

## Article 8

### **Fostering School Counselor Self-Efficacy Through Preparation and Supervision**

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Sarah I. Springer, Daniel A. Cinotti, Lauren J. Moss, Franco A. Gordillo,  
Anthony Cannella, and Khadija Salim

Springer, Sarah I., is an assistant professor at Monmouth University. Her areas of interest include counselor identity, school counseling, group work, and supervision.

Cinotti, Daniel A., is an assistant professor at New York Institute of Technology. As a counselor educator, he is an advocate for comprehensive school counseling programs, and his research interests include school counselor supervision and professional identity.

Moss, Lauren J., is an assistant professor at Kutztown University of Pennsylvania. Her areas of interest include school counseling, group work, bullying prevention, and social justice.

Gordillo, Franco A., is a practicing school counselor and adjunct professor at Queens College of New York. His areas of interest include school counseling in urban environments and counselor development.

Cannella, Anthony, is a practicing school counselor and adjunct professor at Montclair State University. His areas of interest include school counseling and students with disabilities.

Salim, Khadija, is a master's student at Kutztown University of Pennsylvania studying clinical mental health.

#### **Abstract**

As the diverse needs of children and adolescents expands and the field of school counseling continues to evolve in response, it is important that the training and supervision of school counselors foster the specific knowledge, skills, and demeanor needed to appropriately serve all students in the school setting. Over the past 15 years, there appears to be a concentrated effort to examine the development of school counselors and the construct of self-efficacy through dissertation research. The results of many of these studies, however, often sit unpublished in university libraries and dissertation archives and are never widely distributed to scholars and practitioners. This manuscript serves to highlight and

disseminate these valuable dissertation findings in an effort to support the efficacy development of school counselors-in-training. Recommendations for counselor educators and supervisors, as well as future research, are discussed.

*Keywords:* school counselor, training, self-efficacy, supervision

The role of the school counselor is consistently evolving, as practitioners continue to navigate greater clinical and administrative responsibilities with increasingly diverse caseloads (Bemak & Chung, 2008; Bryant & Constantine, 2006; Herr, 2002). School counselors who practice within a comprehensive school counseling program use a variety of treatment modalities (e.g., individual, group, family counseling, and classroom guidance) to meet the growing needs of all students (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2012). While most graduate coursework highlights the roles of the 21st century school counselor, the specific demographics and needs of each school environment may not often be fully realized and understood until students begin working as practicum and internship students in the schools. These experiences are likely to have a profound effect on the growth and confidence of pre-service school counseling students as they transition into practicing school counselors.

According to Bandura (1986), experience is a strong predictor of people's beliefs about their capabilities, a construct known as *self-efficacy*. New experiences entering counseling settings may therefore impact pre-service and practicing school counselors' beliefs about their abilities to be successful. Moreover, the amount and type of feedback counselors receive prior to and during these experiences may dually impact their professional growth (Bandura, 1986; Daniels & Larson, 2001). Understanding the training needs of school counselors and the experiences and supervision they receive in practice is vital, particularly in light of associations found between self-efficacy and counselor motivation, effort, and performance outcomes (Bandura, 1986; Larson & Daniels, 1998). Accordingly, this article provides a review of the construct of self-efficacy and its connection to supervision, discussion of the quantitative findings from 10 recent school counselor self-efficacy dissertation studies, and implications for counselor educators, supervisors, and researchers addressing areas of continued need in school counselor preparation and supervision.

### **Self-Efficacy and School Counselors**

Self-efficacy, a closely related construct to confidence, has received much attention in the literature and has been found to be related to many important factors including motivation, persistence, resiliency, coping skills, and performance outcomes (Bandura, 1986; Daniels & Larson, 2001; Halverson, Miars, & Livneh, 2006). Many of these factors (e.g., motivation and persistence) are likely needed in order for school counselors to advocate for and be able to implement a comprehensive school counseling program. According to Gysbers and Henderson (2006), comprehensive school counseling models are programmatic, proactive, and include a full-range of interventions and services. Comprehensive models have articulated goals, an organizational framework and delineated activities, defined use of resources and personnel, and accountability measures. The implementation of a comprehensive program therefore requires counselors to develop and utilize a variety of knowledge and skills, which may also include lobbying

for support and resources from various stakeholders (e.g., administrators, families, community members). Fostering the development of school counselor self-efficacy in training programs may result in trainees feeling more confident in both their skills and their abilities to negotiate any challenges to their role in the workplace.

Bandura (1977a) has identified researched-based predictors of self-efficacy including mastery experiences, vicarious learning, verbal persuasion, and management of emotional arousal. Throughout the school counseling curriculum and particularly within appropriate supervisory experiences, school counseling students should have opportunities to process their experiences and observations while receiving associated feedback. Identifying training and supervisory opportunities that promote experiential learning may therefore help to foster school counselor self-efficacy as students move into practice; targeting and reinforcing these areas within site supervisory training may further result in more positive student outcomes and aid in advocacy for the overall role of the school counselor.

### **Supervision and School Counselors**

An essential aspect of counselor development and competent practice is ongoing supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). Counselor self-efficacy represents one of the many well-documented outcomes of clinical supervision (e.g., Cashwell & Dooley, 2001; Daniels & Larson, 2001). Given the predicted implications of a high sense of counselor self-efficacy (e.g., motivation, persistence, performance outcomes), the need to foster self-efficacy throughout pre-service and practicing school counselors' supervisory experiences is evident.

Research specifically examining practicing school counselor development often highlights the inconsistent and sometimes inadequate practices of clinical supervision; these practices may include school counselors being offered only administrative supervision from a non-counseling professional without any clinical element focusing on skills (e.g., Herlihy, Gray, & McCollum, 2002; Luke & Bernard, 2006). Resulting consequences may include a lack of appreciation for supervision and decreased focus on clinical skill development (Borders & Usher, 1992). This is likely to impact practicing school counselors' self-efficacy as well as the support they provide to trainees they may one day supervise. Targeting opportunities for trainees (pre-service school counselors) to engage in meaningful clinical supervision prior to practice may help to disrupt this cyclical pattern and support the appreciation and positive impact of supervision on clinical skill development. Further research examining supervisory practices throughout the school counselor curriculum is warranted.

Unfortunately, despite growing interest in the past decade, Ernst (2012) suggested that there continues to be a lack of documented quality school counseling research. Recently, movement in the profession, such as the development of evidence-based school counseling conferences beginning in 2014 and a professional meeting at the University of Georgia (March 2, 2016) aptly titled, *Strengthening Student Outcome-Focused School Counseling*, has begun to address this need. The purpose of this manuscript is to help disseminate additional school counselor self-efficacy research, often missing from scholarly peer-reviewed journals, and to provide additional recommendations for the

training, supervision, and future research needed to support confident school counseling practice.

### **School Counselor Self-Efficacy Dissertation Findings**

The information in this section includes a brief description of the statistically significant quantitative findings measuring school counselor self-efficacy from 10 dissertation studies completed between the years 2000 and 2015. The majority of dissertations (9) were found using the ProQuest Dissertation and Theses database. One dissertation was found through the reference list of another dissertation. While there were a total of 11 dissertations found that met the authors' population (school counselors/trainees) and construct (counselor/domain specific self-efficacy), one of them, *Online Supervision of School Counselors: Effects on Case Conceptualization Skills and Self-Efficacy* (Lin, 2012), did not produce any statistically significant results and is included in the table but not in the narrative portion of this manuscript. The following search terms were used to locate these studies: school counselor self-efficacy; school counselor supervision; school counselor self-efficacy and motivation; school counselor self-efficacy and working alliance; school counselor self-efficacy and leadership.

Two of the 11 total dissertation studies analyzed used mix methodology, while the other nine used quantitative measures and analysis to answer each of the research questions. After reviewing each dissertation, the authors exclusively chose to report statistically significant quantitative findings that reflected how self-efficacy beliefs impact or are impacted by various factors for pre-service or practicing school counselors. Though important additional information (qualitative and non-statistically significant quantitative findings) existed in these studies, for the purposes of this manuscript, only data that pertained to school counselors (pre-service or practicing) and school counselor (or domain specific) self-efficacy was reported and discussed in the following section. Readers are encouraged to review each dissertation individually for more information about the research design and methodological considerations chosen for each study.

### **Self-Efficacy and Delivery of School Counseling Services**

As the body of literature around school counselor self-efficacy continues to grow, recent studies have highlighted its connection with the variety of delivery methods and skills needed to implement a comprehensive school counseling program. In order to serve all students, it is essential that pre-service and practicing school counselors receive ongoing clinical supervision that addresses and enhances both the delivery and outcomes of important interventions that serve all students. According to the ASCA National Model (2012), service delivery includes counseling, curriculum, consultation and coordination. Mullen (2014) suggested that these areas need to be continually examined in order for school counselors to adhere to all students' academic, personal/social, and career needs.

The following studies in this section discuss the impact of school counselor self-efficacy on aspects of school counseling service delivery. Findings in each of these studies highlight the importance of providing appropriate supervision for school

counselors in areas that directly relate to their abilities to meet the needs of a large and diverse population of students.

### **Self-Efficacy, Attachment, and Service Delivery**

According to Ernst's (2012) study of 515 elementary level school counselors, higher reported self-efficacy beliefs, as measured by a demographic questionnaire created by the researcher, the *School Counselor Activity Rating Scale* (SCARs; Scarborough, 2005), the *School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale* (SCSE; Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005), and the *Experiences in Close Relationships Scale-Short Form* (Wei, Russell, Mallinckrodt, & Vogel, 2007), predicted greater amounts of delivery interventions associated with the ASCA National Model. This is especially meaningful, as according to the ASCA National Model (2012), 80% of a school counselors' time should be spent delivering appropriate interventions.

A more specific finding in this study suggested that a greater sense of self-efficacy was associated with school counselor coordination responsibilities. Coordination activities might include organizing and leading a Response to Intervention (RTI) group, Section 504 team, and/or an Advisory Council. Each of these activities may be directly connected to the delivery of subsequent counseling lessons, small groups, or individual sessions. An additional statistically significant finding in this study found that participants with higher self-efficacy beliefs were also more likely to engage in non-counseling responsibilities whether or not a part of a school counseling comprehensive program. These findings suggest that self-efficacy may in fact predict greater engagement in work tasks, regardless of their connection to the role of the school counselor.

### **Self-Efficacy and Professional Quality of Life**

Mullen's (2014) study examining 577 practicing school counselors (all grade levels) found a statistically significant relationship between professional quality of life as measured by the *Professional Quality of Life* scale (ProQOLs; Stamm, 2005) and the self-efficacy beliefs of practicing school counselors, as measured by the SCSE (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005). Furthermore, both constructs (quality of life and self-efficacy) each predicted service delivery as measured by the SCARs (Scarborough, 2005). The Professional Quality of Life construct specifically focused on burnout, compassion fatigue, and compassion satisfaction, whereas Programmatic Service Delivery included school counselor activities provided to students and stakeholders. The interrelationship between these three constructs suggests that self-care and the development of school counselor efficacy beliefs can help to contribute to the delivery of important services (e.g., counseling, coordination, consultation) inherent within a comprehensive school counseling program.

### **Classroom Guidance Self-Efficacy**

Finnerty's (2015) study examined Classroom Guidance, a specific delivery method used within a comprehensive school counseling program. Based on data from 239 school counseling participants (all grade levels), results revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship between the amount of classroom guidance performed, measured by a single demographic question, and classroom guidance self-efficacy, as measured by a 40-item scale created for this study based on research by

Geltner, Cunningham, and Caldwell (2011). Additionally, Finnerty's results suggested a statistically significant relationship between classroom guidance training as measured by the Experiential Classroom Guidance-Training Assessment and classroom guidance self-efficacy. While there is limited psychometric data for the newly created classroom guidance self-efficacy scale introduced in this study as the dependent variable, preliminary findings suggest that a higher sense of school counselor self-efficacy may be connected to additional service delivery. Further research specific to classroom guidance self-efficacy may help to validate these results and support the need for increased intentionality around classroom guidance training across the school counselor curriculum.

In addition to these two studies, other researchers (e.g., Larson & Daniels, 1998) have suggested that self-efficacy beliefs may have an important connection to performance outcomes. Understanding predictors of self-efficacy may therefore help counselor educators to design coursework that fosters these beliefs and ultimately leads to greater student performance in the field. As defined by ASCA (2012), both large and small group counseling are an important part of a comprehensive school counseling program.

### **Group Leadership Self-Efficacy**

Examining self-efficacy specific to group leadership provides additional insight into counselors' confidence in delivering an important intervention used to meet the needs of all students in the school setting. Springer's (2015) study focused on pre-service school counselors and examined previously identified predictors associated with self-efficacy inherent in students' site supervisory experiences. After surveying 123 pre-service school counseling internship students, results revealed that general self-efficacy, as measured by the *Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale* (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995), as well as three of the four independent variables (experience, measured by a two question composite score; feedback, as measured by a three question composite score; and management of anxiety, as measured by the state scale of the *Spielberger State-Trait Anxiety Inventory*–short form (Marteau & Bekker, 1992), were together statistically significant predictors of group leader self-efficacy, measured by an adapted *Counselor Self-Estimate Scale* (Larson et al., 1992).

While the benefits of group counseling with children and adolescents are well-documented (e.g., Erford, 2010; Sink, Edwards, & Eppler, 2012), research suggests that many school counselors may not include group counseling as part of their practice on a regular basis (Steen, Bauman, & Smith, 2008). Several reasons for this phenomenon have been highlighted throughout the literature, generally citing lack of training in group counseling with children and adolescents and school contextual challenges (Bore, Armstrong, & Womack, 2010; Steen, Bauman, & Smith, 2007; Steen et al. 2008). While the results of this study examined predictors of group leader self-efficacy, given the connections between self-efficacy and performance outcomes, these results could also point to group leader self-efficacy as a reason for less performance of small group counseling in the schools.

## **Self-Efficacy and Diverse Populations**

Acknowledging the importance of service delivery, attention must also be given to contextual factors that impact the fidelity of these services. School counselors' cultural competence and multicultural self-efficacy are in need of further exploration to ensure that the impact of counseling interventions are meeting the needs of a changing demographic of students in diverse school districts. The following studies examined school counselor self-efficacy and its relationship to working with students with diverse needs (e.g., disabilities) and those working with students in culturally diverse environments.

### **Disabilities Competence and Self-Efficacy**

As the number of students with special needs continues to rise, it is imperative that school counselors become equipped to meet the unique needs of all students (Grskovic & Trzcinka, 2011; Hsien, 2007; Titone, 2005). However, school counselors have acknowledged perceived complications in counseling students with disabilities (Milsom, 2002; Romano, Paradise, & Green, 2009). School counselors have reported lower self-efficacy in relation to working with special education students due to training deficiencies (Aksoy & Diken, 2009). With a noted gap in the literature around school counselors' disabilities competence and their self-efficacy, Cannella (2015) surveyed 155 practicing counselors (all grade levels) to capture their feelings about working with clients with disabilities using the *Counseling Clients with Disabilities Survey* (Strike, 2001) and the SCSE (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005). Results indicated that school counselor self-efficacy, disability as the primary focus of academic training, and work experience with deaf/hearing disabilities and mobility/orthopedic disabilities were found to be predictive of school counselors' perceived disabilities competence. This study specifically points to the need to consider additional training around disabilities competence and self-efficacy across the curriculum.

### **Multicultural Counseling Self-Efficacy in Urban Settings**

Given the steady increase in racially and ethnically diverse populations throughout the United States, school systems across the nation are becoming increasingly diversified, particularly within urban areas (Goh, Wahl, McDonald, Brissett, & Yoon, 2007; National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). In order to effectively provide culturally responsive services to students, the attainment of a perceived sense of self-efficacy is essential. For urban school counselors, acquiring this sense of counselor self-efficacy and multicultural self-efficacy is especially critical as many are faced with distinct challenges that may not be as prevalent in other settings (Bemak, Chung, & Siroskey-Sabdo, 2005; Lee, 2005). Additionally, urban school counselors are increasingly expected to deliver multiculturally responsive services while ensuring a quality education for culturally diverse youth (Bemak & Chung, 2005; Eschenauer & Chen-Hayes, 2005; Holcomb-McCoy & Mitchell, 2005; Lee, 2001; Sattin-Bajaj, 2014).

Data for Gordillo's (2015) study was obtained from a sample of 154 urban school counselors (all grade levels). Results of this study revealed that having attended a Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)-accredited counselor education graduate program and the number of multicultural

workshops attended predicted school counselor self-efficacy, as measured by the SCSE (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005). Additionally, Gordillo found that the years of experience as a school counselor, the percent of time spent during the day working with immigrant students, the number of multicultural workshops and multicultural courses taken, and school counselor self-efficacy were all significant predictors of school counselor multicultural counseling self-efficacy, as measured by the *School Counselor Multicultural Self-Efficacy Scale* (SCMES; Holcomb-McCoy, Harris, Hines, & Johnston, 2008). The need to continually examine coursework focused around cultural competence in pre-service school counselor training is evident in the results of this study.

### **Counseling Self-Efficacy and Multicultural Counseling Self-Efficacy**

The growth in student diversity has drawn attention to many of the issues affecting students of color, specifically the ever-widening achievement gap between White and minority students in schools (Holcomb-McCoy, 2007; McKinsey & Company, 2009; Ushomirsky, 2011). As a result, the role of the school counselor has undergone transformation to help address the inequities present throughout the nation's schools (ASCA, 2003, 2004, 2008; The Education Trust, 2009; House & Martin, 1998), while also highlighting the importance of attaining the skills necessary to effectively serve culturally diverse student populations (Holcomb-McCoy, 2000, 2004, 2005; Lee, 2001).

Crook's (2010) dissertation examined similar constructs to Gordillo's (2015) study including counselor self-efficacy, as measured by the SCSE (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005), and multicultural counseling self-efficacy, measured by the SCMES (Holcomb-McCoy et al., 2008), in relation to school counseling tasks. After surveying 173 practicing school counselors (all grade levels), he found that school counselors tended to feel a moderate to high degree of self-efficacy specific to general tasks specified in the ASCA National Model. Additionally, participants reported similar feelings about their abilities specific to multicultural counseling tasks such as equity, advocacy, working with diverse populations, and addressing the achievement gap.

Crook's (2010) study also identified differences in multicultural self-efficacy scores between groups. For instance, in relation to multicultural self-efficacy, African American participants reported higher scores than their White peers; counselors with more years of experience reported higher scores than their less experienced peers, and school counselors working in an urban population reported higher scores than their peers working in suburban or rural areas. While results specific to the group differences in work setting are inconsistent with other studies (e.g., Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005), these results do highlight the need to continue to examine the impact of school specific contextual issues on school counselor self-efficacy.

### **Multicultural Self-Efficacy and the Principal-Counselor Relationship**

Durden's (2011) study represents another investigation that has explored multicultural self-efficacy, measured using the SCMES (Holcomb-McCoy et al., 2008), and its relationship to high school counselors working in an environment with at least a 33% minority population. With a sample of 119 participants who completed the SCMES, Durden found that, overall, participants in schools with at least a 33% minority population perceived themselves to have a high degree of multicultural self-efficacy.



Looking more closely at the data, participants reported the least amount of self-efficacy in relation to utilization of data. Given that collecting and analyzing data are an important part of the accountability piece suggested by the structure of the ASCA National Model (2012), it appears that the results of this study suggest that high school counselors working in culturally diverse environments would likely benefit from additional support or training (e.g., experience, feedback) around the use of data in their programs.

Results for the previously reported studies in this manuscript have focused on self-efficacy in relation to program delivery and the relationships between aspects of diversity and multicultural self-efficacy. Many of the implications, addressed in the recommendations section, focus on ways to prepare school counselors to gain the confidence needed to implement a comprehensive school counseling program. Much of this training and professional development in the field often occurs during supervision.

### **Self-Efficacy and Supervision**

Although the benefits of consistent supervision are addressed in the literature, many if not most school counselors continue to receive inadequate clinical support (Cashwell & Dooley, 2001; Oberman, 2005; Somody, Henderson, Cook, & Zambrano, 2008). According to Borders and Usher (1992), lack of supervision historically begins at the onset of school counselor practice, a critical time period for gatekeeping and support. In fact, some studies (e.g., Roberts & Borders, 1994; Sutton & Page, 1994) have found that approximately only 20% to 37% of school counselors actually received clinical supervision at all. Factors contributing to this seemingly low rate of supervision can be summarized as two fold; a lack of available supervision for those who want it and a lack of appreciation from those who do not (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006). Few studies have looked at the impact of supervision on pre-service and practicing school counselors' feelings of self-efficacy, another critical factor in job performance (Bandura, 1977a, 1977b). The final two studies in this review examine variables associated with the supervision of pre-service and practicing school counselors.

### **The On-Site Supervision of School Counseling Interns**

Similar to Springer's (2015) study, Whitman (2005) explored pre-service school counseling interns' self-efficacy using a new instrument, *School Counseling Intern Self-Efficacy Scale* (SCISS; Whitman, 2005). Examining several previously studied predictors of self-efficacy (Supervisory Working Alliance, Satisfaction with Supervision, Style of Supervision received) Whitman sought, among other research questions, to understand their relationship to pre-service school counselors. Examining the results of 107 participants enrolled in school counseling CACREP-accredited programs throughout the South region of the United States, the only statistically significant data found was a positive relationship between the supervisory working alliance and school counselor intern's self-efficacy. This suggests that the connection between the site supervisor and the intern is a valuable relationship in need of continued exploration.

### **Aspects of Supervision and Practicing School Counselor Self-Efficacy**

Surveying 210 practicing school counselors (all grade levels), Cinotti (2013) examined their school counselor self-efficacy using the *SCSE* (Bodenhorn & Skaggs,

2005) in relation to aspects of supervision, including satisfaction, as measured by the *Satisfaction with Supervision Questionnaire* (SSQ; Ladany, Hill, & Nutt, as cited in Bernard & Goodyear, 2009), role conflict and role ambiguity, as measured by the Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity Inventory (Olk & Friedlander, 1992), and the presence of a non-counseling supervisor. Results revealed a significant negative correlation between self-efficacy and role conflict, defined as a dilemma requiring action based on conflicting or opposing expectations from their supervisor (Olk & Friedlander, 1992). This may suggest that higher levels of role conflict within a supervisory relationship are associated with slightly lower self-efficacy. Similarly, role ambiguity, or “a lack of clarity regarding the expectations for one’s roles, the methods for fulfilling those expectations, and the consequences for effective or ineffective performance” (Olk & Friedlander, 1992, p. 390) was found to have a significant negative correlation to self-efficacy. Additionally, Cinotti’s study revealed important and relevant results indicating that receiving supervision mostly from non-counseling supervisors (such as a principal or vice principal) was associated with significantly lower self-efficacy. Furthermore, the years of counseling experience, teaching experience, and the use of the ASCA National Model were all found to be predictors of school counselor self-efficacy.

The commonality in findings between Whitman’s (2005) and Cinotti’s (2013) studies point to the importance of supervisory relationships. Whether with site supervisors and interns or administrative supervisors and practitioners, it can be inferred that having a clear understanding of one’s role and belief in the quality of the supervisory relationships can potentially impact school counselors’ beliefs about their abilities to be successful. Compiling the findings and implications for each of the 10 reported studies, the following discussion focuses on recommendations for counselor educators, supervisors, and future research, particularly related to school counselors who work in urban settings with diverse caseloads.

### **Implications**

Overall implications in the studies reviewed in this article suggest continued focus on the preparation and professional development of practicing and pre-service school counselors working with large caseloads and in diverse environments. Additionally, the collective findings of the reviewed studies urge continued research to inform future practices related to school counselor preparation. Accordingly, the following recommendations outline specific implications for counselor educators, supervisors, and future researchers.

### **Recommendations for Counselors Educators**

Counselor educators have a unique and important role in preparing school counselors-in-training to function effectively in their future professional capacity. While the majority of studies sampled practicing school counselors, there are many implications for the needs of pre-service school counselors inherent in these findings. In particular, efforts counselor educators can make to address the efficacy development of school counselors-in-training around the delivery of school counseling services and work with diverse student populations are addressed.

**Service delivery.** With respect to service delivery, overall findings imply the need for counselor educators to foster general and content-specific self-efficacy throughout the curriculum. This could include more experiential learning opportunities infused in both clinical and nonclinical courses. Findings from Ernst's (2012) study suggest that school counselors-in-training may benefit from increasing knowledge, skills, and awareness aligned to the ASCA National Model and from discussions specific to school counseling coordination efforts. This may include increasing discussion and practice specific to elements of the model throughout both school counseling and non-school counseling specific courses. For instance, counselor educators teaching group counseling courses may choose to not only infuse discussions around leadership of counseling and psychoeducation groups but also intentionally emphasize leadership in task groups (e.g., response to intervention/504 meetings, advisory council) that students may coordinate and run in their practices.

Similarly, specific to large group counseling, findings from Finnerty's (2015) study suggest that an increase in experiential training around classroom guidance and intentional coursework regarding the functioning of school counselors at the various levels (elementary, middle, and high) may help school counselors-in-training develop an increased sense of self-efficacy in these areas. Given that most states no longer require school counselors to have prior public school teaching experience and the majority of school counseling certificates/licenses include the ability to work in elementary through high school settings, counselor educators may choose to increase their focus on classroom guidance readiness at each grade level. This could mean infusing more teaching and classroom management techniques into the curriculum and including more assessment around clinical skill development with children and adolescents. In doing so, this might also address results found in Springer's (2015) study, which underscores the importance of providing opportunities for students to engage in small group leadership, receive feedback specific to their group leadership experience, and process reactions to group leadership experiences during site supervision and across the counseling curriculum. Focusing more intentionally on the developmental needs of children and adolescents across clinical coursework and throughout supervised practicum and internship faculty-led groups may ultimately result in an increase in both pre-service school counselors' self-efficacy and in the outcomes of the interventions themselves.

Mullen's (2014) study also points to the importance of students' experiences designing and practicing school counselor-specific service delivery tasks and adds the need for counselor educators to help students develop self-care strategies that may ultimately help to reduce burnout and empathy fatigue. Counselor educators may choose to infuse assessments like designing a self-care plan beginning in their counseling orientation classes and monitoring throughout their graduate curriculum to highlight the need for pre-service counselors to continually focus on personal wellness. This may be especially important as school counselors enter the workforce charged with the responsibility of both implementing and advocating for comprehensive school counseling programs that may not yet be in existence.

**Cultural competence.** Counselor educators also have a distinct responsibility of supporting pre-service counselors with cultural competence. Crook (2010), Gordillo (2015), and Cannella (2015) all reported findings that suggest the need to attend to diversity in regard to race, ethnicity, and ability within the curriculum and throughout

field experiences. Specifically, Cannella's study encourages the creation of professional training standards related to disabilities. Interdisciplinary dialogue and curricular collaboration between counselor educators, school psychologists, and special education faculty may be one way for counselor educators to increase their own knowledge and improve school counseling students' self-efficacy around working with students with disabilities. Furthermore, this may increase opportunities for pre-service counselors, school psychologists, and teachers to understand and support each other's roles as they enter their future school environments as support personnel.

Similarly, Crook's (2010) study indicates that counselor educators may help students recognize areas of growth in relation to working with diverse student groups by initiating in-class dialogue about the specific counselor needs working in a variety of settings (i.e., urban, suburban, and rural). Experiential dyads and groups may then be created (in both clinical and nonclinical courses) to help students practice and think more critically about the needs of various client populations. Creating assessments that include observational interviews with stakeholders in diverse settings and building collaborative partnerships with school counseling personnel (in-person and online) from a variety of areas may likewise help to model the importance of stakeholder collaboration and increase opportunities for students to obtain practicum and internship placements in diverse school settings.

An important tenant of the ASCA National Model (2012) includes data-driven decision making. Durden's (2011) dissertation implies that by increasing opportunities for school counselors-in-training to practice data collection, analysis, and utilization, counselor educators may help to improve students' efficacy around serving culturally diverse students. Integrating assignments such as community resource mapping, whereby students conduct needs assessments and create resource maps aligned with the specific needs of their school communities, may be a way for counselor educators to infuse experiential learning into the school counseling curriculum. Collecting this data may also help to advocate for additional electives offered to school counseling students. Gordillo's (2015) dissertation study suggests that counselor educators should consider increasing the number of courses specific to the needs of culturally diverse populations. Collecting data specific to the needs of clients in university surrounding communities using these types of assessments may support opportunities to offer special topic courses (e.g., group counseling for urban youth; counseling children diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder) that highlight underserved populations.

### **Recommendations for Supervisors**

The reviewed studies also provide important implication for the supervision of school counselors-in-training, both on-site and throughout the counseling curriculum. The most poignant recommendations gleaned from the four studies that examined school counselor delivery services involved the need for supervisors to use school counselor specific supervision models as a means of training students to implement classroom guidance activities (Finnerty, 2015), group leadership (Springer, 2015), and counselor coordination activities (Ernst, 2012). Additionally, findings across these studies indicated the need for supervisors to provide specific feedback while processing pre-service school counselors' experiences specific to their engagement with these services. For example, analysis of Ernst's (2012) findings point to the need for supervisors to assist supervisees

with examining and processing discrepancies between preferred and actual work activities. Supervisors who support pre-service school counseling students in navigating ideal (service delivery consistent with the ASCA National Model) and realistic (non-school counseling activities) expectations inherent in the work of most practicing school counselors may support greater confidence and perhaps a stronger desire to seek supervision in the future.

Supporting emotional arousal often accompanying new experiences is another important element inherent in the supervisory process (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). Springer's (2015) study highlights the need for supervision to include discussions surrounding emotional reactions specific to group leader experiences. Mullen's (2014) findings suggest the importance of addressing students' self-care needs. Together, findings across each of these studies point to the importance of attending to the distinct needs of school counselors through specific feedback and processing of emotional arousal throughout students' supervisory experiences, within and beyond the counseling curriculum.

The studies reviewed in this article also highlight the importance of supervisors' attention to preparing school counselors-in-training to work with diverse student populations. Specific strategies supervisors can utilize are varied and are best applied in accordance with the developmental needs of the supervisor(s) and school counselor(s)-in-training. Generally however, according to findings from Cannella's (2015) study, supervisors should consider implementing disabilities-related professional development for counseling staff and themselves as a means of staying current and comfortable with the ever-changing landscape of disabilities services. Regarding multicultural competence, both Gordillo's (2015) and Crook's (2010) studies suggest that supervisors will best serve school counselors-in-training by providing consistent (formative and summative) feedback regarding multicultural counseling tasks, skills, and competencies. Crook's findings further indicate that supervisors may positively support the efficacy development of school counselors by assessing areas of weakness (in knowledge and skills) and, similar to Cannella, advocate for further professional development opportunities in these areas. Helping supervisees to both assess their own cultural competence and advocate for additional learning opportunities during training may further support both competence and confidence working with marginalized populations.

In addition to supervision concerns around diverse student populations and the delivery of quality school counseling programming, the studies discussed throughout this article also point to a number of general supervision implications for school counseling supervisors. For example, Whitman (2005) highlights the importance of providing clinical supervision and, in particular, attending to the supervisory working alliance with school counseling interns. Cinotti's (2013) findings support the continued need for clinical supervision in practice and specifically highlight the importance of increased supervisory opportunities for beginning school counselors (years < 3) entering the field. Whether addressing pre-service or practicing school counselors, each of these studies draws attention to the clinical, developmental, cultural, and emotional needs of supervisees from training to practice. It is thus essential that supervisors (faculty, on-site, and those supervising practicing school counselors), are appropriately trained and held accountable for supporting pre-service and practicing school counselors across each of these areas. Increased specificity in site supervisory training and collaboration between

educational leadership and counseling programs throughout graduate coursework may provide additional opportunities for more effective supervision on-site and in practice.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

While the studies presented in this article offer examples of some of the emerging needs in school counselor preparation and practice, perhaps the most significant contribution of this review lies in the implications for future research. Given the increased interest in school counseling research through national conferences (e.g., Evidence-Based School Counseling Conference [2016] and Innovations in School Counselor Preparation Conference [2016]), related professional meetings (e.g., Strengthening Student Outcome-Focused School Counseling Research Meeting [2016]), and journals featuring school counselor special editions (e.g., *Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision*), it is clear that counselor educators continue to desire quality research that drives the preparation and practice of school counselors. Yet, it appears to be challenging for scholars and practitioners alike to know where to begin to look for such research and scholarly activity. Responsively, this article aims to begin the process of disseminating related dissertation findings specific to an important construct impacting school counselor development and practice: school counselor self-efficacy.

As with all studies, especially those conducted by beginning researchers, there are limitations that point to the need for further research. Common limitations among many of the studies are shared below. A more specific summary of each study, its respective findings, implications, and limitations can be found in the appendix of this manuscript.

**Sampling.** One of the most glaring limitations across each of these studies revolved around sampling size and procedures. For example, in most studies, sample size was small or researchers used e-mail lists they found from the ASCA Web site. This leaves questions about how others who are not affiliated with ASCA or those whose email addresses were not in the database may have responded.

Several of the studies reviewed suggested that survey research conducted face-to-face would likely have yielded a greater response rate; time and limited resources were likely at play for most researchers who used online surveys as a means to collect participants. School counselor educators are encouraged to consider conducting multi-institutional research in order to recruit greater numbers of participants (in person and online) from a diversity of backgrounds, affiliations, and counseling levels.

**Instrumentation and measurement.** Another notable outcome of this review included the variety of instruments used to measure school counselor self-efficacy. Most studies expressed concerns regarding the psychometric properties of the self-efficacy scales utilized in the research. For instance, the School Counseling Intern Self-Efficacy Scale (Whitman, 2005) and the Classroom Guidance Self-Efficacy scales (Finnerty, 2015) were developed for each respective study, while instruments such as the SCSE (Bondenhorn & Skaggs, 2005), used in a number of the studies, still requires additional validation (Crook, 2010). As a result, some researchers (Springer and Crook) chose to either adapt a well-validated counselor self-efficacy measure or utilize a more recently updated version with limited psychometric properties. Furthermore, due to reported collinearity between variables, Springer's study (2015) suggested a need to better operationalize and perhaps more accurately measure potential predictors of group leader self-efficacy. Initial qualitative studies may be necessary to further understand school

counselors' experiences with interventions in order to eventually design more accurate predictor and outcome measures.

**Research design.** Finally, while the research designs varied across each study, each dissertation utilized correlational research, leaving no ability to establish causality between school counselor self-efficacy and student outcomes. Furthermore, all studies used self-report data, which may be especially susceptible to the potential for social desirability bias. This is particularly concerning given that perceived self-efficacy beliefs have no researched implications for the actual fidelity of the interventions performed. Conducting research that both examines school counselors' interventions and measures the self-efficacy of participants utilizing these skills may help to shed additional light on the impact of self-efficacy beliefs.

### **Conclusion**

Although it is generally accepted that school counselors serve an important role in the academic, emotional, and lifespan development of students in the school setting, the training and ongoing supervision provided to school counselors can have significant implications for their developing counselor self-efficacy and resulting professional performance. In light of the reported limitations, the dissertation studies reviewed in this manuscript highlight the need for ongoing training, professional development, and supervision to enhance school counselors' confidence and abilities to serve all students within their respective environments. Counselor educators, supervisors, school administrators, and professional school counselors must work collaboratively to strengthen the skillset and perceived role of the school counselor in a way that fosters self-efficacy and subsequently provides opportunities for school counselors to meet the needs of all students in their schools.

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## Appendix

### *Significant Research Findings and Implications for School Counselor Preparation and Supervision*

Study	Findings	Limitations	Implications
<p><i>The Relationship of School Counselors' Disabilities Competence With Self-Efficacy &amp; Pre-Service Training &amp; the Influence of Experience, Training, &amp; Self-Efficacy on Disabilities Competence</i> (Cannella, 2015)</p>	<p>Self-efficacy was significantly related to disabilities competence.</p> <p>Work experience with physical disabilities, disabilities as the primary focus of academic training, and self-efficacy were found to be significant predictors of disabilities competence.</p>	<p>-Self-report data</p> <p>-Only two states surveyed</p> <p>-Participants had no way of evaluating the effectiveness of pre-service training</p>	<p>Counselor Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Infuse disabilities-related content across counseling curriculum.</li> <li>▪ Create professional training standards related to disabilities.</li> </ul> <p>Supervisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Encourage disabilities-related professional development for counseling staff.</li> <li>▪ Undergo disabilities training and continued development themselves.</li> </ul>
<p><i>The Relationship Between Aspects of Supervision and School Counselor Self-Efficacy</i> (Cinotti, 2013)</p>	<p>A significant negative correlation was found between self-efficacy and role conflict, as well as role ambiguity. In addition, supervision from an individual with a counseling background was associated with slightly higher self-efficacy (but did not predict self-efficacy).</p> <p>Years of counseling experience, teaching experience, and use of the ASCA National Model were found to be predictors of school counselor self-efficacy.</p>	<p>-Self-report data</p> <p>-Sample of school counselors in one state</p> <p>-Lack of diversity (reflective of the profession as a whole)</p>	<p>Counselor Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide performance feedback during supervision throughout the curriculum.</li> <li>▪ Encourage self-advocacy skills during supervision.</li> <li>▪ Encourage peer supervision.</li> </ul> <p>Supervisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure that clinical supervision is a large part of ongoing supervisory dialogue</li> <li>▪ Increase supervisory opportunities for school counselors with less than 3 years of experience.</li> </ul>

Study	Findings	Limitations	Implications
<p><i>Relationship Between Counseling Self-Efficacy and Multicultural Counseling Self-Efficacy Among School Counselors</i> (Crook, 2010)</p>	<p>Results indicated that participants felt self-efficacious with regard to school counseling tasks and activities specific to areas within the ASCA National Model (academic, personal/social, and career).</p> <p>Results indicated that participants felt self-efficacious performing tasks associated with multicultural school counseling (e.g., equity advocacy, working with diverse populations, addressing achievement gap).</p> <p>A moderate to strong positive association was found between general school counseling self-efficacy and multicultural self-efficacy.</p> <p>Results suggested a difference between multicultural self-efficacy and a) participants from different racial/ethnic backgrounds (African American and White counselors), b) years of experience (the greater the better), and c) geographical work setting (urban, suburban, rural).</p>	<p>-Self-report data</p> <p>-Small sample size; lack of diverse sample population</p> <p>-Instrumentation</p> <p>-Absence of information on school counselors attendance in a CACREP-accredited program</p> <p>-Sample: heavily recruited from ASCA online member directory/non-random sample</p>	<p>Counselor Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide additional opportunities for students to obtain experiential learning in diverse environments.</li> <li>▪ Foster growth on recognizing areas of improvement and strengths in relation to working with diversity.</li> <li>▪ Initiate dialogue around working in different counseling environments (urban, suburban, and rural) and different tasks inherent in different communities.</li> <li>▪ Provide professional development opportunities for practicing school counselors.</li> </ul> <p>Supervisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide ongoing feedback about specific multicultural counseling tasks and skills with supervisees of different racial/cultural backgrounds.</li> <li>▪ Identify areas where school counselors' beliefs in their abilities are not as strong and plan professional development opportunities for school counselors within a district.</li> </ul>

Study	Findings	Limitations	Implications
<p><i>Multicultural Self-Efficacy: A Study of the Differences of High School Counselors in Relation to the Principal-Counselor Relationship</i> (Durden, 2011)</p> <p>*This study includes mixed methodology; results reflect findings associated with the author's quantitative analysis</p>	<p>High school counselors working in schools with at least a 33% minority population perceived themselves to have a high sense of multicultural self-efficacy (using the SCMES). Within these results, high school counselors reported the least amount of efficacy specific to the utilization of data.</p> <p>No statistically significant differences in participants' multicultural self-efficacy were found between high school counselors who reported a positive counselor-principal relationship and those who reported "no" to a positive counselor-principal relationship.</p>	<p>-Self-report data</p> <p>-Purposive sample used</p> <p>-Generalizability of sample population</p> <p>-Sample size</p> <p>-Instrumentation</p>	<p>Counselor Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase opportunities to practice data collection, analyzing, and utilization in the context of the school counseling curriculum, as designated in the accountability quadrant of the ASCA National Model.</li> </ul> <p>Supervisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assist supervisees through the assessment and analyzing of data to help support future confidence and data-driven programming.</li> </ul>
Study	Findings	Limitations	Implications
<p><i>Self-Efficacy, Attachment, and School Counselor Service Delivery</i> (Ernst, 2012)</p>	<p>Higher reported self-efficacy beliefs predicted higher levels of delivery of interventions associated with the ASCA National Model. More specifically, results also suggested that there is a strong significant relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and activities associated with coordination responsibilities in a comprehensive school counseling program.</p> <p>Participants with higher self-efficacy beliefs were more likely to engage in non-counseling responsibilities.</p>	<p>-Self-report data</p> <p>-Generalizability of population</p> <p>-Self-selection bias</p> <p>-Social desirability bias</p> <p>-Survey attrition</p>	<p>Counselor Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Foster school counselor self-efficacy through the curriculum.</li> <li>▪ Increase knowledge, skills, and awareness specific to the ASCA National Model.</li> <li>▪ Provide students opportunities to discuss school counseling coordination efforts.</li> </ul> <p>Supervisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assist supervisees with examining and processing discrepancies between preferred and actual work activities.</li> <li>▪ Provide school counselors with specific feedback regarding coordination activities.</li> </ul>

Study	Findings	Limitations	Implications
<p><i>Role of Self-Efficacy and Experiential Training in Classroom Guidance Participation</i> (Finnerty, 2015)</p>	<p>There was a significant relationship between the amount of classroom guidance performed and classroom guidance self-efficacy.</p> <p>There was a significant relationship between classroom guidance training and classroom guidance self-efficacy.</p>	<p>-Self-report data -Social desirability bias -Measurement -Sample size/ demographics</p>	<p>Counselor Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase experiential training around classroom guidance.</li> <li>▪ Tailor school counseling coursework to the needs of different levels (elementary, middle, high school).</li> </ul> <p>Supervisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Using school counselor-specific supervision models, provide more direct feedback specific to classroom guidance</li> </ul>
Study	Findings	Limitations	Implications
<p><i>Online Supervision of School Counselors: Effects on Case Conceptualization Skills and Self-Efficacy</i> (Lin, 2012) * This study includes mixed methodology; the reported results reflect findings associated with the author's quantitative analysis</p>	<p>No significant differences in self-efficacy scores were found before and after the online peer supervision groups.</p> <p>No significant differences were found in participants between years of counseling experience and self-efficacy after the online supervision interventions.</p>	<p>-Sample size -Self-report data -Limitations in psychometric properties of instruments (e.g., CHEF) -Research design (e.g., repeated measure pre/post design)</p>	<p>Counselor Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Facilitate ongoing discussions with students around additional opportunities for counselor supervision in the schools.</li> <li>▪ Partner with supervisors to create and research additional online supervisory opportunities.</li> </ul> <p>Supervisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Longer time, more structure, and clear instructions will help in maintaining regular participation among school counselors.</li> <li>▪ If ongoing face-to-face supervision is challenging, consider a hybrid (face-to-face and online) format.</li> </ul>



Study	Findings	Limitations	Implications
<p><i>The Influence of Counselor Demographics, Work Experience, and Training on Counselor Self-Efficacy and Multicultural Counseling Self-Efficacy Among Urban School Counselors</i> (Gordillo, 2015)</p>	<p>Attending a CACREP-accredited counselor education graduate program and the number of multicultural workshops attended were predictors of school counselor self-efficacy.</p> <p>Years of school counseling experience, the percent of time spent during the day working with immigrant students, the number of multicultural workshops and multicultural courses taken, and school counselor self-efficacy were all predictors of school counselor multicultural counseling self-efficacy.</p>	<p>-Self-Report Data</p> <p>-Distinguishing between multicultural courses and multicultural workshops by respondents on the demographic questionnaire</p> <p>-Sample size</p>	<p>Counselor Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide increased course work specific to the needs of culturally diverse populations.</li> <li>Provide pre-service school counselors with experiential opportunities to work with diverse populations (i.e.: race different from their own).</li> <li>Infuse themes of social and cultural diversity throughout academic coursework for preparing school counselors.</li> </ul> <p>Supervisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide supervisees with feedback related to cultural competency.</li> </ul>
Study	Findings	Limitations	Implications
<p><i>The Contributions of Practicing School Counselors' Self-Efficacy and Professional Quality of Life to Their Programmatic Service Delivery</i> (Mullen, 2014)</p>	<p>Results revealed statistically significant relationship between Quality of Life construct and self-efficacy beliefs.</p> <p>Results revealed statistically significant relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and school counselors' programmatic service delivery.</p>	<p>-Correlational study</p> <p>-Self-report data</p> <p>-Sampling procedures</p>	<p>Counselor Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foster school counselor self-efficacy across the curriculum.</li> <li>Increase opportunities for students to design and practice school counselor specific service delivery tasks.</li> <li>Promote self-care throughout the curriculum and support students in developing a wellness self-care plan.</li> </ul> <p>Supervisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide continued experiential opportunities and feedback as students engage in programmatic delivery services.</li> </ul>

Study	Findings	Limitations	Implications
<p><i>Aspects of Site Supervision as Predictors of Group Leader Self-Efficacy for Pre-Service School Counselors</i> (Springer, 2015)</p>	<p>Above and beyond the influence of general self-efficacy, experience, receiving feedback specific to group leadership, and managing anxiety specific to group leadership predicted pre-service school counselors' group leader self-efficacy.</p>	<p>-Self-report data -Social desirability bias -Measurement: (e.g., adapted group leader self-efficacy and anxiety scales; composite experience variable) -Sample size/demographics</p>	<p>Counselor Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Foster general self-efficacy through curriculum.</li> <li>▪ Provide opportunities to engage in group leadership, receive feedback, and process reactions across counseling curriculum.</li> </ul> <p>Supervisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide formative feedback specific to group leadership.</li> <li>▪ Process emotional reactions to group leadership with supervisees.</li> </ul>
Study	Findings	Limitations	Implications
<p><i>The On-Site Supervision of School Counseling Interns: An Exploratory Study of Supervisory Variables</i> (Whitman, 2005)</p>	<p>Positive relationship found between perception of supervisory working alliance and school counseling intern's self-efficacy.</p>	<p>-Research design -Self-report data (intern's perspective only) -Instrumentation -Unexplained variance (multiple extraneous favorable)</p>	<p>Counselor Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop ongoing relationship with site supervisors to help support supervisory working alliance between student and supervisor.</li> <li>▪ Choose site supervisors with meaningful clinical supervision training.</li> </ul> <p>Supervisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attend to the supervisory working alliance with school counseling interns.</li> <li>▪ Provide clinical supervision.</li> </ul>