The Alabama Counseling Association Journal

An official publication of the Alabama Counseling Association, The Alabama Counseling Association Journal is published twice a year. A primary purpose is to communicate ideas and information which can help counselors in a variety of work settings implement their roles and develop the profession of counseling. The Journal may include thought-provoking articles, theoretical summaries, reports of research, discussions of professional issues, summaries of presentations, reader reactions, and reviews of books or media.

SUBSCRIPTION: Subscription to The Journal is included in the dues for membership in the Alabama Counseling Association. Non-member subscriptions are $14.00 annually; single copies are available at $7.00 and issue. Requests for subscriptions, single copies, or membership should be addressed to:

Dr. Ervin L. Wood
ALCA Executive Director
217 Daryle Street
Livingston, Alabama 35470
Telephone: (205) 652-1712
chip@alabamacounseling.org

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Members should report address changes to Dr. Ervin L. Wood at the above address. Undelivered copies resulting from address changes will not be replaced, but may be purchased at the single issue price. Other claims for undelivered copies must be made within 4 months of publication.

PERMISSIONS: ALCA reserves the right to authorize reprinting of Journal articles for educational purposes to individuals requesting such privileges as long as the author(s) has given permission. In instances where it is not possible to notify the author with reasonable effort, the Association reserves the right to grant permission to reprint without the permission of the author(s). Requests for reproduction should be directed to the ALCA Executive Secretary.

MANUSCRIPTS: Practitioners, educators, and researchers in the fields of guidance, counseling, and development are encouraged to submit manuscripts. While publication priority will be given to ALCA members, counselors from other states and countries are valued contributors. Manuscripts, which conform to the Guidelines for Authors, must be submitted to the editor:

Dr. Debbie Grant
2705 Royal Lane
Pelham, Alabama 35124
dgrant@hoover.k12.al.us

EDITORIAL BOARD: The ALCA Journal Editorial Board consists of one representative from each division of the Alabama Counseling Association. Members serve three-year terms for which a rotation schedule has been established. The primary function of the Editorial Board is to assist in determining the content of publications. At least two members of the editorial board read each manuscript submitted to the publication through an anonymous review system. No honoraria or travel funds are provided for editorial board members. Editorial board members and their respective divisions and terms are:

M. Carolyn Thomas  ALCDA  2007-2009
Glenda Elliott   ALASGW  2006-2008
Glenda Reynolds   ALAMFC  2006-2008
Monica Hunter   ALAMCD  2007-2009
Charlotte Daughheetee  ALACES  2007-2009
Vacant  ALCCA  2007-2009
Jamie Satcher  ALDARCA  2007-2009
Angela Stowe  ALMHCA  2007-2009
Tommy Turner  ALASERVIC  2007-2009
Karla Carmichael  ALSCA  2007-2009
Vaughn Millner  ALAAD  2007-2009
Paul Hard  AGLBICAL  2007-2009
Sharalyn Zander  ALAAOC  2007-2009

The ALCA Journal is provided under the direction of the Alabama Counseling Association Executive Council. The officers are:

President……. Jerri Lynn Morrow,
Pleasant Grove
President-Elect …Katharine Nichols, Hoover
Past-President… Shirley Barnes, Tuskegee
Secretary……… Carol Cleveland, Selma
Treasurer……… Donna Clark, Huntsville
Historian……… Carolyn Liggins, Montgomery
Parliamentarian.. Carol Turner, Birmingham

ISSN: 1546-2781
The Alabama Counseling Association Journal
Guidelines for Authors

The purpose of The Alabama Counseling Association Journal is to communicate ideas and information that can help counselors in a variety of work settings implement their counseling roles and develop the profession of counseling. A function of The Journal is to strengthen the common bond among counselors and to help maintain a mutual awareness of the roles, the problems, and the progress of the profession at its various levels. In this context, thought provoking articles, theoretical summaries, reports of research, descriptive techniques, summaries of presentations, discussions of professional issues, reader reactions, and reviews of books and media are highly recommended. Manuscripts that are either theoretical-philosophical or research-oriented should contain discussion of the implications and/or practical applications. Authors should ground their work with an appropriate review of the literature.

Review Process

Authors are asked to submit an original and three (3) copies of manuscripts. All manuscripts should be prepared according to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th edition). Manuscripts that are not written in compliance with publication guidelines will be returned to the author with a general explanation of the deficiencies. Manuscripts that meet The ALCA Journal publication guidelines will be distributed to a minimum of two (2) members of the Editorial Board and external reviewers for the anonymous review process. The editor will synthesize the reviewers’ comments and inform authors of both publication decisions and recommendations. Anonymity of authors and reviewers will be protected as far as possible.

PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY AUTHORS:

1. Manuscripts must be typewritten or word processed on eight-and-one-half by eleven inch white paper with single spacing and one-inch margins.
2. Authors should make every effort to submit a manuscript that contains no clues to the author’s identity. Citations that may reveal the author’s identity should be masked within the text and reference listing.
3. Author notes including current position, work address, telephone numbers, and email addresses should be included in one title page. Other pages should exclude such affiliations.
4. Camera-ready tables or figures should be prepared and submitted on separate pages.
5. Recommended length of manuscripts is between 13 and 20 pages.
6. Recommended length of abstracts is a maximum of 75 words.
7. Authors should submit only original work that has not been published elsewhere and is not under review by another journal. Lengthy quotations (300-500 words) require written permission from the copyright holder for reproduction. Adaptation of figures and tables also requires reproduction approval. It is the author’s responsibility to secure such permission and provide documentation to the ALCA Journal Editor upon acceptance for publication.
8. Protection of client and subject anonymity is the responsibility of authors. Identifying information should be avoided in descriptions and discussions.
9. Authors should consult the APA Publications Manual for guidelines related to discriminatory language in regard to gender, sexual orientation, racial and ethnic identity, disability, and age.
10. Authors should consult the APA Publication Manual for guidelines regarding the format of the manuscript and matters of editorial style.
11. The terms counselor, counseling, and client are preferred, rather than their many synonyms.
12. Authors bear full responsibility for the accuracy of references, quotations, tables, figures, and other matters of editorial style.
13. The ALCA Journal expects authors to follow the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice of the American Counseling Association (also adopted by the Alabama Counseling Association) related to publication including authorship, concurrent submissions, informed consent for research participants, and piecemeal publication of research data.

PUBLICATION PROCEDURES:

Authors of accepted manuscripts will be asked to submit a final, hard copy and a CD containing the manuscript. The author’s name should be noted on the diskette. The author is also asked to email the editor a final copy of the manuscript attached as a Word document. All manuscripts accepted for publication will be copied, edited, and altered for clarity. No alterations that change the integrity of the article will be made without the primary author’s permission. Three complimentary copies of the issue in which articles appear will be sent to each primary author. Additional copies will be provided for secondary authors. Authors whose manuscripts are accepted may be asked to review manuscripts subsequent to publication of the article in The ALCA Journal.
# Table of Contents

## Articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conduct Disorder in African American Adolescents Males: The Perceptions That Lead to Overdiagnosis And Placement in Special Programs</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie Clark, Jr.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of the School Counselor's Role: A Challenge For the Profession</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leila Vaughn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin Bynum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Ann Hooten</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Norms of Alcohol Use at a Historically Black University</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teresa Laird</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrea Shelton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Jefferson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of Alabama Association of Marriage and Family Counselors</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Archival Feature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenda Reynolds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conduct Disorders in African American Adolescent Males: The Perceptions That Lead to Overdiagnosis and Placement in Special Programs

Dr. Eddie Clark, Jr.
Troy University-Montgomery

Abstract

African American adolescent males are significantly more likely than their Caucasian peers to receive a diagnosis of Conduct Disorder. In contrast, their Caucasian peers are more often diagnosed with Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder. Discrepancies in the way diagnosis is made cause more African American adolescent males to be classified as having behavior problems and not offered accommodations as opposed to their Caucasian counterparts. There are definitely similarities in the behavior of students with CD and ADHD, but how the two disorders are diagnosed is a question for concern.

Introduction

In today’s classrooms students face many challenges that influence learning. Students, educators, and parents alike must constantly deal with factors that influence how conducive an environment is to learning. A very prevalent concern relates to diagnosing mental illnesses and providing services that affords all students with learning opportunities. Unfortunately, for many African American adolescent males, these opportunities are limited by misconceptions held by educators and counselors. According to Spencer & Oatts (1999), often times African American adolescent males who suffer from a mental illness such as Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are misdiagnosed as having Conduct Disorder (CD) or other behavior problems. Rather than receiving intervention services such as counseling, medication, or study assistance, these students are labeled as troublemakers or maladjusted. When African American adolescent males present problem traits similar to their Caucasian peers, they are still more likely to be diagnosed with Conduct Disorder. It is imperative that counselors and educators recognize biases that lead them to disproportionately diagnose African American adolescent males as CD.

Conduct Disorder is described as a repetitive and persistent pattern of behavior in which the basic rights of others, societal norms, and rules are violated American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Serwatka & Deering (1995) reported that teachers are more likely to attribute classroom inattentiveness and restlessness in African American adolescent males as disruptive and aggressive, behaviors most commonly associated with those individuals identified as CD. They are more likely to be viewed as having inappropriate behaviors (cutting up/acting out) than an indication of greater underlying problems. However, Caucasian adolescent males who exhibit similar characteristics as these males are more likely to be identified and subsequently diagnosed ADHD and generally receive special education services, counseling, and medication (Fabrega, Ulrich, & Mezzich, 1993). Obviously, educators and counselors need to be aware of the multicultural and
The purpose of this survey of the literature is to address the misconceptions associated with African American adolescent males’ behavior in the classroom as well as the social and environmental factors that impact motivation. This literature review will also address the multifaceted dimensions of African American adolescent males’ behavior in the classroom as well as answer certain questions that contribute to the overdiagnosis of CD and placement in special programs faced by today’s school systems. The specific questions center around:

a) how teachers’ perception of adolescent behavior differ according to race.

b) whether all children have an equal opportunity to learn in the classroom.

c) how teachers, school counselors, and parenting styles affect motivation.

Because educators and school counselors play such a significant role in the diagnosis of ADHD and CD, there must be uniformity and consistency by providing appropriate training for educators and counselors that incorporate culturally specific strategies for addressing behavioral issues in the classroom. Evidence clearly shows that the public school system has failed to serve at-risk students by low expectation for student performance, inadequate resources, and uneven quality of teaching staff (Blake & Darling, 1994). Only when educators and counselors work to eliminate their own negative images of African American adolescent males can appropriate assessments of their behaviors be made.

The Public School System

Allen-Meares (1990) reported that the school system is failing at making equal educational opportunities for African American adolescent males. The culturally biased assessment tools and prejudice attitudes nurture racial segregation and classroom isolation. The public school practices are no more open and fair than the societal context in which they exist. In fact, they reflect a caste-like system. For example, Blake & Darling (1994) characterized the African American adolescent male as the least understood and studied of all sex/race groups in this country. The primary socializing agent, elementary and secondary education, has negatively affected the achievement and self-concept of these individuals by disproportionately tracking them and not providing positive role models. Neal (2001) concluded that a disproportionate number of African American adolescent males are referred to special programs based on the teacher’s perception of aggressive behavior where mainly the conclusions were drawn from the way African American adolescent males walked, classroom posture, and specifically the way they dressed.

Durodoye & Hildreth (1995) attempted to explain the learning style of African American adolescent male students. What their study found was that these individuals tended to be maligned by an American educational system that has continued to abide by biased assumptions highlighting the differences between African American adolescent males and their Caucasian peers. Furthermore, they found that teachers’ perceptions of African American male adolescent students were in direct contrast to the cultural
assumption promoted by Caucasian students whereby culture and learning style of these individuals were ignored. Teachers tended to be consistent with their personal values and expectations in their evaluation of the performance of African American adolescent male students’ approach to education and learning styles.

Likewise, when discussing teachers’ responses to African American adolescent males’ behavior in the classroom, teachers were found to focus on or react to students’ movement. Watkins & Kurtz (2001) asserts that African American adolescent male students are disproportionately represented in special programs for complex and multifaceted reasons, including the perception of their movement. Neal (2001) further revealed that teachers based aggressive behavior and achievement in comparison to Caucasians of similar ages in the way they walked. African American adolescent males were considered very aggressive and incapable of achieving targeted goals if they did not walk erect with legs and arms synchronized, steady pace, and head straight.

The African Community:

Hill & Bush (2001) conducted a study on the influence of ethnic differences in parenting that may lead to school problems with children. They found that parenting and family interaction patterns among African Americans were associated with outcomes for ADHD and CD. The African American adolescent males presenting with conduct or inattentive problems reported poorer communication patterns and less parental warmth. However, these boys were mainly from lower income single-parent families where authoritarian or no nonsense parenting strategies emphasized the use of physical punishment more often than psychological punishment to stress obedience, conformity, and maintaining order.

Similarly, Simon, Kuei-Hsiu, Gordon, Brody, Velma, & Rand (2002) presented various hypotheses regarding parental control and corporal punishment among African American adolescent males. The parental values and parenting practices of African American families often focus on interdependence and security, group effort, perseverance in spite of adversity, and conformity which impact how these students respond to teachers and counselors.

According to Miller-Johnson, Coie, Maumary-Gremaud, Lochman, & Robert (1999), African American adolescent males who experience peer rejection were more likely to exhibit aggressive behavior and that poorly developed social skills and disruptive behavior were common among those individuals who presented for special education programs. The risk factors for antisocial behavior require interventions that address social relations among peers and the need to develop strategies that promote peer ties that support prosocial behavior and discourage affiliations that persuade or maintain problem behavior. The study acknowledged that African American adolescent males reported lower levels of peer pressure or the need for peer approval placing higher levels of importance on involvement in family and school activities rather than misconduct.

Prospective Solution

Rodney, Crafter, Rodney, & Mupier (1999) reported that African American adolescent males score lower than their
Caucasian counterparts on standardized tests and that they are three times more likely to be placed in special education programs for slow learners. They also found that this placement increased the likelihood of problem behavior as well as the African American adolescent males’ self-perception of school failure. Likewise Joseph (1996) found that the percentage of African American males who were behind in their expected grade levels is far higher than their Caucasian counterparts. A child who is Black and poor is significantly more likely to be physically disciplined, suspended, placed in alternative programs, expelled, or to repeat a grade than their Caucasian peers. Based on Joseph’s (1996) research, an African American adolescent male student is three times more likely to end up in a vocational track than his Caucasian peers.

One of the biggest problems in today’s school systems is the attempt to assess African American adolescents’ motivation to learn. Colarusso (2001) found that African American adolescents were more likely to be placed in programs for behavior problems associated with CD.

Likewise, Serwatka & Deering (1995) found that the disproportionate representation of African American adolescent male students in emotionally handicapped classrooms were identified as conduct problems and that the school system recognized that this was a serious issue. Special Education was viewed as a means to remove students with perceived deviant skills. The lack of awareness of African American culture on the part of the public school systems’ professionals allowed for myopic perceptions of African American adolescent male students.

Larson (1997) in an attempt to examine the political thinking and the strategies used by school administrators, teachers, and counselors with regard to the unfair treatment of African American adolescent males in the classroom revealed that society was less concerned with the education of these youth as maintaining the orthodox images the administrators faced with the diverse and changing school communities. Williams (2002) reported that if everyone understood the decades of deprivation, the educators and school counselors would recognize the need to structure a more diverse system when dealing with the assessment and placement of African American adolescent males in specialized programs. Administrators and teachers admitted to being uncomfortable with the present situation relative to African American adolescent males but find their hands are tied about what to do when dealing this obvious problem (Larson, 1997).

Vygotsky’s View of Overrepresentation

Vygotsky presented several general ideas to remedy the problems associated with African American adolescent males’ behavior and misdiagnosis in the classroom. His cultural-historical activity theory (Gindis, 1999) revealed that the irony of special education was based on artificial data and biased principles. Therefore, Vygotsky looked at ways to educate children with special needs and to avoid some of the discrepancies surrounding African American adolescent males placed in special education programs. Vygodskaya (1999) stated that Vygotsky’s primary concern centered on the problem developmental strategies to help those individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. Vygotsky believed that
5 Conduct Disorder in African American Adolescent

understanding the nature of the individual would help in education. The uniqueness of Vygotsky’s approach lies in his understanding of the disadvantage of sociocultural development. His major concern was upbringing and discipline.

Carlin (1994) reported that any psychological process regardless of behavior is an undergoing change; therefore, interventions must reflect the evolving clinical course. African American adolescent males are frequently misunderstood and their behavior misdiagnosed. Therefore, it is understandable why they are overrepresented in special programs. According to Patton (1998), African American adolescent males are overrepresented in special education programs thus perpetuating the sociohistorical legacy which allows the general and special education enterprises to continue to create problematic classroom arrangements that jeopardize the potentially positive educational chances for African American adolescent males in this country.

According to Obiakor, Obi, & Algozzine (2001), because of language barriers, African American adolescent males have a difficult time understanding what is expected of them in the classroom. Durodoye & Hildreth (1995) reported that teachers and African American adolescent male students have different communication styles and therefore expectations are often unrealistic. Vygotsky identifies several perspectives that have positive implications for multicultural issues including literacy that revolves around access and engagement with various types of texts. Vygotsky’s concern centered on the application of multicultural education as well as the acknowledgement of psychological tools to transform sociocultural activities at the individual, collective, and historical levels (Troutman, Unger, Ramirez, & Saddler, 2001).

Conclusion

Although there is much research done in the area of misdiagnosis of African American adolescent males and their overrepresentation in special programs, social aggression, labeling, grade retention, test bias, and the lack of awareness among school administrators, teachers, and counselors about cross-cultural competent student-school relationships; it is inconclusive as to how to meet the needs of this population. Clearly some adjustment and rethinking is necessary in dealing with the issues of how students, teachers, counselors, and parents conduct themselves within the school system particularly in the classroom. Obviously, educators and counselors need to have a clearer understanding of the cultural and socioeconomic perception of African American adolescent males relative to diagnosis and placement. Furthermore, the diagnoses of Conduct Disorder and Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder continue to be strongly associated with race. Labeling African American adolescent males as aggressive based on their communicating styles, particularly how they dress and walk, clearly does not meet the criteria for a diagnosis of Conduct Disorder as outlined in the DSM-IV-TR. Apparently, the prejudice and bias have contributed greatly to the African American adolescent male’s inability to adjust in many classrooms settings.
Conduct Disorder in African American Adolescent

**Recommendations**

It is imperative that researchers continue to address teacher and counselor bias and the impact of overrepresentation of African American adolescent males in special programs in an effort to find solutions to this ever growing dilemma. The assessment and diagnostic process needs to be revamped to eliminate racism and test bias. Special emphasis should be placed on recruiting and maintaining diverse administrative and teaching staff. Likewise, special emphasis should be placed on training current teachers and counselors through college courses, continuing education, and workshops in working culturally diverse populations.

School systems should address student issues by:

- a) providing cultural enrichment activities for students
- b) fostering an environment of cooperation between students of differing learning styles and interest.

Similarly, teachers must deal with biases and perceptions as well as how to be effective in an environment of diverse learners.

School systems should:

- a) base referrals on more than teacher observation
- b) involve parents in the assessment process
- c) implement a review committee to monitor system-wide compliance
- d) offer a mentoring program to help teachers adapt to new challenges and special issues

By providing these services to students and teachers, those students who need assistance will not be overlooked and others will not be placed for services based on teacher and counselor bias.

**AUTHOR NOTE**

Correspondence regarding this manuscript should be directed to: Dr. Eddie Clark, Jr., Troy University-Montgomery, P.O. Drawer 4419, Montgomery, Alabama 36103-4419. Email: clarked@troy.edu.

**REFERENCES**


7 Conduct Disorder in African American Adolescent


Perceptions of the School Counselor’s Role: A Challenge for the Profession

Leila Vaughn
Robin Bynum
Mary Ann Hooten
Troy University

Abstract
This study was conducted to determine school counselors’ perceptions of their roles and identity and to assess how the guidelines of the American School Counseling Association National Model and the Alabama PEPE are being implemented. The results indicated significant differences on three dimensions of the School Counselor Activity Rating Scale. These findings indicate the need for counselor educators and school counseling leaders to prepare school counselors to assume the roles proposed by ASCA and the Alabama Counseling Plan.

Introduction
Discussion on accountability in school counseling programs has been a topic of concern as early as the 1930s when guidance programs were required to show results in the following areas: dropout rates, standard of scholarship, better morale in the student body, fewer disciplinary cases, fewer subject failures and withdrawals, students better informed about their futures, fewer absences, better study habits, and more intelligent selection of subjects (Gysbers, 2004). Today, the emphasis on accountability is even stronger for school counselors, who are constantly being challenged regarding their roles and identity.

The past decade has witnessed a movement toward transformation of the role and identity of school counselors. Several societal and educational concerns have served as the impetus for reassessing the role of school counselors. Erford (2003) proposes that the “new focus on academic on academic performance in support of a school’s educational mission is necessary to win the respect of school reform advocates and achievement-focused educators” (p.iii). Government agencies and the general public are requiring schools to provide better “outcome products” and all educators, teachers, administrators, and counselors must collaborate to promote student achievement. In 2001, the U.S. Department of Education introduced the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in an attempt to raise standards and promote accountability. The NCLB Act aims to create equal educational opportunities and standards for all children across race, ethnicity and gender.

To become visible in this accountability/achievement movement, school counselors must “move beyond their current roles as ‘helper-responders’ and become proactive leaders and advocates for the success of all students (Erford, 2007, p.3). The American School Counseling Association (ASCA) through the National Standards for School Counseling Programs (Campbell & Dahir, 1997) has developed a comprehensive approach to deliver and manage school counseling programs. One of the key elements of the National Model is accountability with an emphasis for counselors to provide “evidence” rather than report “efforts.” This new measure of accountability focuses on, “How are
students different as a result of what we do? Counselors can no longer only report the number of individual sessions and guidance classes they conduct; they must now show evidence of how their classroom guidance sessions, individual counseling, parent meetings, etc. make an impact on school improvement. Similar to teachers, counselor accountability has shifted from “process” to “student outcome” and counselors are now being challenged to redefine their roles and counseling programs.

**Role Ambiguity.**

For decades, school counselors have struggled to define their image as an integral part of the school and to prove how they contribute to the success of students. Rhyne-Winkler and Wooten (1996) reported that counselors’ roles, responsibilities, and evaluation are “often subject to the whim of the building administrator.” Thus there appears to be little consistency regarding the role and expectations of school counselors. Additionally, many teachers, students, and parents are unclear about the roles and responsibilities of school counselors and as a result the counselors are often viewed as ancillary workers in their schools.

For this reason, counselors are often assigned tasks by principals (Kirchner, 2005) who are either unaware of the ASCA National Standards or totally disregard the required tasks outlined for effective school counseling programs. Kirchner concluded that “it may not be principals’ lack of understanding of counselor roles that leads to poor allocation of counselor’ time, but the real demands of the work settings that impinge on both roles.” (p.3)

Many graduates of school counseling programs indicate that there is a serious disconnect with the preparation they receive in the classroom and the actual tasks they are required to perform when they are hired. In fact, Ross and Herrington (2006) cited an example of a middle school counselor who returned to the university to enroll in educational leadership courses. When asked her reason for taking these courses, she replied “As a middle school counselor I do a lot of administrative work.” (p. 2).

To counter the challenge of role ambiguity, the profession has undertaken a strong thrust to transform school counselor training programs and the identity of school counseling. The Education Trust Fund’s Transforming School Counseling Initiative (1996) was one of the first efforts to address the issue of graduate-level preparation for school counselors. This Initiative recognized the impact that counselors have on students’ choices and their postsecondary options. Through this program, 10 grants were awarded to school counselor programs and their K-12 district partners to identify specific content and skills that school counselor programs should include in their curriculum to effectively meet the needs of students.

**Counseling Standards**

In 1997, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) provided guidelines for comprehensive school counseling programs. The *National Standards for School Counseling Programs* are built on three domains: Academic Development, Career Development, and Personal/Social Development that address nine competencies/skills K-12 students should acquire. Academic Development encompasses strategies and activities to
enable the student to experience academic success; Career Development addresses strategies and activities to enable the student to develop a positive attitude toward work, and to develop the necessary skills to make a successful transition from school to the world of work; and Personal/Social Development provides strategies and activities to support and maximize each student’s personal (Campbell & Dahir, 1997).

In 2003, ASCA published the ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling which is built on four systems: Foundation, Delivery, Management, and Accountability. This model guides counselors in implementation of comprehensive school counseling programs based on professional foundations: a mission statement, the ASCA National Standards and Competencies, and the three domains: Academic, Career, and Personal/Social. The delivery system includes the guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services, and system support. The management system guides the implementation of the counseling program with an advisory council, use of data, action plans, use of time, and calendars. The accountability system requires counselors to analyze data standardized tests and informal data and to develop effective programs that can be audited.

ASCA has provided counselors with specific guidelines to develop, manage, deliver and evaluate their school counseling programs. Thus counselors are being challenged to recognize the crucial role school counseling programs have on student success and school achievement. They must become more involved as leaders and partners with teachers, parents, and administrators in improving academic and behavioral issues of their students. Counseling programs must not only be developmental and comprehensive, but also be data-driven by academic assessments, needs assessments from parents, teachers and students, as well as assessment of the school environment. Strategies implemented based on data must be evaluated to determine effectiveness and areas for improvement.

As the school counseling profession works to redefine itself, there is evidence that although many counselors have embraced the new professional identity they are unable to implement these new roles as outlined by ASCA. In order to be recognized as integral players in the school improvement process, counselors must clearly articulate the ASCA National Standards for their key constituents, teachers, administrators, and parents. Until these critical groups understand the professional roles under which counselors should perform, school counseling will continue to receive limited legitimacy and counselors will continue to be used for inappropriate tasks.

Purpose

The purpose of this research study was to determine school counselors’ perceptions of their roles and the activities they perform. This study was also designed to gather information on activities counselors “actually” performed, versus activities they “preferred” to do. The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To examine the role and functions of school counselors.
2. To assess how the ASCA National Model guidelines are being implemented.
3. To provide information to assist counselor educators in preparing
school counselors to assume leadership roles in the school achievement process.

(4) To determine if significant differences exist in the counselors’ perceptions on five dimensions or activities: (i) Counseling, (ii) Consultation, (iii) Curriculum, (iv) Coordination, and (v) Other, when grouped according to preferred categories.

**Method**

**Participants**

All counselors (N = 52) in the 21 school districts served by the Southeast Alabama In-Service Center were invited to participate in the study. Information regarding the research study was sent to all school superintendents and principals requesting their permission for counselors’ participation. Survey packets, including an informed consent form, were mailed to the counselors approved to participate in the study. Forty counselors returned the surveys of which 9 had incomplete data for both instruments; therefore, only 31 were included in the study.

**Instruments**

Two instruments were used to obtain data on counselor activities: The Counselor Survey and The School Counseling Activity Rating Scale (SCARS). The Counselor Survey was compiled by two of the authors using seven indicators from the Alabama Professional Personnel Evaluation Program (PEPE) Self Assessment Form for Counselors (2007). The PEPE has been used since 1997 by Alabama State Department of Education to evaluate public school educators, including school counselors. Respondents were required to respond using a 5-point Likert scale.

The School Counseling Activity Rating Scale, developed by Janna Scarborough (2005) is designed to gather “process” data on activities of school counselors. It provides valid statistical data on how counselors actually spend their time versus how they would prefer to spend their time in job-related activities (Scarborough, 2005). The SCARS survey is composed of five scales: Counseling Activities, Consultation Activities, Curriculum Activities, Coordination Activities, and Other Activities. Results on the initial instrument indicated content validity, construct validity, and reliability coefficients for the five scales ranging from .75 to .93. Respondents were required to rate each item on a 5-point Likert scale: Actual 1 – I never do this, 2 – I rarely do this, 3 – I occasionally do this, 4 – I frequently do this, 5 – I routinely do this; and Prefer 1 – I would prefer to never do this, 2 – I would prefer to rarely do this, 3 – I would prefer to occasionally do this, 4 – I would prefer to frequently do this, 5 – I would prefer to routinely do this.

**Data Analysis**

The School Counselor Survey items were analyzed by re-coding responses into two discrete categories: (1) Never/Rarely and (2) Frequently/Routinely. A Frequency Table was created to summarize these data. The SCARS data were analyzed using the Windows version of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to compare participants’ responses to each item in the “Actual” category to their responses in the “Preferred” category. A paired t-test was conducted to assess any significant differences.
Results

School Counselor Survey

Table 1 presents a summary of responses for each of the questions from the School Counselor Survey which was based on items from the PEPE. As previously discussed, the categories were collapsed into “Never/Rarely” and “Frequently/Routinely” to allow for a more meaningful analysis.

School Counseling Activity Rating Scale (SCARS)

To analyze the School Counseling Activity Rating Scale (SCARS), a comparison was made between each item that counselors rated as an activity they actually did versus an activity that they preferred to do. There were five different categories of activities to be analyzed: (1) Counseling (2) Consultation (3) Curriculum (4) Coordination, and (5) Other. A paired-sample t-test was done on each group to determine significant differences.

The overall results for the SCARS Instrument revealed that significant differences at $p. < 0.05$ level were found for three categories (i) Counseling Activities (ii) Curriculum Activities and (iii) Other Activities. A closer observation of the findings show that the mean scores were higher for curriculum and counseling activities for tasks they preferred compared to tasks they actually performed. However, under other activities, the mean score was higher for the actual tasks performed compared to tasks that counselors would prefer to do. These findings suggest that significant discrepancies exist in counselors’ perceptions of the activities and roles they were actually performing compared to those they would prefer to perform.

School Counselor Survey

The results of the School Counselor Survey indicate that for all seven items taken from the Alabama PEPE instrument, more respondents reported that they frequently/routinely performed these activities. For item 2 “analyzes student assessment data to identify instructional needs and guidance needs” 28 of the 31 respondents stated that they were performing this activity. For item 7, 28 of the 29 respondents reported that they “participate in shared decision-making in the school.” The majority of respondents (22 of 28) also reported that they frequently/routinely “provide faculty and administrators information regarding conditions and factors that impact teaching and learning” (item 3). These responses suggest that many counselors in our sample recognize the importance of these critical functions as outlined by ASCA and PEPE.

On the other hand, although 13 respondents indicated that they frequently/routinely “provide leadership in identifying and resolving issues in education on local, state, regional, and national levels” (item 4), 12 respondents indicated they either never or rarely provided leadership. This finding is a cause for concern as leadership and advocacy are key roles for school counselors based on the ASCA National Model.
Responses from the SCARS instrument provided important information regarding activities participants actually performed and activities in which they would prefer to spend more time.

**Counseling Activities**

Based on the analyses, overall significant difference \( (p < 0.00) \) was found for Counseling Activities. Significant differences were found for 8 out of 10 variables: counsel with students regarding personal/family concerns; counsel with students regarding crisis/emergency issues; provide small group counseling regarding relationship/social skills; provide small group counseling for academic issues; conduct small group counseling regarding substance abuse; conduct small groups regarding family/personal issues; follow-up on individual and group counseling participants and counsel students regarding academic issues.

These results indicate that respondents would prefer to spend more time providing individual and small group counseling sessions on critical academic and personal issues. These results suggest that counselors believe they are not spending actual time on essential counseling activities that contribute to student development and academic success.

**Consultation Activities**

Although there was not an overall significance at the \( p < .05 \) level for Consultation Activities, 3 of the 7 variables in this category indicated significant differences: consult with community and school agencies concerning students; consult with parents regarding child/adolescent issues; and coordinate referrals to community or education professionals.

These results indicate that respondents would prefer to spend more time consulting with community and school agencies and working with parents regarding developmental issues. They also suggest that counselors are not spending enough time coordinating referrals for their students. Based on these results it appears that school counselors in this study were not fulfilling their roles as advocates for students. The ASCA National Model proposes that school counselors should be advocates and collaborate with stakeholders such as community leaders, school agencies and parents to ensure that students receive essential services to promote student achievement.

Although 13 respondents indicated that they occasionally provided consultation to administrators, only 4 reported that they routinely did so. This is an area of concern as the ASCA National Model proposes that school counselors must exhibit leadership and advocacy for students as they identify barriers to learning. These results are consistent with the responses from the School Counselor Survey that indicated that 12 respondents never provided leadership in identifying and resolving issues facing education, on a local, state, regional and national level.

**Curriculum Activities**

Overall significant difference was found for Curriculum Activities at the \( p < .05 \) level. Significant differences were found
for all 8 variables in this section: conduct classroom activities to introduce yourself and explain the counseling program to all students; conduct classroom lessons addressing career development and the world of work; conduct classroom lessons on various personal and/or social traits; conduct classroom lessons on relating to others; conduct classroom lessons on personal growth and development issues; conduct classroom lessons on conflict resolution; conduct classroom lessons regarding substance abuse; and conduct classroom lessons on personal safety issues.

The results for Curriculum Activities indicate that respondents believe they are not spending enough time presenting guidance curriculum in classroom sessions. The ASCA Standards outlines three domains – career, academic, and personal, that should be addressed in the guidance curriculum. These responses suggest that counselors are spending limited classroom time on topics designed to develop career, and personal/social aspects of students and to encourage high academic performance.

Coordination Activities

For Coordination Activities significant differences at $p < .05$ level were found for 5 of the 13 variables: inform parents regarding the role, training, program, and interventions of a school counselor within the context of your school; conduct or coordinate parent education classes or workshops; inform teachers and administrators about the role, training, program, and interventions of a school counselor within the context of your school; coordinate with an advisory team to analyze and respond to school counseling program needs and formally evaluate student progress as a result of participation in individual/group counseling from student, teacher and/or parent perspectives.

The results indicate that the majority of respondents would prefer to frequently/routinely inform parents and teachers/administrators about the role, training, program, and interventions of a school counselor within the context of their school. This suggests that counselors recognize the importance of clarifying their roles and functions to these key constituent groups. Counselors cannot expect to achieve their goals as defined by ASCA and the Alabama Department of Education if teachers, parents and administrators are unclear about the roles, training, and requirements for a comprehensive counseling program. The ASCA National Model and PEPE both propose that effective school counseling programs should be guided by a team of stakeholders who are all focused on achieving the mission of their school – student success and school improvement.

The item regarding “conduct or coordinate parent education classes or workshops” indicated that there is limited interaction with parents. Twelve respondents indicated that they never conducted parent education workshops, 14 occasionally did, and only 4 reported that they would prefer to do so. As significant stakeholders in student achievement, parents must be encouraged to participate in their children’s academic and social achievement. Counselors and teachers often report how difficult it is to encourage parents to attend parent teacher meetings or to just interact regarding their children before negative issues arise. This is a challenge for school counselors to initiate
innovative methods for increasing parental involvement in the school process.

Of similar concern is the item that addresses coordination “with an advisory team to analyze and respond to school counseling program needs.” Although 12 respondents indicated they occasionally held advisory meetings, only 2 reported they routinely do so. The ASCA National Model proposes that each school should have an advisory team to assist the counselor (a) to analyze the school climate and assessment results and (b) to help develop strategies on how best to respond to identified needs. Advisory teams serve a critical role in developing strong school counseling programs.

Most respondents indicated that they would prefer to do more formal evaluation of student progress. This is a positive sign that counselors want to take more active roles in assisting students academically through individual/group counseling and through more interaction with parents and teachers.

Based on the results, it appears that the majority of respondents were actually conducting needs assessments and counseling program evaluations from parents, faculty and/or students. Only 2 respondents reported they never conducted this activity. These results indicate that most school counselors are following the requirements set forth by ASCA and the Alabama State Guidance Plan for needs assessments to guide the development of the school counseling program. Needs assessments and program evaluations from key constituents – teachers, parents, and students help counselors prioritize areas to be addressed in all aspects of the counseling program, through classroom sessions, small group and/or individual sessions, as well as through teacher and parent workshops.

The majority of respondents indicated that they coordinated the standardized testing program. This response was expected as the Alabama State Department requires that all school counselors coordinate testing within their schools.

**Other Activities**

For Other Activities, significant differences at the \( p<.05 \) level were found for 5 out of 10 variables: participate on committees within the school; organize outreach for low income students; perform hall, bus, and cafeteria duty; handle discipline of students; and substitute teach.

Based on these results, respondents indicated that they would prefer to spend more time on committees and to organize outreach services for low-income students. Twenty respondents indicated that they frequently/routinely scheduled students for classes with only 6 stating they never performed this activity. These results were expected especially for high school counselors for whom this activity is a major task. It is hoped that as counselors schedule classes they will implement the underlying theme of the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), that of ensuring equity for all races and gender, and promoting high standards for all students. As student advocates, they should encourage their schools and system to offer Advanced Placement courses and challenge more students to enroll in these classes so that they will be better prepared for success in life or college.

Twelve respondents indicated that they routinely perform hall, bus, and cafeteria
Perceptions of the School Counselor’s Role

In many school counseling programs, school counselors are required to handle a variety of clerical duties, while only 6 reported that they would prefer to do these duties. Although such tasks may appear on the surface to be non-guidance activities, the interaction that can occur at such times can be viewed in a positive way. As students file on or off the school bus, this provides counselors with an opportune time to meet and greet students, to observe individual and group behaviors and immediately collect subjective information. The same is true for hall and cafeteria duties – these all provide opportunities for assessing the school climate and for counselor visibility.

Fifteen respondents indicated that they routinely enroll and withdraw students and 19 reported that they were responsible for maintaining/completing educational records (cumulative files, test scores, attendance reports, drop-out reports). Although these are important tasks that school counselors should be involved with, there is some concern regarding the amount of time spent in these areas. Some of these tasks could be handled effectively by trained secretaries or other clerical personnel, thus releasing the counselor to utilize their time on higher-order activities, such as delivering the guidance curriculum in classrooms. Additionally, the counselor’s time should be spent analyzing and disaggregating test data to determine specific areas of concern for the school and individual students.

Discussion

The results from the School Counselor Survey (based on Alabama PEPE Indicators) and the School Counselor Activity Rating Scale provide valuable insight for the school counseling profession and counselor education programs. Like other professionals, school counselors should be required to adhere to the guidelines developed by their national organization, ASCA. The National Model should serve as the template for counseling programs and for daily implementation of school counseling programs.

There is strong evidence that the majority of the participants in this study would prefer to be involved in the activities that promote student achievement through the three domains – academic, career, and personal social activities. Yet there are glaring areas of concern – the need for more involvement with parents, for increased leadership roles in their schools, to serve as advocates for students, and for the reduction of time spent on clerical tasks.

The key elements that emerged are for school counselors to truly understand their roles as defined by ASCA and the Alabama State Department of Education and to be effective in communicating this information to principals, teachers, and parents. By doing so, school counselors will enhance their identity and gain respect as integral leaders in achieving the mission of their school - the academic improvement of all students. The school counseling profession will be transformed as counselors embrace the ASCA themes of advocacy, leadership, and collaboration. School Counseling educators play a crucial role in implementing this transformation when they focus on teaching the competencies and skills that will allow graduates to practice with confidence using the guidelines as outlined by the ASCA National Model and School Counseling Standards.

Finally, continuing research and professional development should be
provided for principals and administrators to keep them abreast of the professional roles of school counselors. The intent should be to make them aware that when counselors are allowed to implement the ASCA roles of advocacy, leadership, and collaboration the students will benefit, and ultimately the overall school achievement will be enhanced.

**Implications for Future Research**

This study represents a small sample of school counselors in south Alabama. To validate these findings, further research should be conducted regarding counselors’ roles and functions and to determine how closely aligned their programs are with the ASCA National Model and the Alabama PEPE.

**AUTHOR NOTE**

Correspondence regarding this manuscript should be directed to: Dr, Leila Vaughn, 5B McCatha Hall, Troy University, Troy, Alabama 36082.
Email: lvaughn68@troy.edu

**REFERENCES**


Education Trust. (2005). The Education Trust’s National Center for Transforming


Table 1
School Counselor Survey (based on the PEPE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Never/Rarely</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Freq/Routinely</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Conducts follow-up studies of students for program and school use</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Analyzes student assessment data to identify instructional and guidance needs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Provides faculty and administrators information regarding conditions and factors that impact teaching and learning</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Provides leadership and identifying and resolving issues and problems facing education (local, state, regional, national)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Provides leadership in establishing and/or achieving school goals</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Initiates activities and projects in the school and school system</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Participates in shared decision-making in the school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Total sample = 31. There was no response for some items.
Social Norms of Alcohol Use at Historically Black University

Teresa Laird
Regent University

Andrea Shelton
Joseph Jefferson
Texas Southern University

Abstract
The authors surveyed 239 volunteer participants at one southern historically Black university using the Core Alcohol and Drug survey. The purpose was to document the overestimation (or misperception) of alcohol and drug usage rates at the selected institution and to compare reported rates to those noted at a predominately White university within close proximity. Analysis of the data indicated that participants’ actual responses differed significantly from what they perceived to be the campus norm.

Introduction
Excessive drinking by college students has persisted over the last 200 years (Gehrig & Geraci, 1989; Straus & Bacon, 1953; U. S. Department of Education, 2003). Drinking patterns are noted to vary by demographics of the students and characteristics of the institutional environment. Research conducted in the last decade has demonstrated that college students frequently overestimate the amount of alcohol used by their peers (Baer, Stacy, & Larimer, 1991; Haines & Spear, 1996; Hingson, Heeren, Zakocs, Kopstein, & Wechsler, 2002; Perkins & Wechsler, 1996). Students may justify their patterns of consumption, citing the perceived drinking behaviors of their peers as higher than their own.

Research suggests that students may use alcohol and other drugs as a response to a perceived social norm or environmental misperception (Prentice & Miller, 1993). Compared to pressure by their peer groups, response to a social norm voluntary and individual-based. If students perceive that most students are engaging in a particular activity, the response is to conform to that social norm. Providing students with accurate and campus-specific information on the rates of drinking among their peers may affect the perceived norm. As a result, overestimations of alcohol use among peers decreases and actual consumption declines as a response to new social norms (DeJong, et al., 1998; Haines & Spear, 1996).

Although studies investigating social norms have been conducted for approximately 10 years at Predominantly White Universities (PWUs), there is a paucity of literature on this phenomenon at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The purpose of this investigation was to examine social drinking norms and students’ perceptions regarding campus alcohol consumption at a HBCU.

Ethnic Comparison of Drinking Patterns
Presley, Meilman, and Lyeria (1995) examined students’ ethnic backgrounds and identified social drinking patterns unique to each. A national study of 40,000 college students reported that the highest risk factors for alcohol drinking in college...
include being White, single, male, and having a parent who drank (Lightenfeld & Kayson, 1994). The same study, African American students reported low alcohol consumption regardless of the institution they attended. White students attending PWUs consistently reported drinking significantly more than White students did at HBCUs.

Mielman, Presley, and Cashin (1995) surveyed over 12,000 students at HBCUs and found that students on average report 1.8 drinks per week compared to a reported average of 4.6 drinks per week at PWUs. Historically Black institutions also reported low rates of binge drinking, defined as five or more alcoholic beverage in one sitting during two weeks prior to completing the survey (Meilman et al., 1995) and low frequency of use compared to predominantly White academic institutions (Debro, 1991; Ford & Carr, 1990; Ford & Goode, 1994). In the Mielman et al. (1995) study, 22% of students engaged in binge drinking at the HBCUs compared to 38% of White students at the PWUs.

Social Drinking Norms

The concept of social drinking norms may be defined as a person’s attitudes, beliefs, and feelings regarding his/her behaviors on what he/she perceives as normal, agreeable, or even expected within a particular social context (Berkowitz & Perkins, 1986). In many situations, people’s perception of these norms will influence their behavior (Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth, (CAMY) 2006). When individuals misperceive the norms of their group or think an attitude or behavior is more (or less) widespread than is actually the case, individuals may decide to engage in behaviors that are consistent with those false norms. Although alcohol consumption differs by ethnicity on college campuses, a similar pattern of overestimation or misperception of drinking by peers is demonstrated in the current study.

Method

As part of an annual assessment of alcohol and other drug use at a selected HBCU, the Core Drug, and Alcohol Survey (Presley, Harrold, Scouten, Lyerla, & Meilman, 1994) was administered to 239 students. Volunteer participants were recruited through a convenience cluster sampling of the largest classes in the Education department. This strategy ensured a high return rate and a sample representative of the student body. Participants received information regarding the purpose of the study and consent forms were distributed. Data were collected during the 2004-2005 academic year, with Institutional Review Board approval.

Core Alcohol and Drug Instrument

The Core instrument was developed and funded by the U. S. Department of Education. Survey items are designed to identify and measure students’ attitudes, social perceptions of use, consequences, background characteristics, and perceptions of the campus environment.

Using a Likert format, the questions ascertained self-reported alcohol use. The Core survey is also used to assess perceptions of alcohol use among students on campus by asking subjects how much they think other students are drinking. Responses are recorded on an individualized scanned form, which is
analyzed by the Core Institute (1999 located at Southern Illinois University (Presley et al., 1994). Only data on self-reported alcohol use and participant's perception of overall campus alcohol use are presented in this paper. This data were compared and contrasted with national findings between PWUs and HBCUs.

Self-reported measures assessed by the Core Alcohol and Drug Survey indicated that the survey has construct validity. Test-retest reliability was estimated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. For items on alcohol use, the test-retest reliability was high with item correlations above .80 (Presley, Harrold, Scouten, Lyerla, & Meilman, 1993).

Statistical Analysis

Frequency distributions were calculated, cross-tabbed, and used for comparisons. The Kruskal-Wallis \((H)\) test was utilized as a one-way analysis between subjects, designed to test mean differences with ordinal ranked data. The value of \(H\) was tested at the probability levels of .05 or higher by the chi-square \((\chi^2)\) distribution table.

Results

Participants

A total of 239 participants were enrolled in the study. Although other ethnic groups were represented, including Hispanic, Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Other, only data collected from Black and White students are reported here \((n = 219)\). Participants’ ages ranged from eighteen (18) years to fifty-three (53) years. Nearly half (46%) were in the age range 18-20 years. Eighty-one percent of the students were Black, and were 9.5% White (non-Hispanic).

The majority was single (68.8%) and female (59.7%). These demographics are consistent with data provided by the University’s Enrollment Management office, suggesting that the sample was representative of the approximately 10,000 in the student body.

Drinking Patterns and Perceptions

The analysis of self-reported drinking patterns revealed that the average number of drinks consumed per week was 1.4 per sitting within a two-week span. The percentage of respondents who reported binge drinking was 22.4%. The response to the question about alcohol consumption within the last year (last 12 months) indicated that 98 (40.8%) did not drink or consume alcohol. In contrast, 59 (25.5%) of the respondents perceived that student’s peers drank everyday.

Discussion

The results of this study support previous findings by Meilman, Presley, and Cashin (1995) that alcohol use at HBCUs is lower than at Predominately White Universities. The present study also demonstrates a notable disparity between actual alcohol consumption and the perceptions students’ hold of their peers' usage. The authors found no comparable studies documenting this disparity at HBCUs. The findings are consistent with the numerous studies of PWUs (Presley, Leichliter, & Meilman, 1999; Presley, Meilman, & Leichliter, 2002). A study completed at a PWU in the same state as the present study noted that student norms and activities influenced the perception, frequency and amount of alcohol consumed by peers resulting in a higher consumption “to keep pace with their friends” (Wheeler, Wright, & Frost, 2006).
The Education Development Center (EDC) reported in 2002 that 89.2% of students perceived a higher level of alcohol use among peers than actual drinking levels when students socialize with each other. In the same study, students perceived their peers to be drinking an average of nine drinks a week when the actual reported amount was 4.7 drinks. Results indicated that most students perceived peers “party” drinking with an average of 6.5 drinks, when actually the number was 3.4 drinks. Perkins and Berkowitz (1986) found the same disparity between actual drinking norms and perceived drinking norms on campuses nationwide. Studies evaluated by the CORE Institute (Meilman, Presley, & Lyerla, 1994; Presley, Meilman, & Lyerla, 1995) have also reported this finding and evaluated possible causes for these lower alcohol rates on HBCU’s since the 1990’s, these results suggest a more recent and prevailing trend.

Research at other HBCUs on social norms associated with alcohol consumption is clearly needed. Use rates by students at these institutions remain below national averages. Advertising initiatives by brewers, local marketing, and distributors targeting African Americans may affect future drinking patterns and usage, however.

**Implication for Counselors**

College students may benefit from counseling to reduce or eliminate risky alcohol consumption. Students may establish a skewed schema or perception of college life and college drinking, believing that drinking is an integral part of the college experience, more so than reality. This skewed or inaccurate perspective is often times based on friends’ exaggerated stories and/or the portrayal of college life in the media (Strote, Lee, & Wechsler, 2002). This perspective, built on misperceptions, combined with the often desperate need to “fit in” experienced by many late adolescents and young adults, frequently has a negative affect on alcohol consumption (Johnston, O’Malley, & Bachman, 2002). Students believe that if they drank, as they perceive other students do (following the norm); they will fit in and be accepted. The decision to drink while in college may be more challenging to students as HBCUs who are the first in their families to attend college and who have no point of reference. Counselors may emphasize the negative consequences of drinking that may adversely affect a student’s academic progress, graduation, and career prospects, the very goals that the family is supporting them to achieve.

Problematic drinking is a behavior with known genetic links and environmentally reinforced habits (Lightenfeld & Kayson, 1994). For this reason, it is suggested that counselors invest in resources necessary to identify and refer students needing assistance with alcohol related problems. Opportunities to provide information about alcohol and other drug counseling and education available to students include orientation programs for incoming freshmen and transfer students, welcome back to campus weeks, alcohol awareness month, alcohol-screening programs, and other outreach programs sponsored by university counseling and health education offices. School representatives may also share the campus policy on alcohol use on campus in their recruitment efforts.

Culturally sensitive media presentations, guest lectures, and classroom instruction and activities at HBCUs may prompt students to identify problematic family drinking and allow a forum to discuss physical, legal, and environmental
Social Norms challenges. Information about drinking and perceived norms should be shared with targeted groups such as student athletes, members and pledges of sororities and fraternities, and other student organizations. Such sessions can be facilitated by former athletes or distinguished members, respectively, who may also relay personal stories. Programs may need to be targeted for part-time and commuting students who do not avail themselves of resources on campus due to work conflicts or family obligations. Such programs may be created with students individually or at different venues and times which are more convenient to their schedules. All students regardless of traditional or non-traditional status should be informed of the campus health services or community resources available to them for alcohol and other drug problems. These strategies are currently being implemented or developed for use at the HBCU where the present study was conducted.

In addition to identifying problem drinking, it is helpful to consider psychosocial factors that lead students to problematic alcohol consumption. Issues such as the transition from high school, living away from parents, and wanting to fit in are all major concerns of nearly every new college student (Astin, 1993). Although alcohol may appear to be an easy way to contend with these adjustments, safe alternatives to drinking (i.e. intercept-group interviews, focus groups, and media influences along with exercise, reading, hobbies, volunteer activities, and socializing with peers in non-alcoholic environments) should be provided to students in both formal and informal college settings (Krueger & Morgan, 2005).

Conclusion

College counselors are in an ideal position to help educate students about actual alcohol related behaviors on campus and prevent student alcohol misuse. The personnel at college or university counseling and health centers should provide accurate information to students regarding actual student behaviors in a number of subject areas to avoid misperceptions. These topics could include alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, and sexual activity rates and practices. Newly released findings by the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (CAMY) reported that although African American students drink less, they suffer higher rates of alcohol related problems and behaviors (2006, July). CAMY’s 2006 report also found that the misuse of alcohol, other drugs, and related behaviors decrease once students had accurate information and developed a more realistic perception of use.

High school and college preparatory counselors could also play a role in correcting student’s misperceptions of campus behaviors. Frequently, students (or their alumni parents) choose a particular school due to its social outlets or "party" reputation (Astin, 1993; Colthurst, 1998). Sharing accurate information on actual alcohol use and misuse rates, as well as campus specific alcohol policies could assist in minimizing alcohol consumption and associated risky behaviors before students enter college.◆
AUTHOR NOTE

Teresa Laird is an Associate Professor at Regent University. Andrea Shelton and Joseph Jefferson are faculty at Texas Southern University. Correspondence regarding this manuscript should be directed to: Andrea Shelton, Texas Southern University, 3100 Cleburne, Houston, Texas 77004. Email: sheltonaj@tsu.edu

REFERENCES


History of Alabama Association of Marriage and Family Counselors

Glenda Reynolds
Auburn Montgomery

Abstract

This paper describes the development of the Alabama Association of Marriage and Family Counselors (ALAMFC). The organizational structure, goals, and history are included.

Introduction

When ALAMFC was formed, marriage and family counseling was receiving much attention from various groups. For example, the Alabama legislature enacted the Alabama Board of Examiners in Marriage and Family Therapy on April 8, 1997 (Board of Examiners in Marriage and Family Therapy, 2000), the year after the Alabama Association of Marriage and Family Counselors became a division of the Alabama Counseling Association and the International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors.

Formation of the Division

ALAMFC was the brain child of a group of dedicated practitioners who met in the lobby of a hotel at the 1995 Alabama Counseling Association (ACA) Fall Conference. They talked about current trends and the need for an organization specifically for marriage and family counselors under the umbrella of the Alabama Counseling Association (ALCA). Among those present were, Ken Noram, Sandy Manguson, (S. Manguson, personal communication, February 7, 2007) Harriet Schaffer, Junior Dunham, Carol Ohme, Windell Williamson and Susan Williamson (H. Schaffer, personal communication, August 9, 2006).

For the eleven years since 1996 ALAMFC has served from approximately 150 to 200 members each year. The purpose of the organization has remained unchanged. It includes "fostering programs of education in the field of marriage and family counseling, stimulating, promoting, and conducting programs of research in the field of marriage and family counseling; conducting scientific and educational meetings and conferences; establishing contacts with other organizations for scientific and educational pursuits; and examining conditions which create difficulties for marriage and families, and working to remove them. (Alabama Association of Marriage and Family Counselors, 1999).

Organizational Structure

The Executive Council consists of a President, President-Elect, Immediate Past-President, Secretary/Treasurer, and other officers the Executive Council may consider necessary. A list of the Past-Presidents can be found in Table 1.

Bylaws

The AAMFC Bylaws were approved by the membership in 1996 at the ALCA Fall Conference in Birmingham (AAMFC, 1999). They contained ten articles; name and purpose, membership, meetings, executive council, officers, committees, national representation, amendments, parliamentary authority, and dissolution.
They were amended in 1999 on four points: (a) call the Board of Directors the Executive Council, (b) membership of the council must conform to ALCA’s bylaws, (c) remove one Member-at-Large for every 50 members of the division and make the elective officers and their corresponding terms align with those of ALCA, (d) and change the definition of a quorum. (AAMFC, 1999).

**Chronology of History**

Ken Noram was elected the first president (1995-1996) and Karla Carmichael was the first secretary. The By-laws were approved in 1996 and ALMFC received its charter from the International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors, a division of the American Counseling Association that year at the American Counseling Association Conference. A delegation of officers and members from ALAMFC attended the American Counseling Association conference to receive the national charter from IAMFC (H. Schaffer, personal communication, August 9, 2006). IAMFC is “a division of the American Counseling Association (ACA), which embraces a multicultural approach in support of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of the families we serve” (International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors, 2007).

Nineteen ninety-nine was a busy year for ALAMFC. Dr. Kaplan, president of IAMFC, was the guest speaker at the first luncheon at the ALCA Fall Conference and also did two content sessions. After he spoke, the bylaws were revised to be in line with those of the ALCA and IAMFC (Alabama Association of Marriage and Family Counselors, 1999).

ALAMFC worked in conjunction with the State of Alabama Department of Human Resources to present training sessions for working with adoptive families. Also, in 1999 three members of the ALAMFC Executive Council were nominated to the ALCA Professional Standards Committee for membership on Alabama Board of Examiners in Counseling (ABEC). They were W. Dunham, Jr., Karole Ohme and Harriet Schaffer. The Professional Standards Committee, with Meg Smith as chair, met and selected the names of two people, Karole Ohme and Harriet Schaffer, to send to the Governor of Alabama for consideration. Harriet Schaffer was appointed by the Governor to ABEC in 2001. She served until 2006.

The next year, 2000, W. Dunham, Jr. president, again invited the president of IAMFC to come to Alabama’s Annual Conference. Patricia Stevens, the IAMFC president, was in private practice in Birmingham before moving to Colorado. President Dunham wrote in the newsletter, “IAMFC President, Patricia Stevens, will be our guest speaker. Be sure to sign up early so you can take advantage of the free lunch, learn an exciting presentation from one of Alabama’s own, and be treated to fellowship and dialogue with your colleagues.” (Alabama Association of Marriage and Family Counselor News, Fall, 2000).

From the first, interest must have been high among ALAMFC members. The minutes of the April, 1997 meeting showed that income for May included $1360.00 from dues and $1237.00 from the workshop (Minutes of ALAMFC Board, April 1997). Doris Wood was the second Secretary-Treasurer and her minutes show a very active board (D. Wood, personal communication, April 24,
29 History of AAMFC

2007). Some of the early activities included a fall luncheon and two workshops per year, research and scholarship awards, and advocacy for insurance and favorable legislation for practitioners. Services to the community include monetary support for needy organizations Valecia Asberry was Secretary-Treasurer during the busy 2001 year, then Harriet Schaffer because Secretary-Treasurer and has served in that position with seven presidents.

Topics and Presenters at Workshops and Luncheons

A complete list of presenters was not available at the time of this writing. However the excellence of topics and presenters are found in Table 2.

Summary

The Alabama Association for Marriage and Family Counselors has served Alabama marriage and family counselors well for eleven years. The division has provided its 150 to 200 members with excellent continuing education opportunities and advocated for professional counselors. The future of the association includes continuation of the services and goals of the past. ALAMFC will provide leadership in couple and family therapy training, skill building, and research through workshops and presentations at state and national conferences. Goals include emphasis on what works with couples and families and recognizing and working with the diversity of family systems. We will utilize technology to provide announcements of workshops, contact members and the executive council, and place a Web page on the ALCA Web site. New services will evolve as the division continues to evaluate the needs of members and respond to those needs in a proactive way.

This brief history was written with the assistance of members, minutes, newsletters, and other documents. No names were omitted purposefully. Many people contributed to the growth of ALAMFC and all their contributions are appreciated. ✷

AUTHOR NOTE

Correspondence regarding this manuscript should be directed to: Dr. Glenda Reynolds, Auburn Montgomery, 575 Ridge Park Drive, Montgomery, Alabama 36117-8032.

REFERENCES


Table 1

**ALCA Past-Presidents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Past-President</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995-96</td>
<td>Ken Norem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-97</td>
<td>Karole Ohme (moved up following resignation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td>Karole Ohme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-00</td>
<td>Harriet Schaffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-01</td>
<td>Junior Dunham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-02</td>
<td>Doris Wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-03</td>
<td>Necoal Driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-04</td>
<td>Mary Barr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-05</td>
<td>Kelly Driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>Brenda James</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>Glenda Reynolds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>Robert Hunt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2

**Topics/Presenters at ALAMFC Workshops and Luncheons**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Presenter(s)</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Ray Beevar</td>
<td>Constructivist Approach to Marriage/Family Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>David Kaplan</td>
<td>President of IAMFC, Fall Conference Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Richard Delaney</td>
<td>Troubled Transplants (Co-Sponsored with DHR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nick Stinnett</td>
<td>Secrets of Strong Families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patricia Stevens</td>
<td>President of IAMFC- Integrating Family Work within The School Setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Bob Wendorf</td>
<td>Diagnosis and Treatment of Borderline/Narcissistic Couples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Winston Schepps</td>
<td>Three Approaches to Working Out Conflicts with Families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doris Wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W. Dunham, Jr.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Connie LaMonte</td>
<td>Helping Families with End of Life Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Tarin Majure</td>
<td>Art Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Connie LaMonte</td>
<td>Creative Techniques in Counseling: Using Music in A Therapeutic Setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>David Creamer</td>
<td>Families in Need: Family Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wesley Goodenough</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poppy Moon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brad Willis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Micheal Semon</td>
<td>The Power of Friedman`s Fables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Marvin Jenkins</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a branch of the American Counseling Association

Dr. Ervin L. Wood
Executive Director
217 Daryle Street
Livingston, AL 35470