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SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PRACTITIONERS' PERSPECTIVES ON CONSULTATION TRAINING AND PRACTICE

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Psychology
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Specialist in Education

By
Kimberly A. Unseld

May 2004

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PRACTITIONERS' PERSPECTIVES ON

CONSULTATION TRAINING AND PRACTICE

Date Recommended 5/21/04

Carl L. Myers, Director of Thesis

Elizabeth L. Jones

Sally L. Kuhlenschmidt

Elmer Gray, Dean of Graduates Studies and Research, May 26, 2004

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who provided me with help and support to reach this level in my graduate school experience. I would like to thank my committee members, Carl Myers, Sally Kuhlenschmidt and Libby Jones for their guidance, knowledge and patience during the completion of this project. I would like to thank my best friend, Allison, who has offered support to me and has always provided an ear to listen. Finally, I would especially like to thank my family who has offered continual support, encouragement and understanding throughout my entire graduate school experience.

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SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PRACTITIONERS' PERSPECTIVES ON

CONSULTATION TRAINING AND PRACTICE

Kimberly A. Unseld May 2004 51 Pages

Directed by: Carl L. Myers (Chair), Elizabeth L. Jones, and Sally L. Kuhlenschmidt

Department of Psychology Western Kentucky University

School psychologists have increased their practice of consultation within the schools due to mandates by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and positive outcomes associated with the service. Previous research has examined how training directors at school psychology graduate programs viewed consultation training. The current study investigated how school psychologists view their training in consultation and how they view the practice of consultation in school systems.

A random sample of 510 school psychologists from across the country was sent a survey to obtain their perspectives on consultation. A 46% return rate was achieved. The respondents were divided into two groups based on the practitioner's years of experience (i.e., more than 10 years experience and less than 10 years experience) in order to make comparisons based on when the school psychologists received their training. Results indicated that recent graduates reported more comprehensive training in consultation, a heavier emphasis on collaborative and problem-solving consultation and significantly higher levels of satisfaction with consultation training and practice. However, recent graduates did not perceive their skills with consultation to be higher than school psychologists with less training, but more experience.

Introduction

Consultation has become an increasingly widespread practice for school psychologists within schools and school districts. When consultation is formally conducted within an educational environment, it provides a process for individuals from multiple disciplines to collaboratively develop strategies and interventions for a defined goal. Consultation becomes a way for two or more people to develop ideas for implementation to achieve a desired outcome (DeBoer, 1995).

School psychology graduate students are trained in the area of consultation in preparation for practice in the field. School psychologists are viewed as professionals in the area of problem solving and prevention, therefore making consultation training necessary for competent entry into the career field. Most university and college curriculums prepare school psychology students for consultation activities through coursework, practicum and internship experience (Bramlett & Murphy, 1998). The consultation models taught and implementation of consultation curriculum, however, may vary depending upon the university training program. Bramlett and Murphy (1998) indicated that traditional models of consultation (i.e., behavioral, mental health and organizational) are more often taught if coursework in consultation is offered. The training in and use of these three traditional models have led to the development and use of other related models such as instructional, conjoint-behavioral, ecobehavioral, behavioral-systems and intervention assistance models (Bramlett & Murphy, 1998). Depending on the educational setting, population of students and demands of the school district, the consultation model and type of service may vary. Upon entry to the field, school psychologists may discover they use

one, a combination or none of the traditional models learned or discussed in pre-service training (Bramlett & Murphy, 1998).

This literature review describes roles of school psychologists, traditional consultation models and pre-service consultation training. The types of instruction used in training as well as benefits of using consultation in the educational setting will also be discussed. Factors regarding the training, uses for and benefits of psychological consultation in education will also be reviewed.

Recent research has examined consultation training from the perspective of university school psychology training programs. Other research has examined the prominent journals in school psychology to evaluate trends in published consultation articles. This thesis research intends to survey recent graduates of school psychology programs to obtain their perspectives on consultation training practices and their use of consultation as school psychology practitioners. Like many school reforms, there may be a need for reform in what consultation skills, models and techniques are used in training school psychology students to meet the demands of current students, schools and school districts. Additional research examining school psychologists' use of consultation is needed for a better understanding of current consultation practices which may help identify ways to improve university training practices.

Literature Review

Consultation has been defined many ways and used in many contexts depending upon the profession, the clientele and the service needed or provided. While debate continues over an exact definition, many experts can agree in the overall design and nature of human service consultation. Human service consultation is viewed as a problem-solving process initiated for purposes of aiding consultees in the development of skills for effective functioning with a client and for improving the consultee's ability to work with the client (Brown, Pryzwansky, & Schulte, 2001). Consultation differs from consulting in that consulting is viewed as a short-term procedure where two or more people meet as a team to generate ideas together about issues or problems (DeBoer, 1995).

Consultation is noted in the literature as an essential role for school psychologists rather than a secondary role behind the traditional testing and placing of students into special education services (Bramlett & Murphy, 1998). School psychology consultation is viewed as an indirect, problem-solving approach where a school psychologist works with teachers and caregivers to assist children with learning or behavioral needs. The need for consultation services has been expanding due to the outcomes associated with consultation being viewed positively by school staff and the benefits gained in the areas of intervention and prevention (Anserello & Sweet, 1990). By providing consultation to schools and districts, a school psychologist may best serve the needs of students through solving problems of children and creating effective interventions (Bergan & Caldwell, 1995).

Consultation within the schools is generally viewed as a process. As described by Bramlett and Murphy (1998), consultation is a framework or strategy for developing a working relationship between an educator or parent and a school psychologist with the focus on benefiting a student with academic and/or behavioral difficulties. While student concerns are a primary focus of consultation, a particular school or school district may also be the subject of concern in the consultative process when organizational conflicts or problems are examined. The consultation process is viewed as a way for two or more people to generate ideas for addressing and eliminating school-based problems. Thus, the school psychologist's work with the client (e.g., student) is indirect. Figure 1, based on Anserello and Sweet (1990), provides a conceptualization of the relationship between the consultant (e.g., school psychologist), the consultee (e.g., teacher, parent, administrator) and the client (e.g., student, school system).

Whether consultation is for the benefit of one student or for the overall school district, consultation is viewed as having two main objectives. Consultation has a short-term objective of resolving a particular problem and a long-term objective of enhancing the consultee's skills for prevention of future problems (Bramlett & Murphy, 1998). In providing consultation services for the benefit of a student or organization, the consultant can enhance and empower the consultee in similar future situations (Zins & Erchul, 2002).

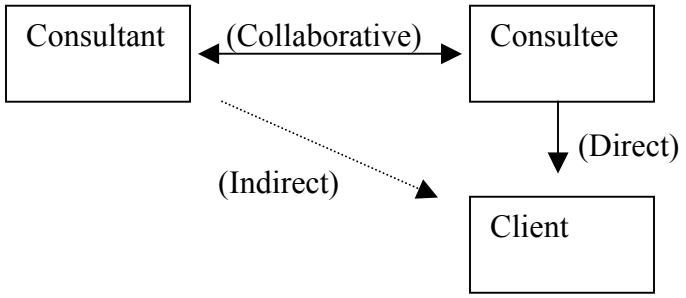

Figure 1. Conceptual model of consultation relationships (Anserello & Sweet, 1990).

Roles of the School Psychologist

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) defines the role of a school psychologist as a specialist in the field of psychology and education who provides services in the areas of consultation, assessment, intervention, prevention, education, research and mental health (NASP, 2003). Traditionally, school psychologists were regarded as gatekeepers to special education and their function was to assess academic and cognitive abilities of students referred to them (Fagan, 2002). Ideally, the assessment role would be viewed as a smaller responsibility and role for school psychologists. Unfortunately, studies continue to reveal that most school psychologists spend the majority of their time involved in assessments for special education even though the demand for other psychological services in classrooms and school districts calls for an increase in consultation and intervention services (Fagan, 2002).

Today, school psychologists are expected and encouraged to utilize their skills as a consultant as the primary job role (Zins & Erchul, 2002). Research reviewed by Zins and Erchul supported that consultation services have effectively improved academic experiences for all students. In order to expand this essential and effective role, school psychologists must be effectively trained in consultation. To facilitate a transformation from the traditional assessment role to that of a specialist in consultation, training during pre-service study is considered essential (Zins & Erchul, 2002). Not only should training include instruction on various models and procedures, it should also include teaching the ability to work with multicultural, diverse and varying populations on an interpersonal level (Carey & Wilson, 1995). Within this expanded role, the psychologist may be asked to review referrals, provide prevention strategies, review the interactions between the student and the systems in which the student is involved, and provide research-based interventions (Alpert, 1995).

Models of Consultation

NASP (2000) standards for school psychology preparation programs require consultation training. While school psychology programs typically train graduate students to engage in consultation, the models presented in curriculum may differ across programs. A review of the literature notes three commonly referenced models of consultation in school psychology to be the behavioral model, the mental health model and the organizational model (Bramlett & Murphy, 1998). The three models will now be described.

Mental health consultation model. The mental health model of consultation was developed by Gerald Caplan and is sometimes referred to as Caplanian consultation (Brown et al., 2001). The model was developed during the post-World War II era when Caplan and teams of mental health professionals worked with immigrant children in residential institutions throughout Israel. Due to the numerous referrals and magnitude of services needed, the professionals found an alternative way to resolve the children's problems. The alternative solution was for the professional to discuss resolution strategies for the children's problems with staff who worked in the residential setting with the children. The "discovery" of consultation for handling mental health issues was made during this process (Brown et al., 2001). The two goals described in Caplan's model were to assist the consultee in improving his/her understanding of the problem situation and improving the consultee's competence to resolve similar future problems. The model views both the consultant and the consultee as experts in their own area, one having no authority over the other, where the consultee carries full discretion and responsibility to carry out the plan or intervention suggested. Brown et al. (2001) defined mental health consultation as follows:

> A process of interaction between two professionals in which one professional (the consultee) seeks the help of a specialist in a particular area (the consultant) with regard to a current work problem that the consultee has decided is within the consultant's area of specialized competence. (p. 19)

Caplan distinguished four types of consultation based on the difficulty a consultee has with a client, the administration of an intervention, or the goal of improving the consultee's problem-solving abilities (Brown et al., 2001). The four main types of consultation defined by Caplan are (a) client-centered case consultation, (b) consultee-centered case consultation, (c) program-centered administrative consultation, and (d) consultee-centered administrative consultation. In client-centered consultation, the focus is on the consultee's abilities to work with a client more effectively. Consultee-centered case consultation also focuses on working with clients more effectively; however, the goal is to increase the skills of the consultee and reduce the problems he or she has in successfully working with a client. In program-centered administrative consultation, the consultant's role is that of an expert for providing recommendations for programs or concerns of administrative agencies. Consultee-centered administrative consultation focuses on enhancing the consultee's effectiveness in dealing with solutions for organizational concerns (Brown et al., 2001).

Bramlett and Murphy (1998) noted Caplan's model of mental health consultation was later expanded to provide a basis for school-based models of consultation. Three types of mental health consultation (i.e., system-centered, teacher-centered and child-centered) came from this expansion. System-centered consultation focuses on school issues for the benefit of all students. Teacher-centered consultation addresses the way a teacher interacts within the classroom and the relationship of that interaction to the student's problem. Child-centered consultation has its main

focus on academic or behavioral issues regarding one child or a number of children (Bramlett & Murphy, 1998).

From these three mental health consultation approaches, the most often used type by school psychologists is teacher-centered consultation (Bramlett & Murphy, 1998). Within the school systems, teachers note difficulty in dealing with their students. These difficulties are thought to stem from either a lack of knowledge, a lack of skill, a lack of objectivity, or a lack of confidence regarding the problem. Through use of the mental health model, the school psychologist's role as a consultant is implemented to help teachers, faculty and systems become more productive for the benefit of students (Bramlett & Murphy, 1998).

Behavioral consultation model. The behavioral consultation model was developed by Bergan (1977). Bergan's model was developed from the theories of operant learning and behavioral psychology. The theory and model were later revised by Bergan and Kratochwill (1990) and renamed the behavioral-operant model. A definition of behavioral consultation provided by Brown et al. (2001) is as follows:

> An indirect, problem-solving service involving a collegial relationship between the consultant and consultee in which the consultant acquires and communicates psychological data germane to the consultee's problem as well as the psychological principles that will enable the consultee to utilize the data. (p. 48)

The goals of the behavioral model include changing a client's behavior, altering the consultee's behavior and producing change within an organization. The behavioral-operant model of consultation views the consultant as an expert who is to provide information to the consultee through a problem-solving paradigm (Bergan & Kratochwill, 1990). The behavioral (Bergan, 1977) and behavioral-operant (Bergan & Kratochwill, 1990) models of consultation

included a systematic problem-solving process of four stages: (a) problem identification, (b) problem analysis, (c) plan implementation, and (d) problem evaluation. Within the problem identification stage, the objectives for change are identified. Problem analysis involves identification of variables that may contribute to the problematic behavior. In the plan implementation stage, interventions and strategies are developed and put into place for reduction or elimination of the problem identified. During the final stage of problem evaluation, the consultee and consultant evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention, goals that were or were not obtained, and if the interventions should continue or cease. The behavioral consultation model has been popular with school psychologists working in schools because behavioral consultation allows more opportunity for school psychologists to become directly involved in observing and intervening in problematic behaviors (Brown et al., 2001).

Organizational consultation model. Organizational consultation evolved out of both behavioral and mental health models. Organizational consulting contains many of the same processes as consultation with individuals, but within organizations the clientele may be many people and the issues may be systemic in nature (Brown et al., 2001). Many models exist within organizational consultation and no one model appears to prevail in the literature. School psychologists are noted by Brown et al. to use organizational models when dealing with systems issues or problems noted within their particular school district. Although organizational consultation is considered to be one of the three primary models of consultation in school psychology, its prominence may be exaggerated. In a 1992 survey, no participating school psychologist reported using the organizational model within his or her job duties (Costenbader, Swartz, & Petrix, 1992). Owens (2002) found more than half (56%) of school psychology training programs do not discuss, or only briefly mention, the organizational model.

Other consultation models. Other models of consultation exist and are used in the school systems and taught in university training programs. Some models (e.g., instructional, conjoint-behavioral, ecobehavioral) were developed from the main three models. However, numerous other consultation models were also found in the school psychology literature (Lawson, 2003; Zaciewski, 2003). Both Lawson and Zaciewski reviewed the consultation literature in school psychology journals between 1980 and 2002. Over 100 different types of consultation were discovered although most models were only mentioned in a single article. The rarity of references to most of the consultation models and the lack of definitions within the articles led Lawson (2003) and Zaciewski (2003) to question the validity of the existence of that many models. It appeared many authors were merely making up a descriptive term for consultation and were not referring to a specific consultation model. In a survey of school psychology training programs, Owens (2002) found the Collaborative and Problem-Solving models of consultation were emphasized by the majority of programs but that other (unspecified) models of consultation were rarely emphasized in training programs.

Pre-Service Consultation Training

The emphasis on consultation in pre-service training programs has increased greatly over time. Based on a survey of university training programs, Meyers, Wurtz, and Flanagan (1981) found few school psychology training programs offered any consultation coursework during pre-service training over twenty years ago. At that time, the results indicated that consultation coursework was more abundant in doctoral programs than subdoctoral. This was considered to be a significant problem as most school psychologists practicing in the field were trained in subdoctoral programs. Of the programs responding to the survey at that time, 60% did not provide a course devoted exclusively to consultation. Programs reported the behavioral and

mental health models were most heavily emphasized in training. Of the programs in the sample, 21% of the doctoral programs were noted to train a combination of behavioral, mental health and organizational consultation models, while only 6% of the subdoctoral programs used this combination (Meyers et al., 1981).

School psychology programs began to implement systematic training in consultation in the 1980s (Bramlett & Murphy, 1998). However, by the beginning of the 1990s, little improvement in pre-service consultation training appeared to have occurred. Costenbader et al. (1992) reported on a survey of school psychologists and their consultation training and practices. One thousand members of NASP were sent a survey and a response rate of 33% was obtained. Their results found that 61% of the respondents reported receiving no formal training or less than a one-semester course in graduate school devoted to consultation. Such results were similar to the results found by Meyers et al. (1981) a decade earlier. Furthermore, the quality of consultation training was judged to be "inadequate" or "less than adequate" by 53% of the sample (Costenbader et al., 1992). The behavioral consultation model was found to be the most often used model in the schools as well as the model most studied in pre-service training. It should be pointed out that because the mean years of experience for Costenbader et al.'s sample was 8.9 years, many of the school psychologists surveyed were trained several years prior to the 1992 publication date of the article. Thus, it is difficult to ascertain from this publication what university pre-service training programs were teaching in regard to consultation at that point in time.

Recent NASP training standards require training programs to make sure that school psychology graduates demonstrate competency in the area of consultation (NASP, 2000). The prior version of NASP's (1994) training standards only listed consultation as a content area

under the recommended knowledge base for training school psychologists. Improvements in the training of consultation are much more evident now than previous studies indicated. Owens (2002) assessed the teaching of consultation to school psychology graduate students by surveying all school psychology training programs in the United States. Half of the training programs provided responses to the survey. Of those responding, 100% of the programs indicated they teach consultation and 84% noted they have at least one course devoted entirely to consultation. No significant differences were noted between doctoral and subdoctoral programs. Training programs gave the most emphasis to the Mental Health, Behavioral, Organizational, Collaborative and Problem-Solving consultation models.

Most of the current research in the school psychology literature focuses on the application of consultation by school psychology practitioners while examinations of pre-service consultation training and the effectiveness of this training are very rare (Lawson, 2003; Zaciewski, 2003). Alpert and Taufique (2002) also noted that certain models of consultation and the development of coursework for consultation training are referenced in articles but references and research reporting on trainee evaluation are scarce. Few studies have been published to date which review consultation training practices in personnel preparation.

Students in pre-service training are often expected to master the theories of certain consultation models for use in their everyday profession (Knoff, 1985). This literature review indicates there is a lack of sufficient research to demonstrate the relationship between what is being learned in coursework to the models and practices used by school psychology practitioners. Many school psychology consultation articles report respondents having difficulty with consultation for various reasons (Kratochwill & Van Someren, 1995). Often the reasons appear to be directly related to a lack of training or preparation. School psychologists cannot be

expected to competently perform consultation if they are inadequately trained in this area. Training must consist of more than an overview of consultation models and theories. The application of consultation, how to interact in a system and how schools represent systems must also be taught (Kratochwill, Sheridan, Carrington-Rotto, & Salmon, 1991).

The timing of consultation training may be important for school psychologists as well. Some research articles note that training in consultation and systems should occur at the end of graduate school programs, while others believe consultation experiences should occur at the beginning of pre-service training (Kratochwill et al., 1991). Kratochwill et al. suggest consultation training should occur throughout the entirety of graduate school training. The belief for this is that the experience can be connected to both the content and the process of consultation so that this service can be fully developed for entry into the career as a school psychologist.

Another issue in consultation research is reflected in the type of pre-service training being provided by graduate programs. While many models of teaching are used in graduate training, experts in school psychology consultation feel that a combination of experiences is necessary for effective preparation of school psychologists (Kratochwill & Van Someren, 1995). As noted by Kratochwill and Van Someren, graduate students participating in an academic class on consultation without having practicum experience to accompany the coursework can result in application problems. Graduate students find it difficult to break down the process of consultation into steps if the models are presented without concurrent practicum experience. With practicum experience, the graduate student may also learn to modify questions and strategies for the consultee, as well as develop better selection techniques for intervention strategies. Without a combination of pre-service training coursework and practicum experience,

Kratochwill and Van Someren state barriers are established preventing effective consultation outcomes. Kratochwill and Van Someren suggested most graduate training programs have failed to adequately prepare school psychologists in consultation by not combining pre-service coursework and practicum experience.

Henning-Stout (1999) conducted research regarding novice school psychologists' experiences in consultation in an attempt to find needed areas of training and experience for entry-level school psychologists. Participants' consultation logs were examined and incidents of corroboration and reinforcement were noted. Corroboration was noted when the participants sought input from a consultee's professional peer. Reinforcement was noted when the participant demonstrated social reinforcement for maintaining the professional relationship. These two techniques appeared to be used often but were seldom emphasized in pre-service coursework. Participants were also found to use techniques in consultation from previous courses that were not specific to consultation courses. They were found to draw from classes where reframing, modeling and role-playing were taught instead of pulling information from consultation courses. Although the sample was limited in size, a general theme from all participants was that they learned from the experience of the process rather than from just classroom instruction. The author also noted each participant demonstrated awareness and flexibility in the consultation process, which can only be learned through experience (Henning-Stout, 1999).

Consultation is becoming recognized as one of the most important tasks and skills in the profession of school psychology. Yet Henning-Stout (1999) reported that practitioners only spend 16% of their time in consultation. While school psychologists report consultation as a limited role in terms of time engaged in the activity, the number of consultation cases conducted

by school psychologists has been increasing (Costenbader et al., 1992). Perhaps the role of consultation has increased, in part, due to school reform movements. Special education reforms have emphasized consultation and problem-solving models to replace traditional assessments of students (Reschly, Tilly, & Grimes, 1999).

Kratochwill and Pittman (2002) stated that literature on the training and practice of consultation in school psychology is too limited. Researchers specifically note the need for comparative research where the effectiveness of specified consultation models in the field is determined. "Clarity must occur in defining the dimensions and in characterizing how they function in real-life school settings with real-life student problems" (Kratochwill & Callan-Stoiber, 2000, p. 595).

Purpose

Previous research has examined how consultation training practices in pre-service graduate programs have changed over the past twenty years. In particular, Meyers et al. (1981) found training programs rarely placed much emphasis on consultation training. Owens (2002) recently found a much greater emphasis placed on consultation training that appears to be in line with current NASP training standards. Costenbader et al. (1992) evaluated school psychology practitioners' perspectives on their consultation training but most of their sample of participants was trained many years prior to the time of the survey. Lawson (2003) and Zaciewski (2003) found that of the three traditional models of consultation, only two (i.e., behavioral and mental health) were still prominent in the school psychology literature. They also found over a hundred other consultation models referenced in the articles they reviewed.

There appear to be many consultation models and various ways graduate programs prepare their students to carry out the practice of consultation. However, the pre-service training

methods and models taught during coursework may not be pragmatic or effective for school-based practice. Gresham (1991) surmised years ago that there probably was a large gulf between what is presented in consultation literature and how consultation is used by school psychologists in practice. Work by Lawson (2003) and Zaciewski (2003) provided descriptions of consultation in the school psychology literature. Owens (2002) provided training programs' perspectives on the teaching of consultation. It is unknown, however, as to how school psychologists currently view their consultation training and how they are implementing consultation in practice.

The purpose of this study is to examine how school psychologists currently view consultation as regards to training and practice. Specifically, perspectives on pre-service teaching techniques regarding consultation, the training and use of various consultation models and how consultation is used in the field will be examined. The purpose of this study will be accomplished by surveying a randomly selected national sample of practicing school psychologists. The survey will be sent to current members of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). The study will use the survey information to examine if the traditional consultation models taught in graduate training programs are useful for today's school psychologists. Because the NASP (1994) training standards listing consultation as part of the knowledge base for school psychologists was published 10 years ago, a comparison will be made between "recent" graduates with 10 years or less experience in the field and "older" graduates with more than 10 years of experience. The results of this study could be used for the modification of consultation training procedures in graduate programs to better prepare school psychologists with the skills they need for school settings.

This study will compare practitioners with less than or equal to 10 years of experience to those with more than 10 years of experience through descriptive methods (i.e., percentage of

respondents indicating each answer). The following research questions will be addressed through a national survey of school psychology practitioners:

1. Are there differences in the amount of pre-service consultation training coursework?
2. Are there differences in the types of consultation instructional techniques used at the pre-service level?
3. Are there differences in the types of consultation models taught during pre-service training?
4. Are there differences in the consultation models used in professional practice?
5. Are there differences in the level of satisfaction with practitioners' pre-service consultation training and use of consultation in practice?
6. Are there differences in the ratings of similarity between the training of consultation and the practice of consultation?
7. Are there differences in self-ratings of skills with consultation and how do self-ratings of skills in consultation compare to other types of services?
8. Are there differences in supervisors' expectations and teachers' views of the consultation process?

Method

Participants

The Director of Member Services of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) was asked to provide a random sample of 500 practitioners from the NASP membership database. An address list of 510 school psychologists was provided by NASP. All 510 school psychologists were contacted to participate in this study. A total of 235 surveys were returned for a response rate of 46.1%. There were 77 respondents (33.2%) with less than or equal to 10 years of experience and 155 respondents (66.8%) with more than 10 years of experience. Three respondents did not indicate years of experience on the survey and were excluded from the data analyses. The mean number of years of experience for those with less than 10 years of experience was 5.9 (range 1 to 10), while for practitioners with more than 10 years of experience, the mean was 21.3 (range 11 to 38). For the total sample, the mean was 16.3 years of experience. Table 1 describes the demographics of the sample that responded to the survey. The majority of the respondents was female, had more than 10 years of experience and possessed specialist degrees. This sample seemed fairly representative of school psychologists in general. Fagan and Wise (2000) reported that 72% of school psychologists that were NASP members were female with the median years of experience between 11 and 15 years.

Table 1

Demographics of Sample

	Experience					
	≤ 10 years		> 10 years		Total	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Gender						
Male	14	18.7	47	32.0	61	27.5
Female	61	81.3	100	68.0	161	72.5
Degree						
Masters	12	15.6	50	32.2	62	26.7
Specialist	53	68.8	68	43.9	121	52.2
Doctorate	12	15.6	37	23.9	49	21.1

Instrument

The survey used in this study was an adapted version of the questionnaire used by Owens (2002), which was modified from Meyers' (1981) study, to assess university programs' consultation training practices. Owens' questionnaire was developed to gain information regarding the amount of consultation training that is provided, the consultation models taught and the techniques used in consultation training. The questionnaire was modified (see Appendix A) to also assess school psychologists' perceptions of employer and teacher expectations regarding consultation, the consultation model(s) they use in practice, their level of satisfaction

with their consultation training and their level of satisfaction with their use of consultation in the field.

Procedure

An address list of 510 school psychology practitioners was obtained from NASP. The sample was mailed the questionnaire, a cover letter (see Appendix B) and a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the return of the information. The cover letter indicated the completion of the survey was voluntary and that the return of the survey would imply consent to participate in the research. Participants were asked to return the surveys within one week of the original mailing date. The surveys were completed anonymously which did not allow for follow-up contact of non-respondents. This research project was approved by the Human Subjects Review Board at Western Kentucky University (see Appendix C).

Results

The survey results were primarily evaluated with descriptive statistics. Where applicable, *t* tests were used to determine if mean ratings between groups were significantly different. Two groups were created based on the number of years the practitioner had in the field (i.e., 1 – 10 years of experience and more than 10 years of experience).

Pre-Service Consultation Coursework

The amount and type of consultation coursework received by those with less than or equal to 10 years of experience was compared to those with more than 10 years of experience. The results are presented in Table 2. Of those with more than 10 years of experience, about one out of five school psychologists indicated that consultation was not specifically addressed in graduate school coursework. All recent graduates received consultation coursework. Only 10.4% of recent graduates have less than a full course in consultation. That percentage is half of the more experienced group. Likewise, the percentages of recent graduates with an entire course on consultation and those having two or more courses on consultation are more than double than those of the more experienced group. Results also indicate that the majority of school psychologists now have consultation addressed in the applied settings of practicum and/or internship.

Pre-Service Consultation Training Techniques

Each participant was asked to provide information regarding the methods or techniques that were used in their pre-service training to teach the skills of consultation. Information regarding consultation training techniques used in school psychology graduate programs is listed

Table 2

Percentage of Practitioners Receiving Various Amounts of Consultation Coursework

	Experience	
Pre-Service Training	≤ 10 years[a]	>10 years[b]
Not addressed in coursework	0.0	19.4
Addressed in practicum and/or internship	72.7	47.7
Part of one course	10.4	21.9
One course solely devoted to consultation	64.9	31.6
Part of two or more courses	36.4	23.9
Two or more courses devoted to consultation	10.4	4.5
Other	0.0	4.5

[a]n = 77. [b]n = 155.

in Table 3. Of those responding that they had received formal training in consultation, the didactic/lecture method is the most commonly used method for both groups. Compared to the more experienced group, slightly higher percentages of recent school psychology graduates reported being trained with techniques of role-playing, individual supervision, audiotapes, video demonstrations and mentoring by field-based personnel. Many more recent graduates (69%) were assigned an actual consultation case as part of their coursework than the older group (39%). Despite recent technological advances, online discussion and supervision rarely occurs at all. Few practitioners reported being trained with competency-based methods.

Table 3

Percentage of Practitioners Exposed to Various Consultation Training Techniques

	Experience	
Training Technique	≤ 10 years[a]	> 10 years[b]
Didactic/lecture	85.7	60.0
Role-Playing	61.0	45.8
Individual supervision by faculty member	42.9	34.8
Audiotapes	15.6	11.6
Videos modeling consultation practices	27.3	20.6
Assignment of actual consultation case	68.8	39.4
Mentoring by field-based personnel	42.9	32.3
Online discussion groups	0.0	0.6
Online supervision/feedback	1.3	0.0
Competency-based methods	15.6	15.5
Behavioral Training Program	19.5	9.7
Group discussion of cases	83.1	54.8
Other	1.3	5.2

[a]$n = 77$. [b]$n = 155$.

Consultation Models Emphasized in Pre-Service Training

The current survey examined the participants' amount of exposure to each model of consultation during their pre-service training. For each model listed, respondents could indicate

they received no training at all or could indicate the amount of exposure received during their pre-service training. For respondents who indicated they received pre-service consultation training, the amount of exposure was rated on a 5-point Likert scale (i.e., 1 = brief introduction, 2 = general overview, 3 = moderate emphasis, 4 = thorough emphasis, 5 = proficiency expected). Table 4 presents the results where all those indicating a "brief introduction" or a "general overview" were combined and all those indicating a "thorough emphasis or "proficiency expected" were combined for the sake of simplicity. Few differences in percentages between the more experienced and the less experienced groups were noted for the Mental Health, Behavioral and Organizational consultation models. Higher percentages of recent graduates received thorough training in the Collaborative and Problem-Solving models. In fact, the Problem-Solving model is the model the highest percentage of recent graduates (77%) indicated they received a moderate to thorough emphasis while the Behavioral model was the second highest (75%). For recent graduates, the Mental Health and Organizational models had the highest percentages for no training at all (9.9% and 15.7%, respectively) and had the lowest percentages for moderate to thorough emphasis (33.8% and 37.2%, respectively).

To further analyze the differences between the school psychologists with more than 10 years experience and those with less than or equal to 10 years experience, means for each consultation model were determined. Only those indicating they received training (i.e., those not circling a "0") were included in this data analysis. An independent samples *t* test was conducted for each pair of means to determine if significant differences existed between the two groups. Results are presented in Table 5. The only significant differences in training emphasis between the more experienced group and the recent graduates were significantly higher levels of training for the Collaborative and Problem-Solving models for the newer graduates.

Table 4

Percentage of Practitioners Exposed to Specific Consultation Models in Pre-Service Training

Models	No Exposure	Brief Overview	Moderate Emphasis	Thorough Emphasis
Mental Health				
≤ 10 years[a]	9.9	56.3	21.1	12.7
> 10 years[b]	12.4	48.7	27.3	11.6
Behavioral				
≤ 10 years	0.0	25.0	30.6	44.4
> 10 years	4.6	16.3	31.0	48.1
Organizational				
≤ 10 years	15.7	47.1	24.3	12.9
> 10 years	23.2	43.8	20.5	12.5
Collaborative				
≤ 10 years	1.3	25.3	21.3	52.0
> 10 years	10.7	32.0	27.0	30.3
Problem-Solving				
≤ 10 years	2.7	20.3	20.3	56.7
> 10 years	9.4	30.5	27.3	32.8
Instructional				
≤ 10 years	7.3	47.1	26.5	19.1
> 10 years	20.4	41.6	21.2	16.8

Note. The two groups were divided by ≤ 10 years of experience and > 10 years of experience.

[a]*n*'s for each model ranged from 70 to 75. [b]*n*'s for each model ranged from 112 to 129.

Table 5

Mean Ratings of Training Emphasis for Various Consultation Models

	Experience			
Model	≤ 10 years[a]	> 10 years[b]	*t* value	*p*
Mental Health	2.37	2.50	0.78	.438
Behavioral	3.37	3.42	0.30	.763
Organizational	2.47	2.46	-0.05	.963
Collaborative	3.45	2.96	-2.81	.006
Problem-Solving	3.67	3.01	-3.74	.000
Instructional	2.64	2.57	-0.37	.713

Note. Higher mean values indicate higher levels of emphasis during pre-service training. [a]*n*'s for each model ranged from 70 to 75. [b]*n*'s for each model ranged from 112 to 129.

Consultation Models Used in Practice

Participants in the study were asked to indicate the consultation model(s) currently used in their daily practice. Practically all school psychologists reported engaging in consultation. In the more experienced group, 98.7% of the participants engage in consultation while 100% of the participants with 10 years or less of practice indicated some form of consultation being used. Table 6 details the participants' responses regarding consultation models being used by practitioners. Despite differences in training, the results are remarkably similar in each category for each group. A similar proportion of each group (about 20%) indicated they did not use the structured format of any specific model. The majority of school psychologists in each group also

Table 6

Percentage of Practitioners Currently Using Specific Models in Practice

	Experience	
Consultation Model	≤ 10 years[a]	> 10 years[b]
Do not provide consultation services	0.0	1.3
Do not use the structured format of any specific model	18.2	22.6
Eclectic (personal combination of aspects of ≥ 2 models)	59.7	56.8
Mental Health	28.6	27.1
Behavioral	58.4	60.6
Instructional	24.7	23.9
Organizational	13.0	15.5
Collaborative	59.7	55.8
Problem-Solving	75.3	68.4
Other	3.9	1.3

Note. Percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could choose multiple categories.

[a]$n = 77$. [b]$n = 155$.

indicated they use a personal combination of methods from multiple models. The Problem-Solving model appears to be the consultation model used most often for both groups.

Consultation Satisfaction

The survey questioned the respondents on their satisfaction level with the consultation training they received in graduate school and their satisfaction with their use of consultation in

practice. A 5-point Likert scale was used for both questions (i.e., 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = moderately dissatisfied, 3 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 4 = somewhat satisfied, 5 = very satisfied). Results are presented in Table 7. Almost a third of the school psychologists (32.2%) with more than 10 years of experience indicated dissatisfaction with their consultation training while less than 15% of the recent graduates indicated dissatisfaction. Similarly, a higher percentage of the more experienced group (19%) indicated dissatisfaction with their current practice of consultation than the recent graduates (10.7%). Likewise, a higher percentage of the recent graduates indicated satisfaction with their consultation training and practice.

The mean level of satisfaction with consultation training for the more experienced group was 3.17 while the mean level for the recent graduates was 3.75. An independent samples *t* test found the recent graduates' satisfaction level with consultation training was significantly higher, $t(217) = -3.37$, $p = .001$ (two-tailed) than the more experienced school psychologists. The mean level of satisfaction with the practice of consultation for the more experienced group was 3.69 while the mean level for the recent graduates was 3.84. An independent samples *t* test found the school psychologists with less than or equal to 10 years of experience had a satisfaction level with consultation practice significantly higher, $t(226) = -1.10$, $p = .002$ (two-tailed) than the more experienced practitioners.

Similarity of Consultation Training and Practice

The school psychology practitioners were asked to rate the similarity of their practice of consultation to the methods and models they were trained with during graduate school. A 5-point Likert scale was used to obtain ratings of similarity (i.e., 1 = very different, 2 = different, 3 = somewhat similar, 4 = very similar, 5 = same). Only those practitioners that reported receiving training in consultation were included in the analysis ($n = 151$ for the more experienced group

Table 7

Percentage of Respondents Indicating Satisfaction With Consultation Training and Practice

	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral	Moderately Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Training					
≤10 years[a]	2.6	11.8	15.8	47.4	22.4
> 10 years[b]	14.0	18.2	18.9	34.2	14.7
Practice					
≤10 years[c]	0.0	10.7	12.0	60.0	17.3
> 10 years[d]	2.0	17.0	13.1	46.4	21.5

[a]n = 77. [b]n = 142. [c]n = 76. [d]n = 152.

and n = 76 for recent graduates). The mean level of similarity between consultation training and practice for the more experienced group was 2.85 while the mean level for the recent graduates was 3.17. An independent samples t test found the recent graduates' similarity ratings to be significantly higher, $t(198) = -2.57$, $p = .011$ (two-tailed).

Self-Ratings of Skills

Practitioners were asked to rate their level of skills in the area of consultation. In order to get a sense of how consultation skills compare to other skills typically required of school psychologists, participants were also asked to rate their level of skills in other areas. A 5-point Likert scale was used for rating skills (i.e., 1 = weak, 2 = fair, 3 = good, 4 = strong, 5 = excellent) in the areas of consultation, assessment, direct service (e.g., counseling), behavioral interventions and academic interventions. Table 8 lists the mean level of self-perceived skills for each area. There were no significant differences on any of the skill areas between those with

Table 8

Practitioners' Mean Self-Ratings of Skills

	Experience			
Service	≤ 10 years[a]	> 10 years[b]	*t* value	*p*
Consultation	3.45	3.57	1.00	.318
Assessment	4.34	4.52	1.88	.061
Direct service	3.38	3.50	0.72	.470
Behavioral interventions	3.71	3.71	-0.21	.983
Academic interventions	3.34	3.45	0.78	.439

Note. Higher mean values indicate higher levels of self-perceived skills.

[a]n = 76. [b]n's for each service ranged from 150 to 154.

more than 10 years of experience and those with less than 10 years of experience. As part of a post-hoc analysis, a series of paired samples *t* tests were conducted between skills with consultation and with the other four skill areas for the total sample. Two areas resulted in significantly higher ratings than the consultation area. School psychologists rated their skills in the assessment area, $t(232) = -14.01$, $p = .000$ (two-tailed), and in the behavioral interventions area, $t(231) = -3.22$, $p = .001$ (two-tailed), as higher than their consultation skills.

Supervisors' and Teachers' Views of Consultation

The current research also assessed the practitioners' perceptions regarding how others (i.e., supervisors, teachers) view the use of consultation. Each participant was asked to rate his or her supervisor's expectations regarding consultation by selecting one of three possible

categories (i.e., not expected, encouraged, or expected). In addition, each practitioner was asked to rate teachers' expectations for consultation by selecting one of two possible categories (i.e., expect consultation or do not expect consultation). Results are presented in Table 9. Few differences were noted between the more experienced group and the group of recent graduates. Both groups indicate a high level of expectation (or encouragement) for consultation.

Practitioners were also asked to give their perception of the level of cooperation received from most teachers they work with in the schools. A 5-point Likert scale was used to gain information regarding the levels of cooperation (i.e., 1 = actively resistant, 2 = resistant, 3 = neutral, 4 = cooperative, 5 = actively cooperative). Table 10 presents the percentages of practitioners indicating each level of cooperation. A similar percentage of school psychologists from both groups indicated most teachers were "cooperative." However, fewer of the recent graduates noted most teachers to be "actively cooperative" than the experienced group and more of the recent graduates indicated that teachers were resistant to consultation than the experienced group. Mean ratings for each group were determined. The mean for the recent graduates was 3.63 while the mean for the experienced group was 3.93. An independent samples *t* test found the experienced practitioners ratings of cooperation to be significantly higher, $t(217) = 2.89$, $p = .004$ (two-tailed).

Table 9

Percentage of Practitioners Noting Expectations for Consultation

	Experience	
Personnel Expectations	≤ 10 years[a]	> 10 years[b]
Supervisors		
Not expected	10.4	14.2
Encouraged	37.7	32.9
Expected	51.9	49.0
Teachers		
Not expected	26.0	28.4
Expected	74.0	69.7

[a]*n* = 77. [b]*n* = 155.

Table 10

Percentage of Practitioners Noting Amount of Cooperation Received from Most Teachers

	Experience	
Cooperation Level	≤ 10 years[a]	> 10 years[b]
Actively resistant	0.0	0.7
Resistant	10.5	5.6
Neutral	18.4	9.8
Cooperative	68.4	67.8
Actively cooperative	2.6	16.1

[a]*n* = 77. [b]*n* = 142.

Discussion

The current study examined how school psychology practitioners view consultation in regard to pre-service training and practice in the field. In particular, perspectives on pre-service training techniques, training received in specific consultation models, uses of consultation models in the field, perceptions of how the consultation service is viewed and rating of consultation skills was assessed. While Owens (2002) examined consultation training in graduate programs in the United States, research evaluating practitioners' perspectives on consultation can provide additional information useful to potential modification of consultation pre-service training in graduate schools.

School psychologists who are current members of NASP were surveyed to identify their views and perspectives of consultation. Ten years ago, NASP (1994) training standards listed consultation as part of the knowledge base for school psychologists. Due to the NASP standards regarding consultation being published 10 years ago, the current study addressed the research questions by dividing the respondents into two categories (i.e., practitioners with more than 10 years experience and those with 10 years or less experience). This division of the sample allowed the comparison of views of recent graduates to those who were trained prior to the 1994 publication of NASP training standards.

Pre-service consultation coursework and training techniques were addressed in this study to examine what changes have occurred over time. Owens (2002) reported that all school psychology training programs either had coursework or field placement experience in the area of consultation. Consistent with Owens' (2002) results, all recent graduates responding to the

current survey indicated receiving consultation coursework, although 10.4% of the school psychologists still received less than one full course in the subject. Kratochwill and VaSomeren (1995) expressed concerns that school psychologists were not receiving practicum experiences with the didactic training of consultation. The current results indicated that the majority of recent school psychology graduates (73%) have received some type of application training through practicum and/or internship experiences. Clearly, the amount of training in consultation has increased over the years.

An increased use of a variety of training techniques used to teach consultation also appears to have increased over the years. Owens (2002) reported that the lecture/didactic technique was most often used as the form of consultation instruction in graduate programs participating in the research. Likewise, in the current study, this instructional method was still reported to be the form graduates experienced most as a training technique. Newer graduates had slightly higher percentages of exposure to techniques such as role-play, individual supervision, audio and videotape instruction and mentoring by field placement personnel. Similar to high percentages of practicum and internship experiences with consultation, recent graduates also reported being assigned a consultation case as part of coursework training at a higher percentage than that of their more experienced colleagues. Online discussion and supervision does not appear to be used much at all, despite technological advances.

The literature review noted the Behavioral, Mental Health and Organizational models to be the "traditional" models in school psychology. Meyers et al. (1981) found that the Mental Health model was taught most often with 58.8% of all programs noting it to be within their curriculum. Owens (2002) concluded the Behavioral consultation model was most widely taught in pre-service training with 74.8% of the responding programs indicating that a thorough

emphasis or proficiency was expected in behavioral consultation. The Collaborative and Problem-Solving models were the other most recognized models within the training programs (Owens, 2002). Little difference was found between the two groups of practitioners regarding exposure to the three traditional models. However, recent graduates were found to have received more training in the Collaborative and Problem-Solving models than the more experienced graduates. Furthermore, recent graduates reported having the most emphasis placed on the Problem-Solving and Behavioral models while the least amount of emphasis was placed upon the Mental Health and Organizational models. These findings suggest that two of the three consultation models considered "traditional" are no longer prominent models.

The current research examined what models practitioners are currently using in their practice. For both groups, the Problem-Solving model was used most in the practice of consultation. An interesting finding was that the majority of practitioners from both groups indicated they do not use a specific format from any one model but rather a combination of methods from different models. This finding raises the question as to whether or not the practitioners combined methods from different models because current consultation models are inadequate to meet the needs of practitioners in school settings.

Satisfaction levels regarding consultation pre-service training and the use of consultation in practice were addressed in the research in order to note any changing satisfaction levels from more experienced practitioners to more recent graduates. The experienced practitioners indicated more dissatisfaction with their pre-service training and their use of consultation in practice than the newer practitioners. This may be an indication that recent graduates are receiving a higher quality of training at the pre-service level, which increases the overall satisfaction with the use of the skill once placed in the field.

The current research examined the perceived similarity between how consultation was taught in graduate school to the practice of consultation in the field. Newer practitioners noted significantly more similarity between their training and practice than the more experienced practitioners. These findings indirectly lend further support to better pre-service training in consultation in the last decade. If consultation training was limited for the more experienced practitioners, obviously it is unlikely the practice of consultation would be very similar to training.

The practitioners of the current research were asked to rate their skill level in consultation along with their perceived skill level with other roles generally performed by school psychologists. An interesting finding was that despite dissatisfaction with their consultation training, experienced practitioners did not indicate poorer skills in consultation. Perhaps years of experience offsets a lack of training. When self-rating of skills in consultation was compared to other performed duties, all practitioners were noted to rate their skill level significantly higher in the areas of assessment and behavioral interventions. These findings may be due, in part, to assessment and behavioral interventions being performed more often by school psychologists (Reschly & Wilson, 1995). An alternative explanation is that while training programs have improved in the teaching of consultation, the programs are still not training consultation as well as other roles.

The current research also examined how school psychologists think other professionals in the schools view consultation. Overall, most practitioners reported that consultation is expected from their supervisors as well as by the teachers they work with in the schools. It is interesting to note that more experienced graduates reported teachers being “actively cooperative” with consultation than did the recent graduates. Conversely, more recent graduates indicated that

teachers were resistant to consultation than the experienced practitioners. While there may be many variables that influence practitioners' perceptions of cooperation level, experienced practitioners may feel more at ease in their job role and confident in the services they provide which may influence perceptions of co-workers. Likewise, newer graduates may feel less secure at the time they enter the field, creating less favorable perceptions by others. The consultation role is a collaborative one and most recent graduates of school psychology programs are likely to be young. Another possible explanation for the current results is that teachers are more resistant to collaborating with young school psychologists.

Limitations

The current study has some limitations. Surveys rely on self-report data that may or may not be accurate. In addition, the representativeness of a sample is always a concern for generalization purposes. There were only 77 practitioners in the group of recent graduates, making it difficult to generalize the results to all relatively new practitioners in the field. Attempts were made to obtain a large sample of only recent graduates from the NASP membership database, but NASP was unable to use years of experience as a selection criteria. Although the current sample appeared representative of NASP members, less than half of the practitioners contacted responded to the survey. It is unknown whether the non-respondents differed in any way from the obtained sample. Furthermore, the survey was sent only to members of NASP. It is unknown if non-members of NASP differ in any way from the obtained sample of school psychologists.

It is difficult to compare current results to those reported by Owens (2002) because the practitioners randomly selected for this study may or may not have been associated with the training programs in Owens' study. Also, while the respondents were all members of NASP and

were practitioners in the field of school psychology, a few respondents indicated that the bulk of their graduate school training was in the area of counseling, clinical psychology or some other social service field of study. This variable may have distorted some of the results. Future surveys may need to assess whether or not respondents received training at a NASP-approved school psychology graduate training program.

In an attempt to determine if differences existed between consultation training of experienced school psychologists compared to recent graduates, the respondents were divided into two categories (i.e., more than 10 years experience and 10 or less years experience). The selection of 10 years was based on the time since the 1994 standards were published by NASP. To some extent, however, the decision to use 10 years as the division point was still arbitrary. An immediate shift in training practices is unlikely to have occurred in 1994. That is, it is likely many programs were already emphasizing consultation prior to 1994 whereas other programs may have taken years to strengthen and implement consultation training practices after 1994.

Future Research

The current results suggest training programs are doing better at training school psychologists to perform consultation. However, conducting this research raised additional research questions as well. Future research needs to examine the actual application of consultation in school settings. In the application of consultation, most practitioners reported using a personal combination of methods from multiple consultation models. Is such a practice to be expected due to the varying demands of school settings or are there severe limitations to current consultation models that practitioners must invent ways to actually put consultation into practice? Research should attempt to determine the modifications practitioners are doing when

applying consultation. Perhaps there are commonalities in the adaptations practitioners are making that would be useful for trainers in the teaching of consultation.

In comparison to the recent graduates, the experienced group of practitioners reported less satisfaction with their training in consultation and with their practice of consultation. However, the experienced group rated themselves just as skilled in consultation as the better-trained recent graduates. Furthermore, the experienced group found teachers to be less resistant to the consultation process. The effect years of experience has on the consultation process needs additional research.

Additional variables related to consultation practice and satisfaction could also be examined. For example, gender or age differences could be examined. Perhaps there is an interaction effect between gender and age with regard to consultation practice and satisfaction. Furthermore, an examination of differences depending upon the type of degree earned (i.e., Masters, Specialist, Doctorate) could be conducted.

Finally, future research should also focus on the long-term outcomes of consultation training in school settings. Current findings suggest the Collaborative and Problem-Solving consultation models are now prominent while the traditional models of Mental Health and Organizational are given little emphasis. Does training in Collaborative and Problem-Solving models result in better services to schools? This research touched upon other school professionals' perspectives on consultation. As part of examining the effectiveness of consultation models, additional research should obtain more information from consultees as to their perspectives on the consultation process.

Summary

The current research provided additional information on consultation training and practice from the perspective of the school psychology practitioner. The results contribute to the literature on consultation by providing evidence that consultation training practices are improving in university training programs. The data also suggest that two of the three models of consultation often cited as traditional models in the field of school psychology are no longer prominent. Additional research in the area of consultation is still needed to make additional improvements in the training and practice of consultation.

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Appendix A

Consultation Survey

Consultation Training & Practice

1. What is your current role? **Practitioner** **Trainer** **Student** **Other**_____

2. Years of experience as a school psychologist? *(include current year & internship)*_____

3. Gender? **Male** **Female** 4. Highest degree? **Master** **Specialist** **Doctorate**

5. How was consultation training provided in your graduate school program? *(Check all that apply. Do not count practicum or internship as a "course.")*

___ Not addressed in coursework
___ Addressed in practicum and/or internship
___ Part of 1 course
___ One course solely devoted to consultation
___ Part of 2 or more courses
___ Two or more courses devoted solely to consultation
___ Other (Please specify)

6. If training in consultation was provided, what teaching techniques were used in your program? *(Check all that apply.)*

___ Didactic/lecture
___ Role-playing (e.g., steps, interviewing)
___ Individual supervision of consultation case by faculty member
___ Audio tapes
___ Use of videos (consultation practices were modeled)
___ Practice: Assignment of actual consultation case as part of coursework
___ Mentoring by field-based personnel
___ Online discussion groups
___ Online supervision/feedback
___ Competency-based or skill building methods
___ "Competency-based Behavioral Consultation Training Program" (i.e., view videos, rehearse and receive feedback on skills; Kratochwill Bergan, & Luiten, 1980).
___ Group discussion of consultation case(s)
___ Other *(please specify)* _____

7. What models of consultation were taught in your program(s)? Please choose how much time was devoted to each model on the 0 – 5 scale.

	Not At All	Brief Introduction	General Overview	Moderate Emphasis	Thorough Emphasis	Proficiency Expected
Mental Health	0	1	2	3	4	5
Behavioral	0	1	2	3	4	5
Organizational	0	1	2	3	4	5
Collaborative	0	1	2	3	4	5
Problem-solving	0	1	2	3	4	5
Instructional	0	1	2	3	4	5
Other_____	0	1	2	3	4	5

(Please specify "other" models.)

8. How satisfied are you with the consultation training you received in graduate school?

Very Satisfied **Somewhat Satisfied** **Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied** **Moderately Dissatisfied** **Very Dissatisfied**

9. What model(s) of consultation do you use in your current practice? *(Check all that apply.*

____ I do not provide consultation services.
____ I do not use the structured format of any specific model.
____ Eclectic (personal combination of aspects of ≥ 2 models)
_____ Mental Health _____ Collaborative
_____ Behavioral _____ Problem-Solving
_____ Instructional _____ Other (Please specify) _____
_____ Organizational

10. How satisfied are you with your use of consultation as a school psychologist? *(Circle one.)*

Very Satisfied	**Somewhat Satisfied**	**Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied**	**Moderately Dissatisfied**	**Very Dissatisfied**

11. Which statement best describes the expectations placed on you by your supervisor for consultation activities in the workplace? *(Circle only one)*

Not Expected **Encouraged** **Expected**

12. Most teachers I work with… *(Check one.)*

_____ expect consultation from the school psychologist.
_____ do not expect consultation from the school psychologist.

13. Rate the level of cooperation you receive from most teachers. *(Circle one.)*

Actively Resistant **Resistant** **Neutral** **Cooperative** **Actively Cooperative**

14. Rate your overall level of skills with each of the following activities:

	Weak	Fair	Good	Strong	Excellent
Consultation	1	2	3	4	5
Assessment	1	2	3	4	5
Direct service (e.g., counseling)	1	2	3	4	5
Behavioral interventions	1	2	3	4	5
Academic interventions	1	2	3	4	5

15. How similar is your practice of consultation to the primary consultation model(s) and methods you were trained with during graduate school?

Same **Very Similar** **Somewhat Similar** **Different** **Very Different** **No Training**

16. Estimate the number of consultation cases you participated in during the Fall semester 2003 (August – December) time period. _____ times

17. What, if anything, would you change to improve pre-service consultation training?

_____

_____

THANK YOU!

Appendix B

Cover Letter Explaining Study

March 15, 2004

Dear School Psychologist:

My name is Kimberly Unseld and I am a School Psychology graduate student at Western Kentucky University. As you have been through graduate school, I am sure you can empathize with my current aches and pains regarding thesis research and completion of a graduate program☺!!! I am coming to you for support with this project. I am asking you to assist me with filling out the enclosed survey in order to help me assess consultation pre-service training and what types of consultation services are being used in professional practice.

Completing this survey is completely voluntary and there will be no repercussions for choosing not to do so. Completion of the survey should take no longer than 10 minutes. Enclosed please find a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the convenience of returning the information to me. **Completion of the survey will imply your consent.**

This information will be used for completion of my thesis. Your name on the survey is not requested to protect anonymity.

I would sincerely appreciate your cooperation and assistance with my research. This will hopefully provide insight for graduate school programs in the training of future school psychologists (and, it will complete my graduate program requirements)! This will be the only notice sent regarding the survey. I am requesting that the surveys be returned to me within one week from the original mailing date.

For purposes of completing the survey, please use the following definition for the term consultation:

> **Consultation :** **Problem-solving process initiated for purposes of aiding consultees in the development of skills for effective functioning with a client and for improving the consultee's ability to work with the client.**

Feel free to contact me or my thesis chair with any questions that you may have concerning the survey or study.

Sincerely,

Kimberly A. Unseld, M.Ed.
Ed.S. School Psychology Graduate Student
859-375-0400
kaunseld@bardstown.com

Carl Myers, Ph.D.
School Psychology Program Director
270-745-4410
carl.myers@wku.edu

Appendix C

Human Subjects Review Board Approval

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
Human Subjects Review Board
Office of Sponsored Programs
104 Foundation Building
270-745-4652; Fax 270-745-4211
E-mail: Phillip.Myers@Wku.Edu

In future correspondence please refer to HS04-045, December 4, 2003

Kimberly Unseld
7657 Loretto Road
Loretto, KY 40037

Dear Kimberly:

Your research project, "School psychology practitioners' perspectives on consultation training and practice," was reviewed by the HSRB and it has been determined that risks to subjects are: (1) minimized and reasonable; and that (2) research procedures are consistent with a sound research design and do not expose the subjects to unnecessary risk. Reviewers determined that: (1) benefits to subjects are considered along with the importance of the topic and that outcomes are reasonable; (2) selection of subjects is equitable; and (3) the purposes of the research and the research setting is amenable to subjects' welfare and producing desired outcomes; that indications of coercion or prejudice are absent, and that participation is clearly voluntary.

1. In addition, the IRB found that: (1) signed informed consent will be waived for all subjects. (2) Provision is made for collecting, using and storing data in a manner that protects the safety and privacy of the subjects and the confidentiality of the data. (3) Appropriate safeguards are included to protect the rights and welfare of the subjects.

a. Your research therefore meets the criteria of Exempt Review and is Approved.

2. Please note that the institution is not responsible for any actions regarding this protocol before approval. If you expand the project at a later date to use other instruments please re-apply. Copies of your request for human subjects review, your application, and this approval, are maintained in the Office of Sponsored Programs at the above address. Please report any changes to this approved protocol to this office. A Continuing Review protocol will be sent to you in the future to determine the status of the project.

Sincerely,

Phillip E. Myers, Ph.D.
Director, OSP and
Human Protections Administrator

cc: Human Subjects File HS04-045
cc: Dr. Carl Myers