects of the construct, rather than studying the construct in its entirety.

As an example, Sutton and Fall (1995) suggested that a relationship exists between administrative support of counselors and counselor self-efficacy. Before the current study was completed, further exploration of this relationship was limited to investigation of counselor self-efficacy and administrative support of counseling programs as a whole. As a result of this study, researchers now have the option of studying the relationship between counselor self-efficacy and one or two components of administrative support of counseling programs. For example, the relationship between counselor self-efficacy and the administrative-support component of affirmation can be studied, or a study of the relationship between counselor self-efficacy and the administrative-support components of engaged advocacy and capital allocations can be conducted. Because this study provided a broad, comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs, investigations of the construct can now be more tightly focused, if researchers so desire.

In addition to providing a more comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs, this study also has made a significant

theoretical contribution by creating a reliable, valid instrument with which to measure administrative support of counseling programs. The field testing of the CAQ as an instrument for measuring administrative support of counseling programs has left the literature with a tool that can be used to measure the presence of administrative support of counseling programs in individual schools. This tool can be of tremendous assistance to future contributors to the literature because it gives them the ability to measure and compare the presence of administrative support of counseling programs (or any components of the construct) with a number of other factors. As a result, the CAQ expands the utility of the theoretical framework of administrative support of counseling programs by giving researchers and practitioners a tool that makes it possible to apply the theoretical framework to schools and counseling programs.

The utility of the CAQ was confirmed by the correlation measures of the CAQ with the SCS. A correlation of .87 was found between the CAQ and the SCS, and a correlation of .91 was found between the CAQ and the SCS administrative support subscale. Taken together, these two measures of correlation strongly support the value of the CAQ as an instrument measuring administrative support of counseling programs.

Although the data indicated that the CAQ and the SCS are highly correlated, the purposes of the two instruments are different. The SCS was constructed by Sutton and Fall (1995), based on a school climate survey that was developed by Coledarci in 1986. This original school climate instrument was designed for educators in general and contained only two identified

subscales: a subscale of general administrative support and a subscale of staff support.

In adapting the SCS for use exclusively with counselors, Sutton and Fall assumed that the components of administrative support for counselors were the same as those for teachers in general. The researchers used the general subscales of the SCS to measure the relationship between administrative support for educators in general and counselor self-efficacy. They did not provide further insight into the components of administrative support of counseling programs because that was not the purpose of their study.

In contrast, items for the CAQ were based on the five components of administrative support of counseling programs as discovered in the content analyses of the literature and of notes from focus groups of high school counselors. These items were constructed specifically for counselors, and not for classroom teachers. As a result, the findings from this study contribute greater insights into the specific elements of the construct of administrative support of counseling programs, advancing the abilities of researchers and practitioners to study and discuss the construct in more specific terms.

The measurement of the five components of administrative support of counseling programs is a crucial difference between the SCS and the CAQ. Whereas in measuring such support the SCS provides no clear information on the presence of particular components of support, the CAQ furnishes specific information on the current level of support for each of the five components of the construct. With this more detailed information from the CAQ, future contributors

to the literature can analyze the measurements taken by the CAQ and evaluate the relationship of any of the components of administrative support of counseling programs to other factors. This more specific information might help to further refine the construct of administrative support of counseling programs, clarify the relationship between administrative support of counseling programs and known support-related factors, or discover the existence of a relationship between administrative support of counseling programs and a support-related factor that is currently unknown. In summary, although the CAQ and the SCS are highly correlated instruments, the utility of the CAQ in measuring the construct of administrative support of counseling programs in a comprehensive, specific way opens up tremendous opportunities for researchers and practitioners to explore the construct in a more detailed manner.

In addition to its theoretical significance in the field of administrative support of counseling programs, this study provides an important theoretical contribution to the larger fields of administrative support of educators and managerial support of employees. In conducting the content analysis of the literature for this study, the researcher reviewed 24 articles about administrative support of school programs other than counseling. Of these 24 articles, only one (Arends, 1982) presented a theoretical framework for administrative support. This suggests that the theoretical literature in the field of administrative support of educators as a whole is in need of significant expansion.

The method of instrument development used in the current study serves as a model for theoretical advancement. By conducting a content analysis of the

existing literature and by conducting focus groups of educators other than counselors, researchers can develop definitions of administrative support for other content-specific teachers (biology teachers, special educators), teachers of a specific grade level (elementary, secondary), teachers in different school settings (rural, urban, suburban), or educators in general (including counselors). These definitions could then serve as the basis for creating instruments designed to measure administrative support, which can be statistically analyzed for validity and reliability, as was done in this study.

The benefits of devising instruments to measure administrative support of educators other than counselors would be tremendous. If successfully developed, these instruments (and the definitions that serve as the basis of their development) would advance the theoretical literature on administrative support of teachers just as this study has advanced the literature on administrative support of counseling programs.

With valid instruments that measure components of administrative support for groups other than counselors, researchers can refine the construct of administrative support for specific groups of teachers (rural teachers, biology teachers, elementary school teachers, and so on), or for teachers in general. These results would help in identifying the similarities and differences in support that exist among different groups of educators. This same information can help researchers better understand the relationship between administrative support of specific groups of teachers and support-related factors (health, job satisfaction, and so on).

This advancement in the theoretical construct of administrative support can lead to significant breakthroughs in the degree of support demonstrated by administrators to all educators. Advancements in this area would lead, in turn, to increased teacher commitment to schools, which would lead to improved school effectiveness, according to Likert (1961) and the theory surrounding today's empowerment and quality movements. The theoretical implications of the current study help clarify the construct of administrative support of counseling programs, but they also have significant potential for advancing the theoretical framework of administrative support of teachers in general.

Practical Implications

In addition to contributing to the theoretical literature on administrative support of counseling programs, this study has significant practical applications for school administrators and counselors. The comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs developed in the first part of this study provides administrators and counselors with five specific components to consider when addressing administrative support. Administrators can use these components as guideposts for self-evaluation when reviewing the actions they take in support of counselors and counseling programs. In addition, counselors can use these components in reviewing the actions taken by their administrators to support counseling programs.

Although both of these applications of the comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs can be helpful, it is hoped that the

results of this study will be used by administrators and counselors together to initiate an effective discussion of the current level of administrative support of the school's counseling program. This study indicated that communication with counselors is one of the five components of administrative support of counseling programs. As a means of improving the current level of support in this component, administrators and counselors can use the results of this study in working together to build more effective bridges of communication. An appropriate first step toward improvement would be to discuss the components of administrative support of counseling programs presented in the study. This discussion would be followed by the development of examples of how each of the components is currently being demonstrated toward the school's counseling program. As an alternative to discussing the definition provided in part one of this study, counselors and administrators can use the CAQ for a more structured approach to evaluating current levels of administrative support of their schools' counseling programs.

By discussing the components of the definition of administrative support of counseling programs, or by responding to the items on the CAQ, administrators and counselors can perform a thorough evaluation of the current levels of administrative support of counseling programs. Such an evaluation can serve as a basis for discussing how levels of administrative support of the counseling program can be improved. The ideas presented in a discussion of this nature can serve as a basis for formulating action plans designed to improve levels of administrative support of counseling programs. Development of these

action plans is a key step in realizing actual increases in the levels of administrative support of counseling programs, which in turn improve counselors' level of commitment to the counseling program and to the school, thereby improving the quality of counseling programs (Likert, 1961).

In addition, an initial measure of administrative support of counseling programs using the CAQ can be used as a baseline comparison for subsequent uses of the CAQ. This would help administrators and counselors determine whether improvement in any of the five components of administrative support of counseling programs has occurred over a period of time. It can also serve as the basis of a longitudinal comparison of levels of administrative support of a counseling program over many years.

Evaluative Implications

The CAQ also has strong evaluative implications. As a valid, reliable measure of administrative support of counseling programs, the CAQ can be used to provide normative data on the levels of administrative support of counseling programs in schools. This would make it possible for researchers and practitioners to evaluate the current state of administrative support of counseling programs in general, and establish a benchmark for future measurements of levels of administrative support of counseling programs. The same normative data can be used to compare the levels of administrative support of counseling programs at different schools.

The use of the CAQ to develop normative data has many potential benefits. Normative data can be used by school counselors and administrators for formative evaluation. After comparing the level of administrative support realized by their school's counseling program to the normative data, administrators and counselors can work together to develop plans to improve the levels of administrative support in their building. Because the CAQ measures the five components of administrative support of counseling programs, the normative data provided by the CAQ can be used to develop plans to improve any one component, several components, or all five components of support. Regardless of the current level of administrative support experienced by a school's counseling program, administrators and counselors at all schools can use the normative data generated by the CAQ to review existing practices of administrative support of counseling programs and develop plans of action to increase the levels of support.

Normative data generated by the CAQ can also be used for summative evaluations. Because the CAQ is a valid, reliable measure of administrative support of counseling programs, administrators can use the normative data from the instrument to make decisions in a number of areas, from assigning administrative oversight of counseling to another administrator, to terminating the administrator currently assigned to oversee the counseling department, to undertaking a districtwide restructuring of the counseling program.

Similarly, counselors can use the normative data from the CAQ to decide whether the level of administrative support of the counseling program merits an

increase in counselors' commitment to that program. Counselors can also use the normative data to make significant career decisions, including transferring to a building with a higher level of administrative support of the counseling program, or accepting a position as a building administrator in order to increase the level of administrative support in that building.

The normative data generated by the CAQ can lead to effective dialogues between counselors and administrators on how to improve the levels of administrative support of counseling programs. These data also can be used by groups of counselors and principals from different buildings to generate a better understanding of how administrative support of counseling programs is manifested in different schools. When used appropriately, the normative data generated by the CAQ can help administrators and counselors better understand the construct of administrative support of counseling programs and devote more attention and resources to improving current levels of support.

Implications for Further Research

The formulation of a comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs and the development and cross-validation of the CAQ as a valid, reliable measure of the construct are important contributions to the literature on administrative support. At the same time, this study generated several new questions to be answered in future research:

Can the CAQ be improved so that it is an even more effective measure of administrative support of counseling programs?

Two avenues of exploration exist to answer this question. The results of this study indicated that two of the five components of the construct of administrative support of counseling programs measured by the CAQ (encouragement of program expansion and capital allocation) are represented by only three items on the CAQ. As can be seen in Table 7, the reliability of these two components was low, compared to the reliability of the other three components measured by the CAQ and the CAQ as a whole.

To improve the measures of reliability for these two components, additional items designed to measure the two components should be developed and tested. The high reliability of the CAQ as a whole and the high reliability of the subcategories on the CAQ (as shown in Table 7) suggest that these new items can replace existing items on the CAQ without threatening the reliability of either the overall instrument or the components of support that are represented by many items on the instrument. This testing will lead to a greater degree of reliability of two of the five components measured by the CAQ and provide additional insight into the make-up of these components of support.

Another change to the CAQ should be tested to determine whether the flexibility and accuracy of the instrument can be improved. In the current CAQ, subjects are asked to respond to the items assuming that all components of administrative support of counseling programs are of equal value to all

counselors. What the current CAQ does not measure is the relative importance each respondent assigns to each of the components.

Although the components presented in the definition of administrative support of counseling programs are comprehensive, the results of both the literature review and the focus groups indicated that some counselors placed greater emphasis on some components in the definition and less importance on others. Adding a scale of relative importance to each item on the CAQ would give counselors an opportunity to tailor the instrument to their own tastes and circumstances, thus making the instrument even more useful. This could be done by adding a second Likert scale to each item. On the first Likert scale, respondents would evaluate the current level of administrative support in a particular area; on the second scale, respondents would indicate how important that aspect of support is to them.

This technique has been used in other studies of support and program evaluation. The evaluation instrument for science programs created by Voss (1989) included a second Likert scale on which respondents indicated their perceptions of importance, as did the study of counselor-administrator congruence conducted by Stickel (1988). Studer (1997) recommended including a second Likert scale when this researcher asked him how measures of administrative support of counseling programs could be improved.

Such a change in the CAQ might result in a measure of administrative support of counseling programs that would bring about more precise discussions and action plans designed to improve the components of support that are of

greatest importance to counselors in an individual building. This individualization might enhance the likelihood that counselors will perceive an increase in administrative support of counseling programs, which empowerment and quality theory has identified as the key variable in improved employee contributions to the workplace. Because modifying the CAQ to include a scale of importance for each item could increase the value of the CAQ, such a modification could serve as the basis of an appropriate future study.

What is the current level of administrative support of high school counseling programs today?

The idea of using the CAQ to provide normative data on current levels of administrative support of counseling programs was introduced in the section on evaluative implications. Normative data can serve as a baseline of comparison against future measures of administrative support of counseling programs. These comparisons can form the basis of a longitudinal analysis of the state of administrative support of counseling programs over several years.

Administrators and counselors can use the normative data generated by the CAQ to begin evaluating the level of administrative support of their schools' counseling programs. This kind of formative evaluation can lead to the development of action plans designed to improve levels of administrative support of counseling programs, leading to more effective counseling programs.

Of all the implications of the current study, the most significant one is the utility of the CAQ in helping counselors and administrators create more effective counseling programs. Because the appropriate use of normative data generated

by the CAQ would serve as the foundation for more effective counseling programs, this research question is an appropriate subject for future study.

What factors influence the level of administrative support of counseling programs?

Although much of the literature on administrative support of counseling programs discussed how administrative support affects other factors, no writings examined in this study addressed the topic of what factors affect the level of administrative support. It may be possible that certain factors exist in the school environment that effectively prohibit a school administrator from providing additional support to a school's counseling programs, even if the administrator desires to do so. In addition, certain factors might exist in the school environment that prevent a school counselor from recognizing an increase in the level of administrative support of the counseling program. If these factors do exist, the current literature has not identified them.

Identification of the factors that prevent administrators from providing effective support to counseling programs (and factors that prevent counselors from recognizing improved support) is an important topic for future research. A wide-ranging literature review would have to be conducted to identify the elements of environments and relationships that hinder or mask change agents. Whereas some of these elements may be as basic as school size or the number of years a counselor and administrator have worked together, others may be more subtle and complex.

Once these elements are identified, instruments designed to measure their presence would have to be researched or developed, and then used to compare the presence of the element with the level of administrative support of counseling programs. The results of such an inquiry would yield useful information on how to help administrators and counselors identify factors that inhibit improvement in levels of administrative support of counseling programs.

The purpose of the CAQ is to provide a baseline of information for counselors and administrators to use in improving their working relationship. If environmental factors exist that affect the utility of the information generated by the CAQ, future studies should be centered on learning more about these factors and on how to overcome them.

What other factors exist that are related to administrative support of counseling programs?

In reviewing the literature for this study, the researcher found many articles and studies indicating a relationship between administrative support and a host of other factors, including health, job stress, school climate, and job satisfaction. All of these studies were conducted using measures of support based on broad definitions of the construct that lacked specificity; with the development of the CAQ, studies can be conducted to evaluate more precisely the relationship between administrative support of counseling programs and other factors.

Of the many relationships that could be explored using the CAQ, the relationship between administrative support of counseling programs and self-

efficacy would serve as the basis for an appropriate next study. Results of a study by Sutton and Fall (1995) suggest that a relationship might exist between administrative support and counselor self-efficacy. A study measuring this relationship could lend significant support to Likert's theory of supportive relationships, as well as the theory underlying the empowerment movement, the quality movement, and even chaos theory.

In using the CAQ to explore the relationship between administrative support and self-efficacy, researchers can compare measures of the construct of administrative support as a whole and of the five components of support to measures of self-efficacy. This will lead to a detailed level of analysis that was not possible before the CAQ was created, which will show whether some of the components of administrative support of counseling programs are more closely related to counselor self-efficacy than others.

The purpose of providing administrative support to counseling programs is to give counselors a sense of their worth and value in the workplace. Because counselors' perceptions of self-efficacy are an indication of their belief that they can contribute to the workplace in a meaningful way, no more important study could be completed than one that measures the relationship between counselor self-efficacy and administrative support of counseling programs.

Does a relationship exist between administrative support of counseling programs and the effectiveness of counseling programs?

Perhaps the most significant future study to be conducted using the CAQ is one designed to measure the relationship between administrative support of

counseling programs and the effectiveness of counseling programs. In discussing the limitations of this study in Chapter I, it was explained that analyzing the relationship between administrative support of counseling programs and the effectiveness of those programs was beyond the scope of this research. At the same time, one of the theoretical assumptions of this study was that increased levels of administrative support of counseling programs lead to more effective school counseling programs.

As a result of this study, one of the major obstacles to conducting a study of the relationship between administrative support of counseling programs and effective counseling programs has been removed. In this study, a comprehensive definition of administrative support of counseling programs was created, and a valid, reliable instrument that measures the presence of such support was devised.

The next step in completing a study of administrative support of counseling programs and counseling programs' effectiveness requires the creation of a valid, reliable instrument with which to assess the effectiveness of school counseling programs. Such an instrument could be created and tested by following the instrument-development procedures used in this study, beginning with a content analysis of the literature on the effectiveness of school counseling programs. This content analysis would be followed by a series of focus groups addressing the topic of effective school counseling programs.

The researcher's brief exposure to the literature on effectiveness of school counseling programs suggests that the themes, opinions, and ideas

regarding this topic are remarkably diverse and, at times, conflicting. In addition, although it is appropriate to interview school counselors to determine how they, as recipients of administrative support of counseling programs, would define such support, school counselors are the distributors and not the recipients of counseling services. To hold true to the model of exploration presented in this study, focus groups of recipients of counseling services would need to be conducted. For these focus groups to be comprehensive, all recipients of counseling services—students, parents, teaching faculty, staff, and school administrators—would have to be included.

The importance of a study of the relationship of administrative support of counseling programs and the effectiveness of school counseling programs cannot be overstated. If properly conducted, such a study would furnish meaningful insights into the nature of the constructs of both administrative support of counseling programs and effective counseling programs. Such a study would also provide important information on the credibility of Likert's theory of supportive relationships as applied to school administrators and school counselors.

At the same time, the hurdles involved in conducting such a study are still very high. Although the introduction of the CAQ has helped clarify the nature of administrative support of counseling programs, the body of literature on what constitutes effective counseling programs is vast and diverse, as are the methods of delivery systems used in school counseling departments. The results of the current study modestly advance the literature on administrative

support of counseling programs. For the area of **effective** counseling programs, it can only be hoped that the results of this study offer encouragement to those pursuing clarification of a complex issue.

Reflections

The results of this study represent two significant contributions to the field of administrative support of counseling programs. First, the development of a comprehensive definition for the construct of administrative support of counseling programs leaves the field with a clear, thorough understanding of the construct, both in terms of how it is defined in the literature and how it is demonstrated in the eyes of school counselors. Second, the creation of the CAQ gives the field a valid, reliable instrument with which to measure the elements of administrative support of counseling programs. Used separately or together, these contributions can serve as the foundation for dialogue between counselors and administrators on the best ways to improve and support school counseling programs.

Although this study offers new insights into the important construct of administrative support of counseling programs, it was by no means perfect. Although the initial content analysis of the literature left the researcher with a good understanding of the broad components of administrative support of counseling programs, the researcher's understanding of the depth and importance of the subcategories of the components was significantly strengthened, both during the synthesis of the content analyses of the literature

and the focus groups, and during a complete rereading of the literature as part of the preparation of this dissertation. Although the researcher is confident that the research completed in this study was of high quality, a more thorough first reading of the literature, and especially the presence of a more comprehensive set of notes taken on the first reading, might have strengthened the subsequent steps taken in completing the study, and eased the completion of those steps.

An additional point for procedural considerations concerns the timing of the mailing of the questionnaire packet. The packets were mailed in the middle of the fourth academic quarter of the school year, a time that finds counselors involved in a wide variety of activities. Although the researcher was encouraged by a return rate of more than 47%, and although many counselors think that every month of the school year is just as busy as any other, it is always possible that the distribution of the questionnaire at this time of the year may have had a negative effect on the rate of return. As a result, the researcher would be inclined to send future questionnaires to school counselors at some other time of the year, such as late October or early November, after academic scheduling activities have waned in high school counseling offices, but before the conclusion of the first academic quarter. Such a mailing might shed light on the quality of the return rate of the questionnaires realized in the current study.

Finally, consideration of modification of the instructions for completing the CAQ may be in order. As stated in Chapter I of this study, administrative support of counseling programs was defined as those professional actions executed or endorsed by the building principal or the principal's agent to support

counseling programs. This definition was not presented in the directions for completing the CAQ; in addition, the items on the CAQ were phrased to center on the "principal," and not the "administrator," as was suggested in the second series of focus groups with high school counselors.

High school counselors who report to an administrator other than a principal often discuss the level of support that administrator gives to the counseling program when the topic of administrative support arises, even when other counselors are discussing support in the context of the building principal. At the same time, rewriting the directions on the CAQ to include the definition of administrative support would give counselors greater clarity in knowing which administrative relationship should serve as the basis of their answers to the questionnaire. This change will be strongly considered before the CAQ is used again.

In discussing the changing nature of management theory, Wheatley (1999) pointed out that American society is at an organizational crossroads. In reviewing the history and direction of management theory over the past 100 years, Wheatley suggested that management culture must begin to shed the perception that man-made structures (such as organizations) are mechanistic, and embrace the concept that these structures, like humans, are organic. Wheatley argued that, once this theoretical shift is made, the atmosphere of organizations will become more holistic, more empathic, more productive, and more supportive.

Against the backdrop of this need for a shift in organizational and managerial theory, the caseloads of school counselors continue to expand, in terms of both the number of students needing service and the number of services needed by students. As a result, the professional counselors charged with meeting students' needs, and showing students the value of organic qualities such as adaptability and continuous growth, often view themselves as overworked, underpaid, and unsupported by an administrative structure that can all too quickly take on an appearance of being distant, complex, and mechanistic.

It is hoped that counselors and administrators will continue to work together to find opportunities to build professional relationships based on mutual understanding, support, and growth. Because of increased demands on school administrators and counselors, it has never been more difficult to find the time needed to create such opportunities—and yet, because of these same demands, the need for the time has never been more acute. The results of this study can be used to create time, and then guide the use of that time, however modestly, toward the ultimate advancement of our counseling programs, our students, our schools, and our culture.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Questionnaire Packet

**Patrick J. O'Connor
5880 Burnham Road
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302
248.540.8249**

23 April 1999

Dear Counselor:

I am writing to ask you to give 25 to 30 minutes to complete a study that could improve counseling services to students.

I'm asking you to complete the enclosed forms and return them as part of a research study I'm doing for a doctoral dissertation. The results of the study may shed some light on how school counseling programs are supported by building administrators, an area where remarkably little research has been done. Your answers will be used to report the group response of counselors from the Metropolitan Detroit area. If you make comments on the survey, they may be used in the dissertation, but they will be referenced anonymously.

Enclosed in this packet are three very brief surveys. One asks you to evaluate the level of support your building principal gives to the counseling program; one asks you about your job satisfaction, and one asks about your school climate. The surveys should reflect how you respond as an individual, so please complete them without assistance or counsel from others, especially from other counselors in your building.

Your participation in the study is very important to its success. Once you've completed all three forms-- a process which should take no longer than 25 to 30 minutes--please return all three forms in the pre-paid envelope to me as soon as possible, but no later than Tuesday, May 25. If you'd like to see a copy of the cumulative results of the study, please indicate that on the counseling survey; I'll remove the form ID information from your answers as soon as I receive them--so, once again, your answers will remain anonymous.

By returning the forms, you're indicating your consent to participate in the study. I would expect to have the results of the surveys tallied by late summer.

Thank you for your support of this study.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. O'Connor

Counseling Assessment Questionnaire and School Climate Survey

Directions: Each of the statements below relates to some aspect of your work as a school counselor. Read each statement, then circle the number that best indicates the degree to which you agree with the statement:

5= You strongly agree with the statement (Stg Ag)

4= You agree with the statement (Ag)

3= You are neutral towards the statement, or you sometimes agree and sometimes disagree with the statement (N)

2= You disagree with the statement (Dis)

1= You strongly disagree with the statement (Stg Dis)

	Stg Ag	Ag	N	Dis	Stg Dis
1. My principal provides the necessary time, staff, and resources for the implementation of counseling programs and activities.	5	4	3	2	1
2. My principal provides the time, staff, and resources for the review, evaluation, and development of counseling activities.	5	4	3	2	1
3. My principal provides the time, staff, and resources necessary for the preparation and follow-up duties that accompany counseling programs and activities (processing paper work, reviewing files, phone calls, consultations, etc.).	5	4	3	2	1
4. My principal assigns me only duties relevant to my work as a counselor.	5	4	3	2	1
5. My principal provides resources and opportunities for professional development of counselors.	5	4	3	2	1
6. My principal promotes counselor-initiated activities in the classroom.	5	4	3	2	1
7. My principal promotes school-wide counseling programs (assemblies, speakers, etc.).	5	4	3	2	1
8. My principal takes the time to update his/her understanding of the duties and functions of counselors.	5	4	3	2	1

	Stg Ag	Ag	N	Dis	Stg Dis
9. My principal seeks and welcomes information from counselors on school, community, and professional issues.	5	4	3	2	1
10. My principal keeps counselors informed of school, community, and professional issues that might impact the work of counselors.	5	4	3	2	1
11. My principal keeps in touch with me on a regular basis.	5	4	3	2	1
12. My principal encourages an atmosphere of open communication with me.	5	4	3	2	1
13. My principal expresses appreciation to counselors.	5	4	3	2	1
14. My principal appropriately involves counselors in building-wide planning, problem solving, and decision-making activities.	5	4	3	2	1
15. My principal appropriately involves counselors in long-range planning.	5	4	3	2	1
16. My principal effectively utilizes my resources as a counselor.	5	4	3	2	1
17. My principal promotes the work of counselors to other faculty and staff.	5	4	3	2	1
18. My principal promotes the work of counselors to parents and the community.	5	4	3	2	1
19. My principal promotes the work and needs of counselors to the superintendent and other members of the central office staff.	5	4	3	2	1
20. My principal supports counseling decisions when those decisions are appealed to the principal by those affected by the decisions (parents, students, teachers, etc.).	5	4	3	2	1

	Stg Ag	Ag	N	Dis	Stg Dis
21. The office space and rooms needed for counseling activities are available and accessible.	5	4	3	2	1
22. The lighting, painting, and furniture needs of the offices and rooms used by counselors are maintained at appropriate levels.	5	4	3	2	1
23. The technology needs of the department (phones, computers, etc.) are maintained at appropriate levels.	5	4	3	2	1
24. My principal gives me appropriate flexibility in my role as a counselor.	5	4	3	2	1
25. My principal has reasonable expectations for my work as a counselor.	5	4	3	2	1
26. My principal sees me as capable.	5	4	3	2	1
27. My principal trusts my judgment.	5	4	3	2	1
28. My principal demonstrates respect to me as a counselor.	5	4	3	2	1
29. My principal demonstrates respect to me as a person.	5	4	3	2	1

School Climate Survey

Continue to complete the survey using the same directions.

	Stg Ag	Ag	N	Dis	Stg Dis
30. The principal at my school is very active in securing resources which facilitate the counseling program.	5	4	3	2	1
31. The counselor(s), teachers, and other staff at my school are cooperative and supportive of each other.	5	4	3	2	1

	Stg Ag	Ag	N	Dis	Stg Dis
32. The counselor(s) regularly receive feedback from the principal regarding their counseling program.	5	4	3	2	1
33. I have influence on the decisions within the school that directly affect the guidance program.	5	4	3	2	1
34. People at my school try to understand each other's views, even though they may not agree.	5	4	3	2	1
35. I think the people in this school care about me as a person; they are concerned about more than just how well I perform my role at school.	5	4	3	2	1
36. The principal regularly brings counseling issues to the counseling staff for discussion.	5	4	3	2	1
37. The counselor(s) in this school system treat students respectfully and fairly.	5	4	3	2	1
38. After an assessment of the counseling program by my principal, a plan for improvement frequently follows.	5	4	3	2	1
39. The principal seeks ideas and suggestions from the rest of the staff.	5	4	3	2	1
40. There is an adequate support system provided for counselor(s) by this school system.	5	4	3	2	1
41. There is teamwork among the staff at this school.	5	4	3	2	1
42. The counselor(s) in this school system are proud of their identity as guidance counselors.	5	4	3	2	1
43. The principal at my school is responsive to student problems.	5	4	3	2	1

	Stg Ag	Ag	N	Dis	Stg Dis
44. Important decisions are made at this school with representation from students, faculty, counselors, and administration.	5	4	3	2	1
45. The school system provides opportunities for professional development.	5	4	3	2	1
46. The counselor(s) in this school system feel accountable for student psycho-educational development.	5	4	3	2	1
47. When we have staff conflicts at school, the result is constructive, not destructive.	5	4	3	2	1
48. The counselor(s) in this school system are free to observe other counselor(s).	5	4	3	2	1
49. The counselor(s) like to work in this school system.	5	4	3	2	1
50. The principal talks with the counselor(s) frankly and openly.	5	4	3	2	1
51. Everyone respects everyone else, regardless of area, grade level or position on the entire school staff.	5	4	3	2	1
52. There is clear and strong leadership from the principal at this school.	5	4	3	2	1
53. The counselor(s) in this school turn to the principal with concerns or problems.	5	4	3	2	1
54. Counselors in this system work together to effectively coordinate the counseling program within and between grades.	5	4	3	2	1
55. The principal visits my department for formal observations at least twice a year.	5	4	3	2	1
56. When all is said and done, I feel that I count in this school.	5	4	3	2	1

Finally, please answer the following six questions in your own words:

- 1. In what area(s) does your principal offer strong support of counseling programs?**
- 2. In what area(s) could your principal offer more support of counseling programs?**
- 3. How many years (including the current school year) have you worked in this building as a counselor?**
- 4. How many years (including the current school year) has your principal served as principal of this building?**
- 5. How many students are you responsible for (or, are on your case load)?**
- 6. How many other counselors work in your building?**

Thank you for completing the survey. If you would like to receive a summary of the results, please print your name and mailing address below. This information will be removed from the survey when it is received, in order to assure anonymity.

The School Climate Survey is used by permission of Dr. John Sutton of the University of Southern Maine.

The School Climate Survey is reproduced in this appendix with permission of Dr. Ted Coladarci of the University of Maine. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, which was also included in the questionnaire packet, could not be reproduced in this appendix due to copyright protection.

Wording sent on reminder postcards to all counselors who were sent surveys:

14 May 1999

Dear Counselor:

By now, you should have received a survey I sent to you in the last two weeks. The survey asks about administrative support of the counseling program in your high school. It's being given as part of my dissertation work at Michigan State University, and takes about 25-30 minutes to complete.

Your completed survey is very important to this study. If you've already mailed your survey back, thank you. If you're still working on the survey, thank you—and remember, your survey should be sent back to me by **Tuesday, May 25th**. If you haven't received your survey, please contact me right away at 248.544.5571.

May is a busy time, and counseling is a busy calling. Thank you for supporting this ground-breaking study.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. O'Connor

**MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY**

March 9, 1998

TO: Fred Ignatovich
405 Erickson Hall

RE: IRB#: 98-051
TITLE: ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT OF COUNSELING PROGRAM:
CREATING A CONSISTENT MEASURE
REVISION REQUESTED: N/A
CATEGORY: 2-1
APPROVAL DATE: 03/03/98

The University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects' (UCRIHS) review of this project is complete. I am pleased to advise that the rights and welfare of the human subjects appear to be adequately protected and methods to obtain informed consent are appropriate. Therefore, the UCRIHS approved this project and any revisions listed above.
PLEASE SEE ATTACHED REVIEWER SUGGESTIONS.

RENEWAL: UCRIHS approval is valid for one calendar year, beginning with the approval date shown above. Investigators planning to continue a project beyond one year must use the green renewal form (enclosed with the original approval letter or when a project is renewed) to seek updated certification. There is a maximum of four such expedited renewals possible. Investigators wishing to continue a project beyond that time need to submit it again for complete review.

REVISIONS: UCRIHS must review any changes in procedures involving human subjects, prior to initiation of the change. If this is done at the time of renewal, please use the green renewal form. To revise an approved protocol at any other time during the year, send your written request to the UCRIHS Chair, requesting revised approval and referencing the project's IRB # and title. Include in your request a description of the change and any revised instruments, consent forms or advertisements that are applicable.



OFFICE OF
RESEARCH
AND
GRADUATE
STUDIES

**PROBLEMS/
CHANGES:**

Should either of the following arise during the course of the work, investigators must notify UCRIHS promptly: (1) problems (unexpected side effects, complaints, etc.) involving human subjects or (2) changes in the research environment or new information indicating greater risk to the human subjects than existed when the protocol was previously reviewed and approved.

If we can be of any future help, please do not hesitate to contact us at (517) 355-2180 or FAX (517) 432-1171.

Sincerely,

University Committee on
Research Involving
Human Subjects
(UCRIHS)

Michigan State University
246 Administration Building
East Lansing, Michigan
48824-1046

517/355-2180
FAX: 517/432-1171

David E. Wright, Ph.D.
UCRIHS Chair

DEW:bed

cc: Patrick J. O'Connor

The Michigan State University
IDEA is Institutional Diversity
Excellence in Action

MSU is an affirmative action,
equal-opportunity institution

Appendix B

Materials Used With First Series of Focus Groups

Script for inviting focus group participants (*italicized portions will also be read at the start of the actual focus group meeting*)

My name is Patrick O'Connor, and I'm calling to invite you to participate in a focus group I'm putting together. *The purpose of the focus group is to discuss administrative support of counseling programs. Some general definitions of administrative support will be given to you, and you'll be asked to respond to them; in addition, you'll be given the opportunity to share your ideas on what administrative support means.*

The results of the focus group discussions will be used to develop an assessment tool to measure administrative support of high school counseling programs. As a result, one benefit from your participation will be your contribution to the development of an instrument that could help school counselors and administrators support one another. In addition, you'll have the opportunity to hear how other high school counselors in the focus group receive support from their administrators.

This focus group is part of a study being done in partial fulfillment of a doctoral degree from Michigan State University. The focus group is scheduled for (date) at (time) at (place) and should last for about 90 minutes. Of course, your participation is voluntary. Your remarks will remain confidential and anonymous with the investigator, and all focus group participants will be asked to sign a consent form agreeing to keep all remarks made in the focus group confidential; one potential risk to participating is that a participant may consciously or unconsciously breach confidentiality. The focus group discussions will not be tape recorded, but the investigator will take notes that will remain confidential. Summaries of the focus group discussions may appear in the final dissertation.

If you say yes today, you always have the right to change your mind, even once the focus group has actually begun. In addition, you have the right to refrain from answering any questions asked at the focus group. Would you be willing to participate?

(If yes) Great! I'll be sending you a confirmation letter with a reminder of the date, time, and location of the focus group. If you have any questions about the focus group or the purpose of the study, my name is Patrick O'Connor, and you can contact me at any time at 248.544.5571. My dissertation advisor is Dr. Fred Ignatovich, and he can be reached at Michigan State at 517.353.5342. Thank you for your interest, and I'll look forward to seeing you on the (date).

(If no) Is there another full-time counselor in your department who might be able to attend?

(If yes) May I speak to him/her?

(If no) Thank you for your time.

Confirmation Letter

**Patrick J. O'Connor
5880 Burnham Road
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302
248.540.8249**

1 March 1998

Dear Participant:

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the Focus Group on administrative support of counseling programs. As a reminder, the Focus Group will take place on (date) at (time) at (location). A map to the location is provided in this mailing.

If you have any questions about the focus group or the purpose of the study, my name is Patrick O'Connor, and you can contact me at any time at 248.544.5571. My dissertation advisor is Dr. Fred Ignatovich, and he can be reached at Michigan State at 517.353.5342. Thank you for your interest, and I'll look forward to seeing you on the (date).

Sincerely,

Patrick J. O'Connor

Focus Group Consent Form

Thank you for your willingness to participate in today's focus group. Please read the information below, which contains a description of the purpose of today's focus group, the benefits and risk involved with participation in the focus group, and the procedures used to ensure confidentiality. If you do not wish to sign the consent form, please advise the investigator now; a consent form must be signed by all focus group participants before the program begins.

The purpose of the focus group is to discuss administrative support of counseling programs. Some general definitions of administrative support will be given to you, and you'll be asked to respond to them; in addition, you'll be given the opportunity to share your ideas on what administrative support means.

The results of the focus group discussions will be used to develop an assessment tool to measure administrative support of high school counseling programs. As a result, one benefit from your participation will be your contribution to the development of an instrument that could help school counselors and administrators support one another. In addition, you'll have the opportunity to hear how other high school counselors in the focus group receive support from their administrators.

This focus group is part of a study being done in partial fulfillment of a doctoral degree from Michigan State University. Of course, your participation is voluntary.

Your remarks will remain confidential and anonymous with the investigator, and all focus group participants, by signing this consent form, agree to keep all remarks made in the focus group confidential; one potential risk to participating is that a participant may consciously or unconsciously breach confidentiality. The focus group discussions will not be tape recorded, but the investigator will take notes that will remain confidential. Summaries of focus group discussions may be given in the dissertation.

You always have the right to change your mind with respect to participating, even once the focus group has actually begun. In addition, you have the right to refrain from answering any questions asked at the focus group.

My name is Patrick O'Connor, and you can contact me at any time at 248.544.5571. My dissertation advisor is Dr. Fred Ignatovich, and he can be reached at Michigan State at 517.353.5342. Please feel free to contact either of us at any time if you should have any questions about this research.

I consent to participate in the focus group as described above, and I understand that remarks, comments, and suggestions I make in today's focus group may be used for the purpose of creating an assessment tool for administrative support. In giving this consent, I also agree to keep the remarks of all focus group participants confidential.

Print Name

Your signature

Today's date

Focus Group Questions

We're here today to discuss administrative support of high school counseling programs. For purposes of this study, administrative support is defined as "those professional actions executed or endorsed by the building principal or the principal's agent to support counseling programs." Given that definition, think about your own high school, or other high schools you know of. What areas of a high school's counseling program need administrative support?

What kinds of support can administrators show towards high school counseling programs?

Counseling programs are sometimes divided into categories of counseling services, counseling personnel, and counseling facilities. What kinds of support can administrators show towards counseling programs?

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest level of importance and 10 being the highest level of importance, how important is administrative support of counseling services? Why?

What kinds of support can administrators show towards counseling personnel?

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest level of importance and 10 being the highest level of importance, how important is administrative support of counseling personnel? Why?

What kinds of support can administrators show towards counseling facilities?

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest level of importance and 10 being the highest level of importance, how important is administrative support of counseling facilities? Why?

Of the three areas we've been discussing—counseling services, counseling personnel, and counseling facilities—in which of these areas is administrative support most important? Why?

In which area is administrative support least important? Why?

What additional kinds of administrative support can be given to a high school's counseling program?

Thank you for your participation in today's focus group.

Appendix C

Materials Used With Second Series of Focus Groups

Script for Inviting Focus Group Participants

My name is Patrick O'Connor. I'm a graduate student at Michigan State University, and I'm calling to invite you to participate in a focus group I'm putting together. The purpose of the focus group is to review items that may be used on an instrument designed to assess administrative support of high school counseling programs. Some general areas and specific statements of possible areas of administrative support will be given to you, and you'll be asked to respond to them, first in writing, then, if you wish, in a group discussion.

The focus group is being held in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a doctoral program at Michigan State University, and is scheduled for (date) at (time) at (place). Of course, your participation is voluntary, and your remarks will remain confidential and anonymous. If you say yes today, you always have the right to change your mind, even once the focus group has actually begun.

Would you be willing to participate?

(If yes) Thank you! Again, my name is Patrick O'Connor, and I can be reached at 248.544.5571. My advisor is Fred Ignatovich, and he can be reached at 517.353.5342.

I'll look forward to seeing you at the focus group.

(If no) Is there another counselor in your school who may be able to participate?

(If yes) May I please speak to him/her?

(If no) Thank you for your time.

**Patrick J. O'Connor
5880 Burnham Road
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302
248.540.8249**

Dear High School Counselor:

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the Focus Group on administrative support of counseling programs. As a reminder, the Focus Group will take place on (date) at (place). A map to the location is provided in this mailing.

If you have any questions about the focus group or the purpose of the study, you can contact me at any time at 248.544.5571. My dissertation advisor is Dr. Fred Ignatovich, and he can be reached at Michigan State at 517.353.5342.

Thank you for your interest, and I'll look forward to seeing you at the focus group.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. O'Connor

**Patrick J. O'Connor
5880 Burnham Road
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302
248.540.8249**

Overview of Focus Group

The purpose of this focus group is to review items that may be used on an instrument designed to assess administrative support of high school counseling programs. As a result, one benefit from your participation will be your contribution to the development of an instrument that could help school counselors and administrators support one another. In addition, you'll have the opportunity to hear how other high school counselors in the focus group respond to the items presented for discussion.

This focus group is part of a study being done in partial fulfillment of a doctoral degree from Michigan State University. The focus group should last for about 90 minutes.

Of course, your participation is voluntary. Your remarks will remain confidential and anonymous with the investigator, and all focus group participants will be asked to sign a consent form agreeing to keep all remarks made in the focus group confidential; one potential risk to participating is that a participant may consciously or unconsciously breach confidentiality. The focus group discussions will not be tape recorded, but the investigator will take notes that will remain confidential. Summaries of the focus group discussions may appear in the final dissertation. You always have the right to change your mind, even once the focus group has actually begun. In addition, you have the right to refrain from answering any questions asked at the focus group.

If you have any questions about the focus group or the purpose of the study, you can contact me at any time at 248.544.5571. My dissertation advisor is Dr. Fred Ignatovich, and he can be reached at Michigan State at 517.353.5342. Thank you for your interest, and I'll look forward to seeing you at the focus group.

Focus Group Consent Form

Thank you for your willingness to participate in today's focus group. Please read the information below, which contains a description of the purpose of today's focus group, the benefits and risk involved with participation in the focus group, and the procedures used to assure confidentiality. If you do not wish to sign the consent form, please advise the investigator now; a consent form must be signed by all focus group participants before the program begins.

The purpose of this focus group is to review items that may be used on an instrument designed to assess administrative support of high school counseling programs. As a result, one benefit from your participation will be your contribution to the development of an instrument that could help school counselors and administrators support one another. In addition, you'll have the opportunity to hear how other high school counselors in the focus group respond to the items presented for discussion.

This focus group is part of a study being done in partial fulfillment of a doctoral degree from Michigan State University. The focus group should last for about ninety minutes.

Of course, your participation is voluntary. Your remarks will remain confidential and anonymous with the investigator, and all focus group participants, by signing this consent form, agree to keep all remarks made in the focus group confidential; one potential risk to participating is that a participant may consciously or unconsciously breach confidentiality.

The focus group discussions will not be tape recorded, but the investigator will take notes that will remain confidential. Summaries of the focus group discussions may appear in the final dissertation. You always have the right to change your mind, even once the focus group has actually begun. In addition, you have the right to refrain from answering any questions asked at the focus group.

If you have any questions about the focus group or the purpose of the study, you can contact me at any time at 248.544.5571. My dissertation advisor is Dr. Fred Ignatovich, and he can be reached at Michigan State at 517.353.5342.

I consent to participate in the focus group as described above, and that remarks, comments, and suggestions I make in today's focus group may be used for the purpose of creating an assessment tool for administrative support. In giving this consent, I also agree to keep the remarks of all focus group participants confidential.

Print Name

Your signature

Today's date

Instructions (To be read by Researcher at the start of each Focus Group):

Thank you for your willingness to participate in today's focus group. As was mentioned in the phone call inviting you to participate today, the purpose of this focus group is to review items that may be used on an instrument designed to assess administrative support of high school counseling programs.

Before we begin the actual review, I will distribute a consent form for each of you to look over and sign. This consent form give you some general information of the nature of the purpose of the focus group research, and reminds you of the confidential nature of the information of the written and verbal remarks made here today. Please take a moment to review the consent form, sign it, and return it to me.

(After completion) Thank you. I will now distribute the items under discussion today. (Passes out items, reads directions from top of page 1) Are there any questions? Then let's begin.

(Answers questions as they arise during individual review.)

(After all participants are finished): At this point, you are invited to share your thoughts and ideas on the items you've just reviewed. All of your written comments will be read carefully, and you do not have to give any comment at all right now, but your insights into the items are welcomed at this time.

Are there any thoughts you'd like to share on the items under Area 1, Counseling Programs and the Work of Counselors? (Takes notes)

Are there any thoughts you'd like to share on the items under Area 2, Communication with Counselors? (Takes notes)

Are there any thoughts you'd like to share on the items under Area 3, Communication with Others? (Takes notes)

Are there any thoughts you'd like to share on the items under Area 4, Physical Space and Technology? (Takes notes)

Are there any thoughts you'd like to share on the items under Area 5, Autonomy and Trust? (Takes notes)

What is your overall response to the items?

Are there other areas that should be included?

Do you have other comments you would like to share at this time?

I'll collect your written comments at this time. Thank you for you participation today.

Administrative Support of Counseling Programs: Creating a Consistent Measure

High school counselors have identified the following five areas where administrative support of counselors is necessary in order for counselors to do their work. For purposes of this study, administrative support is defined as those professional actions executed or endorsed by the building principal or the principal's agent to support counseling programs.

Directions:

Each of the five areas contains statements that offer specific examples where administrative support can be demonstrated. Read each statement to see if it is clear; if a statement is unclear, use the space below the statement to write in questions or suggestions for how the statement could be improved.

At the end of each area, a space is provided for comments on the area as a whole. Reread all of the statements in that area, then use the space provided at the end of the area to give your general comments on the clarity and comprehensive nature of the statements made in that area—would additional statements make that area more comprehensive? Should fewer statements be used?

Your written comments will be most valuable to the development of this instrument. In addition, an opportunity to discuss the instrument with the researcher and other focus group participants will occur in approximately 30 minutes, or when all participants have completed their reviews. All comments, written or verbal, will remain anonymous, but may be quoted in the study.

Feel free to ask the researcher any questions at any time. Please turn the page, and begin the review now.

Administrative Support Is Demonstrated in the Following Ways:

Area I: Counseling Programs and the Work of Counselors

- 1. My principal provides the necessary time, staff, and resources for the implementation of counseling programs and activities.**
- 2. My principal provides the time, staff, and resources necessary for the review, evaluation, and development of counseling activities.**
- 3. My principal provides the time, staff, and resources necessary for the preparation and follow-up duties that accompany counseling programs and activities (processing paper work, reviewing files, phone calls, consultations, etc.).**
- 4. My principal assigns me only duties relevant to my work as a counselor.**
- 5. My principal provides resources and opportunities for professional development of counselors.**
- 6. My principal promotes counselor-initiated activities in the classroom.**
- 7. My principal promotes school-wide counseling programs (assemblies, speakers, etc.).**

Comments, Questions, Additions, or Deletions for This Area:

Communication With Counselors

- 8. My principal takes the time to update his/her understanding of the duties and functions of counselors.**
- 9. My principal seeks and welcomes information from counselors on school, community, and professional issues.**
- 10. My principal keeps counselors informed of school, community, and professional issues that might impact the work of counselors.**
- 11. My principal keeps in touch with me on a regular basis.**
- 12. My principal encourages an atmosphere of open communication with me.**
- 13. My principal expresses appreciation to counselors.**
- 14. My principal appropriately involves counselors in building-wide planning, problem-solving, and decision-making activities.**
- 15. My principal appropriately involves counselors in long-range planning.**

Comments, Questions, Additions, or Deletions for This Area:

Communications With Others

- 16. My principal promotes the work of counselors to other faculty and staff.**
- 17. My principal promotes the work of counselors to parents and the community.**
- 18. My principal promotes the work and needs of counselors to the superintendent and other members of the central office staff.**
- 19. My principal supports counseling decisions when those decisions are appealed to the principal by those affected by the decisions (parents, students, teachers, etc.).**

Comments, Questions, Additions, or Deletions for This Area:

Physical Space and Technology

- 20. The office space and rooms needed for counseling activities are available and accessible.**
- 21. The lighting, painting, and furniture needs of the offices and rooms used by counselors are maintained at appropriate levels.**
- 22. The technology needs of the department (phones, computers, etc.) are maintained at appropriate levels.**

Comments, Questions, Additions, or Deletions for This Area:

Autonomy and Trust

23. My principal gives me appropriate flexibility in my work as a counselor.

24. My principal has reasonable expectations for my work as a counselor.

25. My principal sees me as capable.

26. My principal trusts my judgment.

27. My principal demonstrates respect to me as a counselor.

28. My principal demonstrates respect to me as a person.

Comments, Questions, Additions, or Deletions for This Area:

Comments, Questions, Additions, or Deletions for the Document in General (use back if needed):

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