Perceptions of Selected Counselor Services by Ninth-Grade Public School Students of Jefferson County, Kentucky

Marian Yates
Western Kentucky University

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Yates,
Marian Alice
1974
PERCEPTIONS OF SELECTED COUNSELOR SERVICES
BY NINTH-GRADE PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS
OF JEFFERSON COUNTY, KENTUCKY

A Project
Presented to
the Faculty of the Counselor Education Department
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

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

by
Marian Alice Yates
August 1974
PERCEPTIONS OF SELECTED COUNSELOR SERVICES
BY NINTH-GRADE PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS
OF JEFFERSON COUNTY, KENTUCKY

Recommended 7/22/74
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Finally, the writer wishes to express her sincere appreciation to her family and friends for their support and understanding during the past months.
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A selected sample of six hundred ninth-grade public school students from six schools of the Jefferson County, Kentucky, school system was surveyed to determine their perceptions regarding selected counselor services. A questionnaire was designed made up of questions related to the hypotheses being tested. No distinction was made between male and female responses and students from all socio-economic classes and the various ability groups were included. Based on the data obtained from this study the following conclusions were drawn: (1) secondary school counselors are identified as persons who can give assistance in the areas of educational and vocational planning as well as with school-related problems; (2) secondary school counselors are not identified by ninth-grade students as persons who can help with problems of a personal nature; (3) ninth-grade students delineated the role of the counselor as different from the role of the principal or the role of the teacher; and (4) the secondary school counselor has been identified as helpful to those students with whom he worked. Additional studies were recommended.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

A variety of opinions concerning the role of the secondary school counselor seems to be held by the different groups who view the counselor as he functions in his professional capacity. The counselor appears to be seen by all as a helping person. But how does he help? Whom does he help? One observation that seems safe to make about any professional worker whose job it is to help people is that he is restricted in his functioning by what people think he can do as well as what he has been trained to do. Further, it seems safe to presume that the functions potential clients perceive the counselor as performing will determine the type of problem which they bring to the counselor and on which they will accept assistance from the counselor. Thus, a client will bring to the counselor only those problems with which he perceives the counselor able to assist.

The role of the counselor in the high school setting seems to encompass a combination of facets: (1) his training in guidance and counseling, (2) school board and local school policies and pressures, and (3) community expectations. Some
writers indicate the influential factors that determine the role of the counselor would include school administrators, the teaching faculty, counselor educators, fellow pupil-personnel workers, and the counselor's student clients and their parents.

Administrators, faculty, students, and their parents accept the fact that the counselor is trained to work with the secondary school student in matters of academic choice and vocational planning. However, should he perform just these particular functions and nothing more?

A variety of opinions have been demonstrated among the aforementioned groups in their reactions to counselors performing tasks related to counseling in personal matters. Differences also have been noted among these same groups in their reactions to counselor performance of teacher-like and administrative-like tasks.

It would appear that there is no universally acceptable role definition for the high school counselor. However, if the counselor is to do the work for which he is presumably trained, efforts must be made to promote the counselor's image along lines viewed as being appropriate by the counseling profession, as well as significant others.

This study attempted to determine the perceptions of only one group, ninth-grade public high school students of the Jefferson County, Kentucky school system, regarding selected counselor services.
Rationale

As a result of having served as a counselor for three years in a private secondary school and realizing that some criticisms are being leveled against some counselors by some educators, parents, and significant others, this writer became curious about the perceptions ninth-grade students have of the counselor and the role and function that the counselor serves in the secondary school. Recent professional educational journal articles related to the above-mentioned idea have generated an awareness that the counselor serves many and varied functions and that there is no role model appropriate for all counselors. Previous personal work experience, the unjust or valid criticisms leveled against some school counselors, and the interest in this area by professional writers provided the motivation that led to this study. Further, it was felt that this research project would aid other counselors in ascertaining the students' perceptions of the role of the counselor.

Statement of the Problem

Current literature demonstrates that administrators, teaching faculties, counselor educators, students, and their parents perceive the role of the counselor differently. This investigation was designed to demonstrate how one group of students, ninth-grade public school students of the Jefferson County, Kentucky school system, perceive the school counselor in selected counselor services. This investigation attempted to determine to what extent it could be demon-
strated that the service school counselors perform is different, at least in some respects, from that which other school personnel perform. This study also attempted to show that the counselor, working with the student in a one-to-one or small group basis, gave satisfactory assistance to those counselees with whom he worked.

Purpose of the Study

There were several purposes to this study. The investigation was designed to determine ninth-grade students' perceptions regarding educational, vocational, and personal counseling. Another purpose was to determine if the students were able to delineate the distinction of roles between the counselor, the principal, and the teacher. A third purpose was to determine if the counselor does assist those students with whom he works.

It would have been a herculean task to survey the approximately 3,500 ninth-grade students in the eighteen high schools of the Jefferson County, Kentucky, school system; therefore, a selected sample of students representing all socio-economic classes as well as the various ability levels was used. As a result of the study, certain generalizations were made regarding student perceptions of counselor activities, distinction of roles of the counselor, the principal, and the teacher, and the amount of assistance received by the student.
Four hypotheses were considered in this study. The four hypotheses of this study were as follows:

$H_1$. Selected ninth-grade public school students will identify the counselor as a person who is helpful in assisting the counselee with academic and vocational plans, as well as with school-related problems.

$H_2$. Selected ninth-grade public school students will identify the counselor as a person who is helpful in assisting the counselee with personal problems.

$H_3$. Selected ninth-grade public school students will perceive the role of the counselor as distinct from that of the principal or teacher.

$H_4$. The counselor will be of assistance to at least fifty percent of the selected ninth-grade public school students who were surveyed.

A questionnaire, constructed with these hypotheses in mind, was submitted to one hundred selected ninth-grade students from each of six pre-selected schools of the Jefferson County, Kentucky, school system. The results of the questionnaire were used to test each of these hypotheses. A criterion for the acceptance and/or rejection of each hypothesis was set at a fifty percent response level for each of the nine questions as they related to the individual hypothesis.

Limitations of the Study

Since it would have been a mammoth task to survey the approximately 3,500 ninth-grade students populating the eighteen public high schools of the Jefferson County, Kentucky, school system, this investigation was limited to
the responses of one hundred selected ninth-grade students from each of six pre-selected schools of that school system. Thus, the investigation was concerned with the responses of six hundred selected ninth-grade public school students. No distinction was made between male and female responses. Further, this study was limited to selected counselor services as they were perceived by the surveyed students.

There were several deficiencies in this study that should be enumerated. First, while the perceptions of these ninth-grade public school students regarding counselor services in the project schools were ascertained, there should be additional studies regarding the counselor services as perceived by the administrative staff, the faculty, and the counselors themselves in order to correlate these findings.

Second, while it was felt that the selected six hundred ninth-grade public school students served as a significant sample, the question arose as to whether the results would have been different if a greater number of students had been surveyed.

Third, a question arose as to whether the acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses should be based on a fifty percent response. Perhaps, the basis for acceptance and/or rejection should have been greater than fifty percent or even less than fifty percent.

Fourth, while the survey questionnaire was designed with nine questions related to student perceptions of selected counselor services, it is possible that a more significant outcome might have resulted with the addition of more ques-
tions. However, this study was intended to measure student perceptions of a few selected counselor services. Thus, it seemed that the number of questions was adequate for the task.

Fifth, no allowance was made for important variables such as the location of the project schools within the specific geographic areas or the social, economic, and cultural background of the students.

**Definitions of Terms**

The study was limited also to certain definitions of terms. For the sake of clarity, the following definitions were chosen:

**Counselee** was any student who was assisted (in any manner) by the counselor. The counselee was known also as the client.

**Ninth Grade School Counselor** was a male or female, possessing at least a master's degree in Guidance and Counseling from an accredited college or university and certified by the State Department of Education. This person was employed on a full-time basis to work with a given number of ninth-grade students.

**Helpful Counselor** was the term used to imply that the trained adult assisted the counselee in making academic, social, and behavioral choices.

**Role of the Counselor** referred to the multitude of tasks performed by the counselor during the course of the school day, whether it be on an administrative level or in personal, social, academic or behavioral counseling.
School Related Problems concerned the area where the counselor works with the counselee who is experiencing some perceived difficulty with the administration, academic areas, or personal and social relationships within the school.

Educational and Vocational Planning concerned the role of the counselor as he assists the student in making choices regarding further academic and technical advancements.

Organization of the Study

A review of the related literature is discussed at the close of Chapter I.

Chapter II describes the design of the study and the method and procedure utilized. The number of subjects and the population were described. The background describing how the particular survey questionnaire was developed and a discussion of the variables was included in this chapter.

Chapter III consists of an analysis of the data obtained from the survey. There was a discussion of the findings and a determination was made as to whether the hypotheses were accepted or rejected.

Chapter IV contains the summary of the study and the conclusions drawn as a result of the study. Recommendations were offered.

Review of Related Literature

A review of the literature demonstrated that there were limited articles and research studies done in the area of how the counselor is perceived as to his role and function. Most
of the studies were of recent origin having been written within the last decade.

The school counselor was faced with the task of defining his role and job functions. According to Arbuckle and Wicas (1:304) an important and basic aspect of counselor preparation was the development of counselor perceptions. Writers agreed that there were factors within the school system, the local school, and the community which would affect these definitions. Betz (3:32) indicated that significant others' perceptions of the counselor are effective stimuli for changes within the counselor. Other writers added that there were factors within the counselor himself which affected the way he defined his job.

Van Riper (16:53) pointed out that the identity of the counselor depended upon what he does and not by what he would like to do or should do. The identity that the counselor has may not be the one for which he was trained and may not be the one he desired. Often counselors were identified only as advice-givers by many school administrators, teachers, students, and their parents. The counselor was expected to disseminate information about educational and vocational opportunities and to advise students about these opportunities. Assistance with personal problems was not generally viewed as a significant counselor function.

Dunlop (4:1026) and Tennyson (15:131) stressed that school administrators and other school personnel seem to be in agreement that it was appropriate for the school counselor
to involve himself in educational and vocational planning.
"Sharp differences are observed in their reactions to the
appropriateness of counselors performing tasks related to
personal counseling." (4:1026)

Parents, likewise, are concerned that the counselor
relate himself to academic and vocational tasks. Bergstein
and Grant (2:702) stressed that parents perceive the coun-
selor as being more helpful with problems in the educational
and vocational areas than with problems in the personal-
social areas. Dunlop (4:1026) added that parents supported
counselor performance of administrative-clerical tasks.

According to Grant (9:77) student perceptions seemed
to be a reflection of how the counselor is perceived by
teachers, administrators, and by counselors themselves. In
another study, Grant (8:388) observed that selected students
perceived the counselor as being most able to make accept-
able contributions to them in vocational and educational
planning areas. These same students failed to see the
counselor as playing much of a role in their personal-emotional problems. Gladstein (6:476) stated "there seems to
be clear cut evidence . . . that school . . . clients seek
help primarily with educational and vocational concerns
but only reluctantly with personal-social ones." Jenson
(10:501), Dunlop (4:1027), Senor (14:72), and Mattison
(12:13) noted similar results in later studies.

Guidance is essential in the school setting. "The
school counselor works in an educational setting and as such
the counselor function must be consistent with the goals and
purposes of the school," said Burkeen (18:1). The increasing demand for accountability provided the framework for studying the services delivered by school counselors. Evaluation was not intended to be a threatening process to the counselor but it was intended to aid the guidance worker to gain new insights that would help him to perform at a higher and more effective level. Hence, self-evaluation permitted the counselor to arrive at a clearer definition of his role and function.

Several evaluations were undertaken within the past few years. These were concerned with the counselor's role as perceived by administrators, students, and their parents. The results of these studies were consistent with the findings previously mentioned.

"Counselors contribute to their own images by the functions they undertake and the services they perform, whether such functions and services are personally assumed or administratively acquired," stated Van Riper (16:53).
CHAPTER II

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

There were several methods that might have been used to determine the perceptions of ninth-grade public school students regarding selected counselor services. These included the interview, the opinionnaire, and the survey questionnaire to mention just a few. The survey questionnaire was used since there were so many subjects whose opinions were desired and so many schools involved. (see Appendix A)

Sampling

Within the Jefferson County, Kentucky, public school system there were eighteen high schools containing approximately 8,500 ninth-grade students. This study focused on the responses of six hundred selected students from six selected schools. Two schools were pre-selected to represent each of the three geographic areas of the Jefferson County school system: the eastern, the southern, and the southwestern areas. These six schools represented one-third of the high schools in the Jefferson County school system.

There were approximately 500 ninth-grade students in each of the high schools of the Jefferson County school system. The one hundred students who were surveyed in each of the pre-selected schools represented twenty percent of
the selected schools' population. No distinction was made between male and female responses.

Procedure

After formulating the nine questions on the questionnaire, approval was obtained from Mr. J. C. Cantrell, Associate Superintendent, Division of Instruction, Jefferson County Board of Education, to survey selected ninth-grade students from six Jefferson County high schools.

The questionnaire was designed to ascertain ninth-grade students' opinions regarding educational, vocational, and personal counseling; to ascertain the role of the counselor being distinct from other staff members; and to determine if the surveyed students benefited from their involvement with their counselor. The responses to the questions on the questionnaire were limited to three choices: YES, UNCERTAIN, and NO. This method was designed so that no additional instructions needed to be given by the individual administrators, the homeroom teachers. No space was provided for comments, suggestions, or criticisms. Anonymity was assured since neither the student's name, sex, nor name of school was a part of the questionnaire.

To insure as much validity as possible a pilot survey was made in one school. Interviews were held with the administrators of the questionnaire in order to determine the clarity of the questions. Feedback from these homeroom teachers indicated that the questions were clear and self-explanatory. Based on this information it was felt that the
questionnaire was valid and needed no further revision. The
questionnaire was forwarded unchanged to the remaining five
pre-selected schools.

One hundred questionnaires were forwarded, by way of
the inter-school delivery system, to the ninth-grade counse-
lors in each of the remaining five schools. These counselors
were asked to oversee the dissemination of the materials to
any four, ninth-grade homeroom teachers in their schools. A
letter, addressed to each of the counselors, explained the
procedures for issuing the questionnaires to the homeroom
teachers, collecting the completed questionnaires, returning
the completed forms to the investigator by way of the inter-
school mail delivery, and obtaining any needed assistance
(see Appendix B).

The homeroom teachers supervised the administration of
the questionnaires in their heterogeneously grouped classes
during the homeroom period. Each homeroom teacher was sent
a succinct memorandum in which the limited instructions were
described (see Appendix C).

**Data Analysis**

The major purpose of the study was to examine the
responses of six hundred ninth-grade students regarding cer-
tain perceptions of the counselor's role and the amount of
assistance they felt they received in the areas of educa-
tional, vocational and personal counseling. The method of
analyzing the data was a simple tabulation of the responses
for each of the nine questions and conversion of these numbers into percentages.

It was necessary to set a criterion for accepting and/or rejecting each of the four hypotheses of the study. A fifty percent response level was determined as the basis for accepting and/or rejecting each of the hypotheses. Further, it was determined that where fifty percent or more responses were marked "YES," the hypothesis would be accepted except for questions number six and seven. In this case, the hypothesis was accepted if the "NO" responses were fifty percent or above.

Interpretation of the data led to generalizations made about the roles and functions of the ninth-grade counselor in the Jefferson County school system.

While nine questions were formulated to test the four hypotheses, it was necessary to group some questions in order to test each individual hypothesis. Questions 1, 2, and 3 were designed to test the first hypothesis. Questions 4, 5, and 8 were constructed to test the second hypothesis. Questions 6 and 7 were formulated to test the third hypothesis, and question 9 was developed to support or fail to support the fourth hypothesis. Tables were designed to show the total responses as well as the percentages for each set of questions as they related to each hypothesis.
CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Chapter III presents an analysis of the data obtained from the six hundred selected respondents in the Jefferson County public high schools who completed the prepared questionnaire designed to measure the perceptions the students hold of the counselor in their schools. A section was used to explain (in detail) the purpose of the project questionnaire and to provide information about the questionnaire itself. Tables were presented to show the number of students responses and the percentage of responses to each set of questions, grouped as they were related to each of the four hypotheses being tested in this investigation. An analysis of the data was presented and, from those data, each hypothesis was accepted or rejected.

Purpose of the Project Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to measure several items: (1) to determine that the counselor assisted the counselee with educational and vocational plans as well as with problems which are school related; (2) to determine whether the counselor became involved in personal counseling; (3) to ascertain whether the counselor had a distinct role in
the school; and, (4) to find out if the counselor was benefi-
cial to the student.

**The Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was designed to be made up of nine
questions related to the hypotheses being tested. In order
to have valid responses to the questionnaire certain criteria
should be observed.

The questionnaires were administered by the homeroom
teachers to selected homeroom sections, heterogeneously
grouped ninth-grade students, in the pre-selected project
schools. Limited instructions to the homeroom teacher
regarding the administration of the questionnaires elimi-
nated the need to interpret the questions to the students.
Because the students knew the survey administrator, the
homeroom teacher, it was presumed that a sincere attempt
would be made to answer the questions honestly. Further, the
briefness of the instructions to the students and the require-
ment to place only a check mark or some other mark in the
appropriate space contributed to the validity of the responses.
Another point that contributed to the validity of the re-
sponses was the fact that the questionnaire was administered
during the homeroom period, a ten minute period. Since the
questionnaire was made up of only nine questions, it was
possible to respond to all questions in that short time
period but there would be no time for students to confer
with each other about the responses. Finally, the questions
were constructed so that each question could be read easily by students of the various reading levels.

A plan for tabulating the results of the questionnaire was made prior to the assessment. As the completed forms from the surveyed schools were delivered to the investigator, the responses were tabulated for each question in each of the three categories: YES, UNCERTAIN, and NO. Using an electronic calculator, percentages were calculated in each response area. Percentages were rounded off to the nearest whole number for easier reporting and reading. (see Appendices D-I) A total of the six schools was made for each question in each of the response areas and percentages were calculated. (see Appendix J) The responses were recorded in tables according to the relation of each question to the hypothesis that was tested.

Results

The data were presented in tables designed to show the responses of six hundred selected ninth-grade public school students of the Jefferson County, Kentucky, school system regarding their perceptions of selected counselor services. Table 1 showed the responses to those questions that were designed to test the first hypothesis. Table 2 showed the results of the survey questions that were related to the second hypothesis. Table 3 demonstrated the responses to the questions that tested the third hypothesis. Table 4 showed the responses to the question that was designed to test the
fourth hypothesis. Each of the above-mentioned tables also showed the percentage of responses for each category in the individual question.

A criterion for accepting and/or rejecting each of the hypotheses of the study was selected. A fifty percent response level was determined as the basis for accepting and/or rejecting each hypothesis. Further, where fifty percent or more responses were marked "YES," the hypothesis was accepted except for questions six and seven. In this case, the hypothesis was accepted if the "NO" responses were fifty percent or above.

The data in this study were used to test four hypotheses, as follows:

H₁. Selected ninth-grade public school students will identify the counselor as a person who is helpful in assisting the counselee with academic and vocational plans, as well as with school-related problems.

Table 1 presents the data that related to the first hypothesis. According to the responses to Questions 1, 2, and 3, this hypothesis was accepted (based on the pre-selected fifty percent basis for acceptance) in so far as each of the questions had more than a fifty percent response in the YES column. Seventy percent of the students responded positively to the first question. Fifty-nine percent of the students gave a "YES" answer to the second question and fifty-two percent answered the third question in a positive manner. Negative responses to these same questions were fifteen percent, fourteen percent, and twenty-seven percent respectively.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about educational plans (choosing school subjects)?</td>
<td>421 70</td>
<td>92 15</td>
<td>87 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about choosing a vocation (job preparation)?</td>
<td>354 59</td>
<td>164 27</td>
<td>82 14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about school problems?</td>
<td>314 52</td>
<td>122 20</td>
<td>164 27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages rounded off to the nearest whole number.
H2. Selected ninth-grade public school students will identify the counselor as a person who is helpful in assisting the counselee with personal problems.

Table 2 presents the data that related to the second hypothesis. According to the responses of the students, this hypothesis was rejected. In Question 4, only fourteen percent of the students indicated they can talk to their school counselor about personal problems. On the other hand, sixty percent stated a definite negative response to the same matter. Twenty-three percent of the respondents indicated they can talk with their school counselor "about almost anything" (Question 5). Conversely, forty-nine percent gave a negative response to this question. Twenty-seven percent of the students responded they would like to work with their counselor in groups whereas forty-three percent voted against working in group settings (Question 8).

H3. Selected ninth-grade public school students will perceive the role of the counselor as distinct from that of the principal or teacher.

Table 3 shows the responses of the selected students to the questions that related to the third hypothesis. From the number of responses, it was clear students perceived the counselor's job different from that of the job of the principal or the job of the teacher. The two questions that measured this hypothesis (Questions 6 and 7) showed consistency in numbers of responses. In Question 6, sixty-four percent of the students stated they felt the counselor's job was unlike that of the principal and sixty-two percent of the
### TABLE 2

RESPONSES OF SELECTED NINTH-GRADE STUDENTS REGARDING PERCEPTIONS OF THE COUNSELOR IN THE AREA OF ASSISTING WITH PERSONAL PROBLEMS*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about non-school (personal) problems?</td>
<td>85 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you feel that the school counselor is a person that you can talk to about almost anything?</td>
<td>140 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Would you like to have &quot;group talks&quot; with your counselor?</td>
<td>159 27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages rounded off to the nearest whole number.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the principal?</td>
<td>Yes 103, %17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the teacher?</td>
<td>Yes 115, %19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages rounded off to the nearest whole number.*
students delineated the role of the counselor as different from the role of the teacher in Question 7. Only seventeen percent and nineteen percent, respectively, indicated they felt the roles were similar. Based on the previously-stated criteria, this hypothesis was accepted.

\[ H_4 \] The counselor will be of assistance to at least fifty percent of the selected ninth-grade public school students who were surveyed.

Table 4 presents data which related to the fourth hypothesis. Fifty-eight percent of the students responded that their relationships and dealings with their counselors had been helpful to them. Conversely, twenty-eight percent of the respondents reacted in a negative manner. Therefore, this hypothesis was accepted.

The data of this investigation indicated that counselors are identified by a selected sample of ninth-grade public school students of the Jefferson County, Kentucky, school system as those individuals who help with educational and vocational planning as well as with school-related problems. The findings also indicated that these students could see a distinct difference between the role of the counselor and that of the principal or teacher. The surveyed students indicated they had been assisted and helped by their contacts with the counselor. On the other hand, the students did not perceive the school counselor to be a person with whom they could discuss personal problems or non-school-related problems. The data derived from the responses to question eight indi-
TABLE 4

RESPONSES OF SELECTED NINTH-GRADE STUDENTS REGARDING PERCEPTIONS OF COUNSELOR ASSISTANCE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Has your counselor been helpful to you?</td>
<td>350 58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages rounded off to the nearest whole number.
cated a reluctance on the part of the students to work with the counselor in group sessions.
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The identification of the role and function of the school counselor is perceived differently by school administrators, teaching faculties, students, and their parents. This investigation was designed to determine the perceptions of one group, selected ninth-grade students of the Jefferson County, Kentucky, school system regarding selected counselor services.

Several purposes were considered in the conduct of this study. First, the investigation was designed to determine students' perceptions regarding educational, vocational, and personal counseling. A second purpose was to determine if the students were able to delineate the distinction of the roles between the counselor, the principal, and the teacher. A third purpose was to determine if the counselor does assist those students with whom he works.

With these goals in mind, four hypotheses were established to relate to these objectives. The four hypotheses were:

\[ H_1 \]: Selected ninth-grade public school students will identify the counselor as a person who is helpful in assisting the counselee with
selected ninth-grade public school students will identify the counselor as a person who is helpful in assisting the counselee with personal problems.

H₃. Selected ninth-grade public school students will perceive the role of the counselor as distinct from that of the principal or teacher.

H₄. The counselor will be of assistance to at least fifty percent of the selected ninth-grade public school students who were surveyed.

A criterion for the acceptance and/or rejection of each hypothesis was set at a fifty percent response level for each of the nine survey questions as they related to the individual hypothesis.

In this study, six schools representing three geographic areas of the Jefferson County, Kentucky, school system were selected as survey sites. In each of these project schools, one hundred selected ninth-grade students, representing twenty percent of that school's population, were surveyed by their homeroom teachers. No distinction was made between male and female responses and students from all socio-economic classes and the various ability groups were included in the study.

The survey instrument, a questionnaire, contained nine questions related to the previously mentioned hypotheses. The students were able to respond to each question by placing a check mark or some other mark in a column entitled YES, UNCERTAIN, NO. The data were collected and compiled
according to the number of responses and according to percentages. Then the data were grouped according to their relation to each of the hypotheses.

According to the students' responses to Questions 1, 2, and 3, the first hypothesis was accepted. Seventy percent of the students responded positively to Question 1 relevant to educational plans. Fifty-nine percent of the students gave a "YES" response to Question 2 related to vocational plans. Fifty-two percent answered Question 3, dealing with school problems, in a positive manner. Negative responses to these same questions were fifteen percent, fourteen percent, and twenty-seven percent.

The second hypothesis was rejected. Fourteen percent of the students indicated they could talk to their school counselor about personal problems (Question 4). On the other hand, sixty percent stated a definite negative response to the same question. Twenty-three percent of the respondents indicated they could talk with their school counselor "about almost anything" (Question 5). Conversely, forty-nine percent responded in a negative manner.

According to the responses to those questions related to the third hypothesis, this hypothesis was accepted. The two questions that measured this hypothesis were Questions 6 and 7. In the former, sixty-four percent of the students stated they felt the counselor's job was unlike that of the principal. In the latter, sixty-two percent of the students delineated the role of the counselor as distinct from the role of the teacher.
The fourth hypothesis was tested by one question. Based on the responses of the students to Question 9, the hypothesis was accepted. Fifty-eight percent of the students indicated that their relationships and dealings with their counselors had been helpful to them. Twenty-eight percent of the respondents reacted in a negative manner.

Conclusions

Based on the data obtained in this study this investigator feels that: (1) secondary school counselors are identified by ninth-grade students as persons who can give assistance in the areas of educational and vocational planning as well as with school-related problems; (2) secondary school counselors are not identified by ninth-grade students as persons who can help with problems of a personal nature; (3) ninth-grade students are able to delineate the roles of the counselor, the principal, and the teacher; and (4) the secondary school counselor has proven to be helpful to those students with whom he works. These results are consistent with the findings in previous studies.

Recommendations

Despite the noted limitations, it appears that the overall results of the study outweigh the deficiencies. The following recommendations are made:
1. Secondary school counselors of this system should conduct studies to determine why students do not want to come to the counselor for personal counseling or small group work.
2. Investigations should be made to determine if the students' reluctance to talk with their counselors about personal problems is due to an improper identification of the role of the counselor or merely an adolescent trait of not trusting adults.

3. Similar studies should be conducted in comparable school systems to confirm the results of this survey.

4. An investigation should be made regarding these same counselor services as perceived by the administrative staff, the faculty, and the counselors themselves in the project schools in order to correlate these finds.

5. The results of this study should be shared with the Director of Guidance and Counseling Services, Jefferson County Board of Education, as well as with the ninth-grade counselors and their principals in the project schools.
APPENDIXES
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Sample Copy

You are asked to fill out this questionnaire to supply information for a research paper being written by a student of Western Kentucky University.

PLEASE READ EACH QUESTION CAREFULLY. INDICATE YOUR ANSWER BY PUTTING A CHECK MARK OR SOME OTHER MARK IN THE APPROPRIATE SPACE AT THE RIGHT.

1. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about educational plans (choosing school subjects)?

2. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about choosing a vocation (job preparation)?

3. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about school problems?

4. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about non-school (personal) problems?

5. Do you feel that the school counselor is a person that you can talk to about almost anything?

6. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the principal?

7. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the teacher?

8. Would you like to have "group talks" with your counselor?

9. Has your counselor been helpful to you?

YES UNCERTAIN NO

( ) ( ) ( ) 1.
YES UNCERTAIN NO

( ) ( ) ( ) 2.
YES UNCERTAIN NO

( ) ( ) ( ) 4.
YES UNCERTAIN NO

( ) ( ) ( ) 5.
YES UNCERTAIN NO

( ) ( ) ( ) 6.
YES UNCERTAIN NO

( ) ( ) ( ) 7.
YES UNCERTAIN NO

( ) ( ) ( ) 3.
YES UNCERTAIN NO

( ) ( ) ( ) 9.
May 3, 1974

Dear Sir:

I am sending four packages of twenty-five survey forms to be given to four 9th grade homeroom teachers. Please ask each teacher to administer the questionnaire to the students during homeroom period. (I realize that the teacher may have more than twenty-five students in the homeroom but I only need a total of one hundred responses.) These teachers should return all forms to you at the end of the homeroom period.

Please place the forms in the envelope and put the enclosed mailing label over your name. The envelope should then be sent to me by way of the inter-school mailing system.

You should pick an administration date most convenient to your schedule. If you have any questions, please call me at Valley High School (937-2300) or at my home (935-2997).

Thank you for your assistance in this project.

Sincerely,

(Mrs.) Marian Alice Yates
Sample Copy

Dear Homeroom Teacher:

I am writing a paper for a course at Western Kentucky University and I need your help.

Please pass these questionnaires to twenty-five of your homeroom students. (If you have fewer than twenty-five, please return the unused forms.) Ask the students to complete each question. This survey will require no direction-giving on your part and should be completed in less than five minutes. The student should not put his name or the name of the school on the questionnaire.

Return all forms to (name of counselor) at the end of the homeroom period.

Thank you for your assistance.
RESPONSES OF ONE HUNDRED NINTH-GRADE
STUDENTS REGARDING PERCEPTIONS OF
SELECTED COUNSELOR SERVICES*

SCHOOL 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>UNCERTAIN</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about educational plans (choosing school subjects)?</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about choosing a vocation (job preparation)?</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about school problems?</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about non-school (personal) problems?</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you feel that the school counselor is a person that you can talk to about almost anything?</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the principal?</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the teacher?</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Would you like to have &quot;group talks&quot; with your counselor?</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Has your counselor been helpful to you?</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages rounded off to the nearest whole number.
## RESPONSES OF ONE HUNDRED NINTH-GRADE STUDENTS REGARDING PERCEPTIONS OF SELECTED COUNSELOR SERVICES

### SCHOOL 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>UNCERTAIN</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about educational plans (choosing school subjects)?</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about choosing a vocation (job preparation)?</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about school problems?</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about non-school (personal) problems?</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you feel that the school counselor is a person that you can talk to about almost anything?</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the principal?</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the teacher?</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Would you like to have &quot;group talks&quot; with your counselor?</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Has your counselor been helpful to you?</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages rounded off to the nearest whole number.*
1. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about educational plans (choosing school subjects)?
YES UNCERTAIN NO
63% 18% 19%

2. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about choosing a vocation (job preparation)?
YES UNCERTAIN NO
58% 30% 12%

3. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about school problems?
YES UNCERTAIN NO
61% 16% 23%

4. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about non-school (personal) problems?
YES UNCERTAIN NO
19% 31% 50%

5. Do you feel that the school counselor is a person that you can talk to about almost anything?
YES UNCERTAIN NO
21% 40% 39%

6. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the principal?
YES UNCERTAIN NO
18% 23% 59%

7. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the teacher?
YES UNCERTAIN NO
26% 16% 58%

8. Would you like to have "group talks" with your counselor?
YES UNCERTAIN NO
36% 34% 30%

9. Has your counselor been helpful to you?
YES UNCERTAIN NO
53% 12% 35%

*Percentages rounded off to the nearest whole number.
**APPENDIX G**

**RESPONSES OF ONE HUNDRED NINTH-GRADE STUDENTS REGARDING PERCEPTIONS OF SELECTED COUNSELOR SERVICES**

**SCHOOL 4**

1. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about educational plans (choosing school subjects)?
   - Yes
   - Uncertain
   - No
   - 70% 14% 16%

2. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about choosing a vocation (job preparation)?
   - Yes
   - Uncertain
   - No
   - 56% 31% 13%

3. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about school problems?
   - Yes
   - Uncertain
   - No
   - 39% 22% 39%

4. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about non-school (personal) problems?
   - Yes
   - Uncertain
   - No
   - 10% 23% 67%

5. Do you feel that the school counselor is a person that you can talk to about almost anything?
   - Yes
   - Uncertain
   - No
   - 27% 21% 52%

6. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the principal?
   - Yes
   - Uncertain
   - No
   - 19% 24% 57%

7. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the teacher?
   - Yes
   - Uncertain
   - No
   - 19% 25% 56%

8. Would you like to have "group talks" with your counselor?
   - Yes
   - Uncertain
   - No
   - 29% 31% 40%

9. Has your counselor been helpful to you?
   - Yes
   - Uncertain
   - No
   - 55% 15% 30%

#Percentages rounded off to the nearest whole number.
RESPONSES OF ONE HUNDRED NINTH-GRADE
STUDENTS REGARDING PERCEPTIONS OF
SELECTED COUNSELOR SERVICES*

SCHOOL 5

1. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about educational plans (choosing school subjects)?
   
   YES UNTERTAIN NO
   
   62% 16% 22%

2. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about choosing a vocation (job preparation)?
   
   YES UNTERTAIN NO
   
   55% 27% 18%

3. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about school problems?
   
   YES UNTERTAIN NO
   
   55% 19% 26%

4. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about non-school (personal) problems?
   
   YES UNTERTAIN NO
   
   16% 25% 59%

5. Do you feel that the school counselor is a person that you can talk to about almost anything?
   
   YES UNTERTAIN NO
   
   26% 23% 51%

6. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the principal?
   
   YES UNTERTAIN NO
   
   17% 20% 63%

7. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the teacher?
   
   YES UNTERTAIN NO
   
   22% 21% 57%

8. Would you like to have "group talks" with your counselor?
   
   YES UNTERTAIN NO
   
   32% 24% 44%

9. Has your counselor been helpful to you?
   
   YES UNTERTAIN NO
   
   52% 14% 34%

*Percentages rounded off to the nearest whole number.
APPENDIX I

RESPONSES OF ONE HUNDRED NINTH-GRADE
STUDENTS REGARDING PERCEPTIONS OF
SELECTED COUNSELOR SERVICES*

SCHOOL 6

1. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about educational plans (choosing school subjects)?

   YES  UNCERTAIN  NO
   71%  13%  16%

2. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about choosing a vocation (job preparation)?

   YES  UNCERTAIN  NO
   54%  31%  15%

3. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about school problems?

   YES  UNCERTAIN  NO
   44%  20%  36%

4. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about non-school (personal) problems?

   YES  UNCERTAIN  NO
   14%  16%  70%

5. Do you feel that the school counselor is a person that you can talk to about almost anything?

   YES  UNCERTAIN  NO
   19%  27%  54%

6. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the principal?

   YES  UNCERTAIN  NO
   11%  15%  74%

7. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the teacher?

   YES  UNCERTAIN  NO
   16%  23%  61%

8. Would you like to have "group talks" with your counselor?

   YES  UNCERTAIN  NO
   22%  33%  45%

9. Has your counselor been helpful to you?

   YES  UNCERTAIN  NO
   58%  15%  27%

*Percentages rounded off to the nearest whole number.
### RESPONSES OF SIX HUNDRED NINTH-GRADE STUDENTS REGARDING PERCEPTIONS OF SELECTED COUNSELOR SERVICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>UNCERTAIN</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about educational plans (choosing school subjects)?</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about choosing a vocation (job preparation)?</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about school problems?</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you feel that you can talk to the school counselor about non-school (personal) problems?</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you feel that the school counselor is a person that you can talk to about almost anything?</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the principal?</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Do you feel that the school counselor's job is like the job of the teacher?</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Would you like to have &quot;group talks&quot; with your counselor?</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Has your counselor been helpful to you?</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages rounded off to the nearest whole number.*
SELECTED REFERENCES


UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS


