USING A COACHING MODEL TO DEVELOP LEAD SCHOOL COUNSELORS' LEADERSHIP SELF-EFFICACY

A Record of Study

by

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ABSTRACT

The supervision role and responsibilities of lead school counselors vary widely across and within schools and school districts. One role is increasingly significant – the role of clinical supervisor. The researcher used a case study design to investigate the leadership self-efficacy of three lead school counselors working in a major suburban school district. The intent of this record of study was to examine whether and how the implementation of a leadership intervention impacted counselors' sense of self-efficacy related to their ability to lead and supervise other school counselors. The findings suggest that a lead school counselor professional development model, based on a conceptual framework that includes leadership and coaching principles, resulted in positive changes in lead school counselors' leadership self-efficacy. Recommendations for further research include examining the model with a broader range of lead school counselors and involving school administrators in the conception and use of the clinical supervision model.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this record of study to my miracle, Tameka.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

In response to this pressure, as well as competition from charter schools and other alternative forms of education, publicly funded school districts all over the nation have instituted reforms designed to provide families more options, enhance accountability, improve teaching practice, and promote greater achievement. Educational leaders are making great efforts to hone teachers' skills and to mold principals into better instructional leaders. One group, although a major element in the public school landscape, has been largely ignored in terms of support and intervention – school counselors.

Arguably one of the "big 3" of public education's frontline resources, school counselors complement teachers and principals by supporting student's social and emotional needs, delivering academic planning services, and providing career and college advising. General school counselors are expected to meet the same incredibly high expectations for change imposed upon principals and teachers; however, they have not received the additional professional development and support needed to meet the demands imposed on them. This problem is compounded for so-called lead school counselors because they are expected to manage and execute administrative directives and serve students while providing support to the general school counselors, but without the necessary tools. This complex dynamic was revealed in a recent, exploratory case

study of school counseling supervision that the researcher conducted as a requirement for one of his graduate courses. Lead school counselors in the district where the researcher was formerly employed, referred to in the study as District X, discussed their perceptions of their counseling department's supervision model and the challenges they face in their roles; principals and deans of instruction were also interviewed about their perceptions of lead school counselors and their work.

The Problem in Context: A Case Study

In the aforementioned case study conducted in a major suburban school district as defined by the Texas Education Agency, the primary stakeholders were general school counselors, lead school counselors, deans of instruction, principals, and the director of counseling services (Texas Education Agency, n.d.). As previously stated, general school counselors provide or manage services involving students' academic planning, social-emotional advisement, and postsecondary guidance. Lead school counselors provide these services and also serve as coordinators for their campus counseling teams and as communication liaisons between their campuses and the central office. The director of counseling screens and hires all counselor candidates, makes counselor assignments to campuses, provides district-level supervision to all counselors, and conducts 50 percent of the counselors' performance evaluations. Principals, as the head administrators at their secondary campuses, have the sole responsibility of choosing lead school counselors. Deans of instruction, subject to their respective principals, provide daily, administrative supervision for lead school counselors as well as

general school counselors. Performance evaluations are conducted by both deans of instruction and the director of counseling services. Lead school counselors do not contribute to the evaluation of the general school counselors.

These stakeholders have competing values, especially with regard to organizational leadership. Lead school counselors value efficiency in that they would like to reduce the time devoted to regular counseling duties and instead spend more time focusing on leading and developing their counseling teams. In their favor is the fact that principals and deans of instruction have communicated the value of distributive leadership model in which lead school counselors would be more empowered to assume more programmatic duties and some supervisory responsibilities. However, there are also factors that inhibit their ability to lead. First, the director of counseling services appears to value a centralized leadership in which she holds most of the power and control over programs and supervision. Secondly, the general school counselors direct their attention and loyalty primarily toward those who directly influence their performance evaluations (i.e., the deans and the director of counseling services) rather than those they view as their peers (i.e., lead school counselors). Notably, although all interviewees were aware of these conflicting values and the consequent conflicts lead school counselors reported regarding their leadership dilemma, none of the administrators reported the use of additional training or the development of growth plans as solutions. In the original case study, several salient themes emerged, including:

1) the absence of a consistent supervision model that clearly delineates the process by which clinical supervision is provided to individual counselors and by which lead school counselors are selected;
2) divergent perceptions among stakeholders about lead school counselors' roles and responsibilities;
3) the need for additional and specialized training and support related to lead school counselors' development and management of their team members' counseling and professional skills; and
4) the lead school counselors' description of a low sense of self-efficacy to serve effectively in a leadership role.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

Lead school counselors in District X have reported a lack of clarity in terms of their roles and responsibilities and a dire need for training and support related to clinical supervision. Given the different values of organizational leadership among its ranks, the counseling services department should develop a versatile lead school counselor supervision model that provides clarity about key roles and functions and how to execute them. This model also should emphasize the vital need for lead school counselors to train, support, mentor, and address conflicts with their campus counseling teams. Most importantly, the coaching model should serve as an alternative way for lead school counselors to lead, one that focuses on empowerment and partnership. This study is significant because it could serve as an example of this type of supervision model and,

so, provide a number of benefits. The District's administrators would have a basis for establishing set criteria for choosing lead school counselors as well as access to a body of individuals trained to lead and provide clinical supervision. For the lead school counselors, the benefits include participating in professional development about clinical supervision and being better equipped to lead and inspire their teams.

Accordingly, the overall purpose of this qualitative study is two-fold. First, the researcher developed a coaching model for clinical supervision as a leadership intervention for lead school counselors. This intervention is based on a conceptual framework that features clinical supervision concepts, leadership principles, and coaching strategies. Secondly, the researcher aims to explore whether and how the implementation of the lead school counselor intervention impacts counselors' sense of self-efficacy related to their ability to lead and supervise other school counselors.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Lead School Counselors as Supervisors

Lead school counselors are employed by a variety of school districts across the nation (e.g., in Michigan and California) and across Texas (e.g., Allen ISD, Conroe ISD, Klein ISD). According to several job descriptions, lead school counselors fulfill the duties associated with the school counselor and take on a campus-wide leadership role in managing the counseling program and supervising the general school counselors. Clear Creek ISD provides a good example of how districts report using the lead school counselor position. Clear Creek ISD's lead high school counselors are expected to "supervise counseling team members including counseling support staff; supervise all campus counseling and guidance activities and communications; participate on the screening committee of new team members in the counseling department, [and] provide information about the campus counseling procedure." (Clear Creek ISD, 2017). In Spring ISD, the lead school counselor "provides leadership within the counseling staff and acts as a liaison between and among the counseling department, the principal and the instructional staff" (Spring ISD, 2017). Among the duties of a lead school counselor at Bellville ISD are: effectively plan the school guidance and counseling program to meet identified needs; collaborate with other school and district staff to design and/or administer testing and appraisal programs for students; present for students a positive role model that supports the mission of the school district; and participate in the district

staff development program (Bellville ISD, 2017).

Although neither the term “lead school counselor” nor the concept of the position is unique to the district that is the focus of this study, District X, there are no specific references to the term in the literature. Rather, the term “supervisor” is the one that most closely captures the role of the lead school counselor position. In counseling settings, a supervisor is one who provides clinical supervision, which is defined as:

> an intervention that is provided by a senior member to a junior member or members of that same profession. This relationship is evaluative, extends over time, and has the simultaneous purposes of enhancing the professional functioning of the junior member(s), monitoring the quality of the professional services offered to the clients she, he, or they see(s), and serving as a gatekeeper of those who are to enter the particular profession (Bernard and Goodyear, 1998, p. 6)

Both “lead school counselor” and “supervisor” reference the leadership, feedback, support, mentoring, and guidance offered to other counselors. Thus, for this study, references to "supervisors” and "supervision” in the literature were applied to lead school counselors and related supervision issues.

Training and Preparation in Clinical Supervision

There are three types of supervision that a supervisor in a school setting may provide: administrative supervision, which focuses on monitoring the implementation of the policies and procedures that govern the school community; programmatic supervision, which aims to assist trainees in honing their skills in program development, implementation, and coordination; and clinical supervision, which emphasizes the development of skills related to how services are provided to students (Smith and Koltz,

2015;.Duncan, Brown-Rice, and Bardhosi, 2014). Despite having a critical role in the proper functioning of a counseling services department, clinical supervision is often overshadowed by administrative supervision (Roberts & Borders, 1994).

In terms of trends in supervision research in school counseling, providing quality clinical supervision for professional school counselors in a pre-K-12 school setting is considered "both a responsibility and a challenge for professionals in the field" (Perera-Diltz & Mason, 2011, p. 3). On one hand, it is a responsibility in that clinical supervision has been the main agent for enhancing professional skill, competency, and improving school counselor effectiveness (Crutchfield & Borders, 1997; Duncan et al., 2014) and has been stipulated among the core school counselor competencies and professional standards by organizations such as the American School Counselor Association (American School Counselor Association, 2008). Researchers acknowledge the "need for school counselors to have systematic opportunities available for ongoing professional development" after graduating from school counselor preparation programs (Howell et al., 2007, p). In fact, researchers have provided evidence that access to quality clinical supervision benefits counselors by reducing emotional exhaustion and burnout, providing them with a sense of professionalism, and providing support and job comfort (Duncan et al, 2014).

On the other hand, providing clinical supervision is also a challenge for school professionals. There is a pervasive, perceived and actual lack of clinical supervision in the field (Perera-Diltz & Mason, 2011; Sutton & Page, 1994; Luke, Ellis, & Bernard, 2011). School counselors are increasingly isolated in their settings, and they receive

outdated training and/or little to no consistent, clinical supervision (Sutton & Page, 1994; Mitchum-Smith, 2005). In fact, many school counselors wish they had more clinical supervision (Luke et al., 2011).

The configuration of school counselor supervision is a contributing factor to its scarcity. First, as Duncan et. al. (2014) report, supervision in a school setting most often is performed by a school administrator who may attempt to offer some sort of clinical support without having a counseling background. Yet, the fact that the function of clinical supervision is to provide guidance and support for school counselors suggests that supervisors need, not only to be certified school counselors, but also to have had training to carry out supervision interventions meaningfully (Duncan et al., 2014).

Secondly, there is a decrease in the number of school counselor education program courses that address supervision (Perusse, Poynton, Parzych, & Goodnough, 2015). This is especially crippling to the field because coursework and experiences in school counselor preparation programs are (or should be) the primary methods used to prepare students for future leadership and supervisory roles in school counseling (Littrell, Lee-Borden, & Lorenz, 1979; Dollarhide & Miller, 2006).

Third, beyond pre-service mentoring, once school counselors begin work after graduating from a counseling program, there are few opportunities to receive clinical supervision training that supports what they learned in school (Smith & Koltz, 2015; Perera-Diltz & Mason, 2012). As Howell et. al (2007) noted, professional workshops often are not directly tailored to meet the clinical supervision needs of school counselors and, as such, may not be relevant to their primary responsibilities. In cases where school

counselors could attend training specifically designed to enhance or develop their supervision skills, they may face financial barriers due to lack of employer financial support (Kern, 1996). As a result of these issues, most school counselors do not receive the recommended clinical supervision; consequently, they provide supervision with limited, formal clinical supervision training and experience and without a cohesive, conceptual framework and structure for approaching supervision (DeKruyf & Pehrsson, 2011; Smith & Koltz, 2015). When counselors are unable to secure clinical supervision, they report lower job satisfaction, greater likelihood of exiting the career, and poor skill development (Duncan et al., 2014).

In summary, receiving and providing clinical supervision is a critical component of school counselor supervisor experience, but clinical supervision usually is set aside in preference of administrative and programmatic supervision. School counselors rarely receive clinical supervision from qualified, school counseling professionals, and school counselor supervisors are often unable to deliver informed, quality clinical supervision to those they lead. This trend is due, in large part, to the limited attention on clinical supervision in school districts, counselor training programs, and professional development opportunities.

Social Cognitive Theory and Self-Efficacy

Bandura's social cognitive theory (SCT) posits that an individual's personality (i.e., how he thinks and feels, unique traits), environment (i.e., responses from the world around him), and behavior (i.e., the way he acts and reacts) all exert bi-directional

influences on one another (Bandura, 1977). Of critical importance in social cognitive theory are beliefs. According to Bandura (1994) a person's beliefs about himself are impacted by external factors like the environment and even his own behavior; those same beliefs affect how his world responds to him and how he responds to his world. Self-efficacy, a central concept in SCT, refers to a person's "beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives" (p. 2).

In contrast to later conceptions of the more trait-like general self-efficacy, for Bandura, self-efficacy is primarily task- or domain-specific, representing "a dynamic motivational belief system that may vary depending on unique properties of each task...," (Stajkovic & Luthans, 2002). Self-efficacy can be understood as possessing three dimensions: magnitude, or perceptions about the level of task difficulty that can be performed; strength, the degree to which perceptions are strong or weak in response to difficulty; and generality, how perceptions are applied to tasks within a specific domain or across a variety of domains (Stajkovic and Luthans, 2002). Subsumed in the definition of self-efficacy is the idea that people use their judgments in order to achieve a particular goal (Artino, 2012).

Bandura (1994; 1997) asserts that contributing factors to self-efficacy are, most importantly, enactive mastery experiences (actual performance of a relevant task) and, successively, vicarious experiences (observations of others' performances), social persuasion (verbal or other information used to influence perception), and physiological/affective states. Thus, one's self-efficacy can be strengthened by the

positive, cognitive associations a person makes in the following circumstances:

1) when he succeeds at a challenging task.
2) when he witnesses similar people manage task demands successfully and be rewarded for it.
3) when he is persuaded by trustworthy and competent others to believe in his own capabilities to be successful; and
4) when he is able to manage stress reactions and filter out psychologically disturbing distractions.

Conversely, self-efficacy can be weakened by the negative cognitions associated with experiencing and witnessing failures, receiving discouraging comments (or not receiving feedback at all), and being overwhelmed by stress and anxiety. Self-efficacy can be induced using a variety of techniques to engender positive mastery and vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological states, including: participant, live, and symbolic modeling; performance exposure; desensitization; self-instruction; suggestion; and exhortation.

These dynamics are at play in every aspect of the human experience. In fact, the concept of self-efficacy can be integrated into ideas developed about organizations, work motivation, and performance. According to Stajkovic and Luthans (2002), level of self-efficacy "determines whether an employee's work behavior will be initiated, how much effort will be expended, and how long that effort will be sustained, especially in light of disconfirming evidence." Employees with high self-efficacy will exert the amount and

quality of effort that should yield the positive results they expect (e.g., praise, salary increase), while employees with low self-efficacy may not exert much effort at all or may give up too early to reap any benefits. Indeed, research shows that, regarding self-efficacy for a specific task, people with high self-efficacy perform better than those with low self-efficacy (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). Furthermore, self-efficacy is a better predictor of work performance than job satisfaction or any of the five major personality traits (i.e., extraversion, agreeableness, openness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism; Stajkovic & Luthans, 2002). Speaking of academic self-efficacy and performance, Artino (2012) notes that, although possessing skills and knowledge are important for learners to function successfully across domains and in specific circumstances, self-efficacy beliefs predict academic motivation and choices better. He goes on to promote instructional practices that foster high self-efficacy, including the use of goal-setting and peer modeling, providing honest and explicit feedback, and measuring the difference between students' reported self-efficacy and actual performance.

To summarize, self-efficacy is a term that describes the beliefs that an individual constructs about his ability to perform a task, in response to his environment and his behavior. These self-efficacy assessments determine a person's motivation to establish a goal and how much effort they put forth to reach it. Self-efficacy is related to improved performance and may be shaped by mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, physiological arousal.

Leadership Theory in Education

Theories of leadership explain the dynamics of what it takes to make a great leader, among other things. Of course, like other disciplines, the field of education is concerned with producing good leaders and finding the right model for developing them. It might seem natural to discuss instructional leadership, which focuses on school principal development, or transactional leadership, which promotes compliance by using rewards and consequences (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002; Dambe & Moorad, 2008). However, because school counselor supervisors typically do not have the instructional responsibilities nor the administrative power and authority to require or encourage compliance in their followers, these theories are insufficient to address school counselor supervisors' needs. School counselor supervisors would benefit from a leadership model in which hierarchy is flattened and they can use their personality and intrinsic factors (rather than extrinsic rewards) to encourage leadership. The transformational and servant leadership theories seem to be more fitting for understanding the context of this study.

Both transformational leadership and servant leadership can be viewed as types of charismatic leadership in which leaders are oriented toward people and value individualized consideration and the appreciation of followers (Sendjaya, 2015). As Sendjaya (2015) wrote, Weber originally conceived charismatic leadership as resulting from a perception that a leader has divinely-bestowed gifts that demand the attention and commitment of his followers; these leaders often emerged from a marginalized society during times of social upheaval or revolt against traditional authority systems. The

widely accepted hallmarks of a charismatic leader include their vision; the ability to articulate the vision clearly; willingness to take risks to pursue and achieve the vision; sensitivity to the needs of the people; and novel behavior (Judge, Woolfe, Hurst, and Livingston, 2006). Although negative and personalized charismatic leaders can pose big problems for followers and society in general because of their orientation toward self, positive and socialized leaders are oriented toward serving and developing others (Sendjaya, 2015). Some researchers suggest, under the assumption that all humans possess charisma to some degree or another, that charismatic leaders are not just born, but they can be developed (Judge, et. al., 2006).

Transformational leadership. The concept of transformational leadership, grounded in the seminal work of Burns (1978) on "transforming leadership", is based on the notion that the purpose of leadership is to motivate followers to work toward transcendental, organizational goals through exemplary practice, collaboration, and trust (Sun & Leithwood, 2012; Basham, 2012). Transformational leadership is a value-driven leadership philosophy in which the leader sets high standards for followers, and followers strive to exceed performance expectations because of their sense of purpose, intrinsic motivations, and commitment to the leader (Basham, 2012; Sendjaya, 2015). As Basham (2012) explains, transformational leaders respond to change quickly and bring out the best in people. Moreover, such leaders tend to engage in a distribution of power as they learn from others, and they pay specific attention to others' needs for achievement, growth, and intellectual stimulation (Basham, 2012). Key to transformational leadership is the leader's ability to make events meaningful for

followers through an emphasis on emotions and values (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). Research demonstrates that transformational leadership is positively associated with commitment to the organization, morale, enthusiasm, motivation, and social engagement (Bolthouse, 2013).

Servant Leadership. In 1970, former AT&T executive, Robert K. Greenleaf, "coined" the phrase "servant leadership" as a consequence of his dissatisfaction with the traditional top-down, pyramid style of leadership (Allen, Moore, Moser, Neill, Sambamoorthi, & Bell, 2016; Valente, 2016). In his seminal work, Greenleaf (1977) described servant leadership as follows, "The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (p. 27). That is, in terms of priorities, servant-leaders focus on the people they lead first, the organization itself next, and themselves last. Greenleaf believed that, in contrast to traditional forms of leadership, servant leadership could be effective in inspiring and developing health relationships within organizational communities (Valenti, 2016).

The servant-leadership philosophy stresses the person over the organization and promotes a holistic approach to work through a sense of community and the sharing of power in decision making (Valente, 2016). Sendjaya (2015) echoes that thought, "Rather than inspiring followers to achieve organizational goals, [servant-leaders] empower, coach, train, and develop followers into what they are capable of becoming (p. 22). Spears (2010) extensively studied the work of Greenleaf and identified a set of ten characteristics, or intrinsic motives, that servant-leaders should develop or demonstrate:

(1) listening; (2) empathy; (3) healing; (4) awareness; (5) persuasion; (6) conceptualization; (7) foresight; (8) stewardship; (9) commitment to the growth of people; and (10) building community. Researchers have shown servant leadership to be positively associated with creativity and innovation, job satisfaction, employee engagement, and organizational commitment (Sendjaya, 2015)

To recapitulate, transformational and servant leadership theorists posit that leaders value and prioritize the needs of the people in an organization and are successful because they inspire their followers through their vision, commitment to higher ideals, and charisma rather than using a system of rewards and punishments. These theories are appropriate for application with school counselor supervisors, who do not have the authority to offer extrinsic rewards. School counselor supervisors can, however, foster intrinsic motivation in their team members by developing the charisma demonstrated by transformational and servant leaders.

Coaching Principles in Clinical Supervision

There are a variety of clinical supervision models (e.g., the discrimination model, the development model, and the integrative model) that have been developed to provide ongoing support for counselors (Luke & Bernard, 2006). A coaching model may be most appropriate for the role of a school counselor supervisor. According to the International Coach Federation (n.d., para. 1), coaching is defined as, "partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential". The fundamentals of coaching have been applied

most notably in the field of athletics and music, but a variety of other disciplines have adopted its approaches and strategies, including the field of education. As Kee (2010) opines, coaching for school leaders is necessary because they must think and act differently than before to respond to the changes in and around schools today; they can prepare for the paradigm shift in supervisory roles or instructional practices needed to transform schools through structured coaching protocols. Psencik (2011) states it well, To break the barriers of outdated modes of leadership, principals need a new vision of school leadership, a clear understanding of the role and responsibilities of highly effective principals, and coaches who help them develop and hone their skills," (p. 10).

Coaching as a means to clinical supervision has been used by professionals within the field of education, particularly with teachers and administrators. It has been employed primarily as a method for improving teachers' instructional practices, but also for increasing teachers' pedagogical competence and enhancing communication and team-building skills (Howley, Dudek, Rittenberg, and Larson, 2014). Instructional coaches have participated in a wide range of activities and assumed a variety of roles (Hall, 2004; O'Connor & Ertmer, 2003; Richard, 2003). The typical coach may provide one-on-one support in the classroom, offer professional development to small groups of teachers, or assist with school-wide curriculum or assessment efforts (Cress, 2003; Race, Ho, & Bower, 2002). Regardless of how coaches carry out their varied functions, effective instructional coaching is grounded in theory.

Instructional Coaching. Knight (2007) presents instructional coaching as a theoretical framework grounded in the research of scholars from several fields (i.e. adult

education, business, psychology, philosophy of science, and cultural anthropology). The development of new skills occurs in the context of an effective coaching cycle that focuses on identifying, learning, and improving (Knight et al., 2015). Underpinning the coaching cycle is a partnership approach involving a mutually agreed upon relationship that facilitates a smooth and effective transfer of knowledge (Cornett & Knight, 2008). Knight (2011) states, "At its core, the partnership approach is about a simple idea: treat others the way you would like to be treated" (p. 28). According to Knight (2007), the partnership approach embodies seven principles: equality (the understanding that each person's thoughts and beliefs must be valued); choice (decisions must be arrived at mutually); voice (the freedom to express different points of view and opinions); dialogue (open conversation between partners); reflection (reflective thinking that fosters learning and meaningful decisions); praxis (the meaning that arises after reflection on and application of ideas discussed during the interactions between partners); and reciprocity (the benefits that arise from the collective success, learning, and experience of each participant). With coaching that is partnership-driven, learning should be the goal for all participants.

Leadership Coaching. Although there seems to be a gap in the literature regarding coaching that specifically targets school counselors, leadership coaching (i.e., coaching for educational leaders) may offer useful strategies. In his treatise on results coaching, Kee (2010) states that effective coaching requires collaboration and communication strategies designed to emphasize the work of the coach as a peer attempting to help his partners address the challenging issues. Coaches may facilitate

collaborative learning through inquiry to encourage a learning partner to challenge their current methods and to consider alternative practices. A powerful form of inquiry, questioning strategies, are tools employed by coaches to encourage their learning partners to handle impediments to growth and at the same time avoid adopting solutions centered on their preferences (Kee, 2010). The coach may play a critical role in assisting the peer in identifying their own course of action to address the challenges they face (Knight, 2007). That is, a coach does not unilaterally set an agenda for the relationship; rather, it is important to consider the other person's perspectives and goals and how the coach may guide and support them toward those ends (Knight, 2011).

In summary, coaching can be used as a supervision model for school counselor supervisors. Effective coaching emphasizes partnership and collaboration. Inquiry strategies are important because of their ability to empower the person being coached and minimize any tendency for the coach to prioritize his goals.

Conceptual Framework

In a previously conducted case study in the school district featured in the current study, District X, lead school counselors reported a low sense of self-efficacy to serve in a leadership role. Consistent with Social Cognitive Theory, this low self-efficacy to lead seemed to be impacted by 1) few mastery experiences providing clinical supervision to the counselors they manage; 2) limited, if any, positive vicarious experiences in clinical supervision; 3) lack of recent verbal persuasions offered by their administrators; and 4) persistent physiological arousal due to administrative pressures and the rejection of their

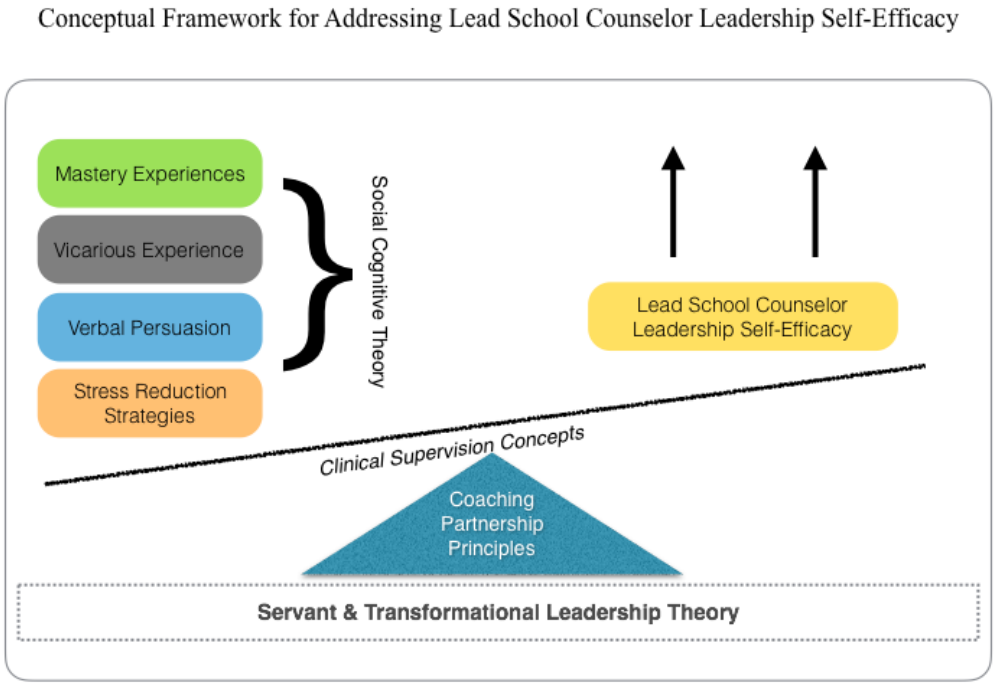
role as supervisor. Because they do not believe they can produce the outcomes expected of clinical supervisors, lead school counselors have little incentive to act like clinical supervisors. Given what social cognitive theory says about methods of improving self-efficacy, it is paramount that lead school counselors are given opportunities to experience supervision modeling, exposure, desensitization, and exhortation.

These opportunities could encompass leadership theory principles couched in a coaching context. Specifically, transformational and servant leadership are well-aligned with a coaching approach to supervision. The District's lead school counselors currently seem to operate from a servant leadership mindset, using a non-hierarchical framework of shared sense of community, power, and decision-making and focusing on the needs of their team members and the organization over their own. Enhancing the benefits of their current approach to leadership, a coaching supervision model could help lead school counselors clarify organizational values and inspire their team members to work toward those by providing exemplary modeling, fostering respectful collaboration, and establishing mutual trust. In line with transformational leadership principles, lead school counselors can be taught how to respond to change quickly and bring out the best in their team members even in the high-stress and often chaotic environment of the public school system.

The coaching model that the researcher used in this study focused on the principle of partnership, along with its emphasis on the strategies of reflection, inquiry, and reciprocity, to build lead school counselors' clinical supervision skills and to address their own need for support. Leadership self-efficacy was the primary measurement of

the effectiveness of the intervention. The conceptual framework shown in Figure 1 illustrates how the researcher connected the concepts and theories to address lead school counselors' leadership self-efficacy.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework: Visual depiction of conceptual framework for addressing lead school counselor leadership self-efficacy as a process



CHAPTER III

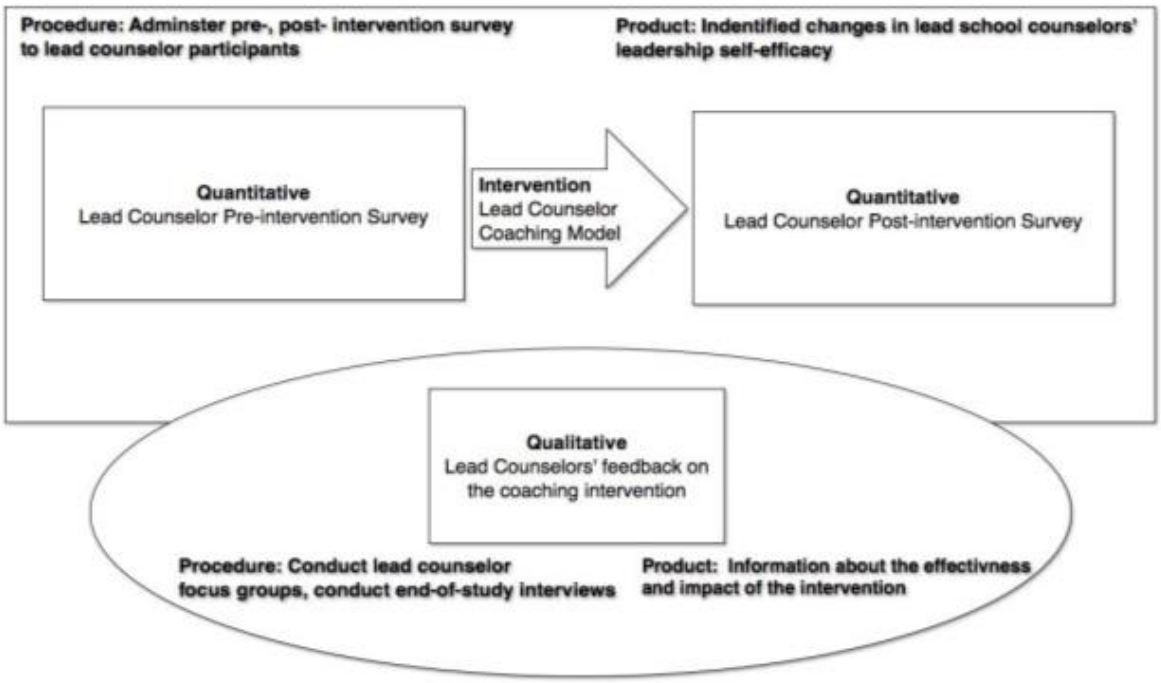
RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

Creswell (2014) defines qualitative research as, "an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (p.4). As discussed by Stake (2010), qualitative researchers try to generate descriptions and interpret phenomena in situational context that could modify how others understand phenomena. This reflects the constructivist basis of the philosophical assumptions of qualitative research.

After considering the various designs, a case study approach was selected as the most appropriate one for this study. Researchers typically choose case study design when they desire to explore processes, activities, and events (Creswell, 2014). Consistent with these considerations, the researcher chose a case study design in order to understand a sense of self-efficacy among a small cadre of lead school counselors before, during, and after the implementation of a leadership intervention. Data was collected during this study in two phases to examine the impact of the intervention. Data from the quantitative phase was used to assess changes in counselor's self-efficacy. Data from the qualitative phase was used to explore how lead school counselors viewed the effectiveness of the coaching model intervention and to determine factors that contributed to the effectiveness of the treatment.

Figure 2. Research Design: Qualitative case study incorporating a quantitative Phase I to identify the initial self-efficacy of lead school counselors and a Phase II to identify the self-efficacy of lead school counselors after an intervention.



Research Questions

This study was designed to answer the following questions:

1) What are lead school counselors' levels of self-efficacy regarding their ability to provide supervision before and after their participation in a coaching model intervention?
2) How do lead school counselors view the effectiveness of the coaching model intervention?

3) How do lead school counselors' reports about the effectiveness of the treatment inform data about self-efficacy?

Ethical Considerations

According to Internal Review Board (IRB) at Texas A&M University, this study qualified as a Quality Improvement project because the project involved the collection of internal data belonging to the school district for the purpose of indicating the impact of an intervention on self-efficacy. There were two aspects of concern for this study: informed consent and subject confidentiality. All subjects were able to choose not to consent and consequently to not participate in the study without facing any negative consequences. Potential risks to participants included risk to their privacy, but all efforts were made to maintain confidentiality. The identities of participants, known only to the researcher, remained confidential in the reporting of the findings. The risk of privacy was controlled by coding the data as soon as possible to remove the identities of the participants, including their names. The risk was necessary because the pre- and post-surveys needed to be linked to each other. No identifiers linking participants to the study will be included in any sort of report that might be published in the future. Aside from a time commitment, there were no costs for taking part in the study. Participants of the study received an Amazon gift card for successfully completing all phases of the study.

Intervention Protocol and Data Collection Instruments

Study participants were given access to four, 1-hour, online modules addressing the following leadership coaching areas: Management Support Tools; Relationship Support Tools; Leadership Support Tools; and Learning Expertise Support Tools. These modules were designed by the researcher based on a review of the literature for self-efficacy and the best practices that have been shown to lead to success in coaching. The researcher also incorporated feedback received from his supervisor (i.e., the director of counseling services) during a semester-long internship in which, among other things, they collaborated about relevant module topics and important lead counselor tasks. Participants completed each module on an internet-accessible computer, tablet, or phone of their choice. Each module took a maximum of one hour and thirty minutes to complete and included reflective exercises, engagement activities, and modeling tasks.

Quantitative Instruments

Lead School Counselor Role Questionnaire. Participants were asked to complete a short survey assessing the role of a lead school counselor, at any time before beginning the modules and on an internet accessible computer, tablet, or phone. After participants completed all modules and focus groups, they were asked to complete the survey again. The surveys were completed on an internet-accessible computer, tablet, or phone before beginning individual interviews.

The questionnaire was developed by the researcher to examine lead school counselor roles, practices, and self-efficacy. The questionnaire's structure was adapted

from the work of Mitcham-Smith (2005), and the lead school counselor job-specific tasks were developed from field notes written during meetings with the District's director of counseling services during the researcher's internship. It consisted of questions distributed among four subscales: Importance, Self-Efficacy, Frequency, and Professional Development. The questions in the Importance subscale assess how significant a respondent deems job-specific tasks, in terms of performing key lead school counselor job functions. The Self-Efficacy subscale measures the respondent's level of comfort or competence in performing key lead school counseling job-specific tasks. The questions in the Frequency subscale are intended to capture how often respondents perform the tasks. The final subscale, Professional Development, assesses beliefs about the potential for professional development to enhance one's ability to perform the specified tasks associated with the lead school counselor job. Respondents rank their perceptions of the 13, job-specific tasks in each subscale based on a four-point Likert scale with one representing "Not at all" and four representing "Significantly". The score ranges and descriptors are as follows: 13-22 (not at all), 23-32 (minimally); 33-42 (moderately); 43-52 (significantly). A short section requesting demographic information (see Appendix B) was also presented to participants.

Qualitative Instruments

The Researcher. The researcher is a 16-year educator with nine years of experience as a central office administrator. At the beginning of this study's proposal, he served as an executive director in the major suburban school district where the study

took place, District X. In that role, he had a strong working relationship with the director of counseling services and K-12 school counselors, such that there was frequent collaboration in a professional development capacity. The researcher even spent a semester with the director of counseling services in preparation for this study. In spite of that close professional relationship with the counseling team and the impact it had on his department, the researcher viewed himself as an "outsider" to the problem of practice because he did not supervise, evaluate, or appoint lead school counselors directly. This outsider perspective was enhanced during the last phase of the study when he transitioned to a larger, urban school district and experienced a decrease in the number of lead school counselors who initially had committed to participating in the study. The researcher had some "insider" knowledge regarding the inner workings of the counseling services department as a whole, which allowed him to build rapport and to understand some of the counselors' references during the focus groups and interviews. At the same time, the researcher felt like an "outsider" in that he no longer was privy to the events that impacted the counselors on a daily basis and, thus, could not relate to their recent experiences as easily. Much of what they shared had an emotional undertone that the researcher had not heard or understood before, even when he was somewhat of an insider. Overall, the lead school counselors who did participate welcomed him in such a way that he felt much like a guest with special privileges, so to speak.

Semi-structured Focus Group Meetings. From January to April, participants attended 2 one-hour, audio-recorded, focus group meetings to discuss key strategies addressed in the online modules and to share scenarios related to the implementation of

the strategies.

Structured Interviews. Each participant was asked to provide individual feedback in an audio-recorded interview of approximately 30 minutes in duration at the completion of the last online module. The interview consisted of the following questions:

- How have your interactions with your counselor teams been impacted as a result of the content presented in the modules?
- How did the content discussed in the modules compare with your experiences?;
- How useful was the information presented in the modules?;
- What barriers did you encounter when trying to apply the content presented in the modules?;
- Describe a work situation where you could apply the information presented in the module.
- What additional information or skills would help you address your described situation?

Setting

The district in which the study was conducted is a major suburban school district, as defined by the Texas Educational Agency (Texas Education Agency, n.d.). According to the District's online profile, it serves more than 25,000 students and 2,500 staff members and has over 40 campuses, including 22 elementary schools, seven middle schools, four high schools, and three grade 6-12 campuses. The District serves a diverse

student population with over 60 percent Hispanic students, nearly 20 percent African-American students, over 10 percent White students, and about 3 percent Asian students. According to the 2014 Texas Academic Performance Report, over 70 percent of the students in District X qualify as economically disadvantaged, and about 67 percent are at-risk.

In terms of the school counseling department, the district employs a total of 60 school counselors, 38 of whom are secondary school counselors, and seven of whom are lead school counselors. According to the director of counseling services, the secondary school counselors are distributed evenly at the middle school level with two at each school; high schools have varying numbers of school counselors (ranging from one to nine) depending on the size of the school's student population. The high school counseling teams have an average student-to-counselor ratio of approximately 400:1, with students assigned to counselors based on their last names.

Participants

The researcher focused on recruiting secondary lead school counselors to be participants in the study. He enlisted the help of the director of counseling services to encourage participation and sent e-mail messages directly to lead school counselors to solicit, explain, and confirm their participation in the study. The researcher also offered potential participants complimentary lunch during research sessions and post-study Amazon gift cards as incentives. A total of three secondary school lead school counselors, all of whose names have been changed for the purposes of this study, agreed

to participate. Each counselor represented one of three high schools in the District described in the setting and had worked under the leadership of more than one principal during their tenure. Prior to being selected to be lead school counselors, all participants had practiced as general school counselors in the District. The participants worked as teachers from 3 years to 16 years, and have been practicing as school counselors for less than 5 years to 17 years. One counselor was Black, and 2 counselors were White, and all were female and non-Hispanic. They range in age from 35-54 years. The data in Table 1 represent a summary of the participant demographic results.

Table 1

Participant Demographic Results

	Pam	Kim	Susan
Served as General School Counselor in District X	Yes	Yes	Yes
Teaching Experience	9-12	Less than 5 Years	13-16 Years
Counseling Experience at Secondary Level	Less than 5 Years	17 Years	Between 5 and 8 Years
Race	White	Black	White

Pam. Pam is a white female who serves over 400 students of the approximately 920 students attending High School A. She has a master's degree, completed a school counselor program in 2013, and is certified both as a teacher and a school

counselor. Before becoming a school counselor, she worked as a teacher for 9 -12 years. Pam has served as a counselor for less than 5 years at the secondary level and is a member of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA).

Kim. Kim is a black female who serves over 400 students of the approximately 800 students at High School B. She has a master's degree, completed a school counselor program in 2000, and is certified both as a teacher and a school counselor. She worked as a teacher for less than 5 years prior to beginning her 17-year tenure as a school counselor. Kim is not a member of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA).

Susan. Susan is a white female with a Masters Degree. She has a student caseload of 450 students at High School C, which has between 401-800 students. Susan completed a school counselor program in 2012 and is a certified teacher and school counselor. Since ending her teaching career of 13-16 years, she has served as a counselor between 5 and 8 years at the secondary level and is a member of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA).

Reliability and Validity

Whether quantitative, qualitative, or mixed in nature, the integrity of a study must be authenticated. Whereas in quantitative research, the terms reliability and validity are critical criteria for evaluating the quality of a study, qualitative research uses terms like credibility, neutrality, dependability, and applicability (Golafshani, 2003). According to Golafshani (2003), "reliability and validity are conceptualized as

trustworthiness, rigor and quality in qualitative paradigm," (p. 604). Moreover, for some qualitative researchers, establishing validity, or trustworthiness, establishes reliability.

As Golafshani (2003) points out, triangulation is used to strengthen the impact of naturalistic inquiry by controlling for bias and increasing researcher's truthfulness. Thus, the researcher focused on maximizing trustworthiness in this study by using the method of triangulation (i.e., the use of several kinds of investigators, methods of data collection, and data analysis, including using both quantitative and qualitative approaches). To answer the research questions about the coaching model intervention and self-efficacy, the researcher gathered both quantitative and qualitative data and used multiple methods to analyze the data. In terms of data collection, the Lead Counselor Role Survey served as an objective assessment of self-efficacy and perceptions about roles and responsibilities based participants' self reports. The researcher collected data from focus groups and interviews based on his own subjective observations and interpretations.

With regard to analysis, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data and support the conclusions that arose from qualitative analysis. For the qualitative analysis, the researcher used the constant comparative method, which involves an ongoing process by which newly collected data is compared with previously collected data through coding. By integrating the data collected in the original case study described in the introduction of this paper with the data collected in the current study, the researcher's theories about the lead school counselor experience evolved. Anticipated and emerging codes and themes came and left as new data became available.

In terms of coding procedures for analyzing the focus group data, the researcher first conducted open coding using a descriptive approach to label the participants' responses, but this did not seem to yield adequate or meaningful data. Next, the researcher used an analytical approach to perform open coding, examining each line of transcribed text with the following questions in mind: Why is this? What does this mean? Then, the researcher grouped codes based on commonalities in their intent or meaning in order to eliminate redundancy. In the axial coding process, the researcher attempted to re-organize these codes into larger themes according to constructs presented in the paper (i.e., supervision, self-efficacy, leadership theory, and coaching). Finally, in the selective coding phase of analysis, the researcher focused solely on Social Cognitive Theory's view of self-efficacy, grouping the codes from the axial coding procedure into the major factors associated with self-efficacy (i.e., mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological states). The same process was used for analyzing the interviews except that in the selective coding phase, the researcher used the interview questions to organize the codes into major themes.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH RESULTS

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the impact and effectiveness of a coaching model on lead school counselors' sense of leadership self-efficacy. The first phase of the study examined the lead school counselors' leadership self-efficacy before and after a coaching intervention. The second phase explored how lead school counselors viewed the effectiveness of the coaching model intervention and determined factors that contributed to the effectiveness of the treatment. The research questions were answered by exploring lead school counselors' survey responses and focus group and interview data.

Data Analysis Strategy and Coding

The following steps were taken to prepare, explore, and analyze the data to answer the research questions. To prepare the quantitative data in Phase I and Phase 2 of the study, the researcher collected and verified that all electronic surveys were completed, and input full-scale score and sub-scale scores (pre-test and post-test) in SPSS to run descriptive statistics. The researcher focused on exploring descriptive statistics and observing trends in their responses across subtests. The researcher focused on exploring descriptive statistics and observing trends in participant responses across subtests. Specifically, the researcher summarized and drew conclusions about subtest scores and searched for marked changes in individual full and subscale scores from pre-

test to post-test. In addition, the researcher looked for disruptive data trends in demographic data (particularly the variables associated with years of experience and training preparation).

The researcher used a grounded theory approach to analyze the qualitative data collected from lead school counselor focus groups and interviews. According to Corbin and Strauss (2015), a grounded theory approach enables a researcher to generate a theory from systematically gathered data that is related to the context of the phenomenon being studied. Upon completion of the semi-structured focus groups and structured interviews, notes were organized and transcribed in NVIVO. After exploring the data and considering the research questions, the researcher read through notes and developed a codebook.

Data analysis consisted of openly coding the data using a first cycle open coding method to identify topics (Charmaz, 2006). Once codes were identified, they were compared to one another. Then, the researcher reviewed codes to identify similarly coded data and further consolidated it into broader categories. Throughout each coding cycle, content was organized, defined, and compared for later reference. Then, the researcher applied a third level axial coding method to further analyze results from the first two cycles and discover how the new categories and sub-categories interrelated with one another (Creswell, 2013). The research findings are presented by analysis type and organized by instrument and major themes.

Quantitative Survey Findings

The Lead School Counselor Role Survey. The data in Table 2 reflects the Lead School Counselor Role Survey subscale score totals for each participant before and after the intervention.

Table 2

Pre- and Post-Intervention Lead School Counselor Role Survey Summary Results

	Pam		Kim		Susan	
Survey Subscale	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Importance	42	52	36	40	45	49
Self-Efficacy	41	36	39	43	42	41
Frequency	26	29	34	30	37	27
Professional Development	33	36	36	41	49	52

As pictured in the data in Table 2, each lead school counselor scored higher on the Importance subscale after participating in the intervention, indicating that the coaching model led them to consider the primary tasks associated with their job position as more important than they had before the intervention. The most striking change occurred for Pam who described the tasks as "moderately" important prior to the intervention and "significantly" important after the intervention. Kim consistently reported the tasks to be "moderately" important, whereas Susan consistently described

the tasks as “significantly” important.

On the Self-Efficacy subscale, all lead school counselors initially reported being “moderately” comfortable performing job-specific tasks. After the intervention, Kim reported feeling “significantly” comfortable, and the other two participants still reported feeling “moderately” comfortable, though to a lesser degree than they did before the intervention. The contrast was most notable for Pam, whose score decreased five points.

Regarding the Frequency subscale, prior to the intervention, Pam reported that she performed job-related duties “minimally”, whereas both Kim and Susan reported performing them “moderately”. Post-intervention survey scores demonstrate that as Pam’s Frequency score increased within the minimally performing range, the other two counselors’ reported that their Frequency scores decreased to the minimally performing range. For Susan, that decrease was notable, with the score dropping ten points.

Lead school counselors’ scores on the Professional Development subscale indicate that they believe that professional development would enhance task performance at least “moderately”. On the post-intervention survey, participants’ scores increased. The five-point increase in Susan’s score appears to reflect a meaningful change.

The data in Table 3 represent the descriptive statistics for the self-efficacy survey subscale results for the lead school counselor participants. The mean score for the post-intervention self-efficacy subscale, 40.47, was slightly higher than the pre-intervention mean score, 40. The minimum score increased from 36 to 39 and the maximum score

decreased from 43 to 42 points.

Table 3

Pre-and Post-Intervention Lead School Counselor Self-Efficacy Survey Subscale Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Self-Efficacy - Post Intervention	3	40.67	1.528	39	42
Self-Efficacy - Pre Intervention	3	40	3.606	36	43

Qualitative Focus Group Findings: Self Efficacy

Bandura (1993) discussed four elements of the external environment that impact a person's beliefs about his capabilities to perform certain tasks: mastery experiences; verbal persuasion; vicarious learning; and physiological states. These elements formed the basis for the coding system used in the qualitative analysis of self-efficacy. The researcher used the following four codes that respectively correspond to the factors influencing self-efficacy as described by Bandura (1993): experiences in leadership (i.e., others' responses to efforts to employ strategies presented in the intervention); verbal persuasion (i.e., expressions that persuade lead school counselors to believe they have the necessary skills to be successful); peer examples (observing other lead school counselors experience success and failure); and job-induced emotional responses (i.e., verbalizations of affective reactions to workplace dynamics and events). The data from

both the focus group and interview sessions were analyzed according to the aforementioned coding scheme.

Experience in Leadership. Most of the responses in this category indicated that lead school counselors, especially Pam, received positive feedback from others on their counseling team when testing coaching strategies. For example, Pam reported:

> Since January, I felt like I had to go back and rebuild the respect level, so we had struggled so much that first semester...I think the level of respect with my coworker, but then it trickled into, even in my office staff. I didn't know...that they're looking to me as their leader.

This same lead school counselor stated this about initiating difficult conversations with one of her supervisors, "Oh, I didn't think I could speak up about that piece. But when I did say it to her, she was like, Go, do it, take the initiative. I was afraid to do that our first semester." This seemed to convey a sense of hope and confidence in her ability to do more of what she had found to be successful. She related:

> What that's also done for me - For me, I felt like I could speak up more. Before Spring Break, I had peace. This is what I know I'm capable of. And being able to talk to [the director of counseling services] about me and my role.

Negative responses communicated that there was a rejection of their ideas and role as an integral member of the team. Pam mentioned a defeating experience in which she noted, "What I thought was going to be a conversation - it was "okay", and that was it, or it was completely shot down, like we're not doing that." When she attempted to practice assuming the role of coach during one of the intervention strategies, Kim reflected, "Sometimes I think, Am I the right person for this position?" When explaining what happens when lead school counselors attempt to advocate for themselves, Pam

lamented, "If we stick up for ourselves, we're looked at as not being a team player."

Verbal persuasion. It is notable that there were relatively few statements that indicated that anyone in the lead school counselors' environments attempted to persuade them about their abilities to be successful. As Kim put it, one of her colleagues tacitly acknowledged her ability to advertise counseling services, "She used to come over and say, you all have got to promote your program." Pam described a particularly impactful interaction between her and a campus principal:

> He had feedback about staff members about how our counseling team was and how we were seen on the campus...he really wanted to press the point that he wanted to show how much we did but that he was advocating for us...I wanted to have someone there that's on my side. Like even in our evaluation, at this point, I would want somebody, like, even if it was just [Kim] or somebody else. For me, it's like you do have an advocate for you.

Several times during the intervention sessions, Pam and Susan made statements of encouragement and support for Kim, which demonstrated a passive expression about her competence that could lead to persuasion. For example, Pam remarked, "Kim didn't give herself a lot of credit for leadership but everything that's under that 'mentor' [category], that's what she does." Susan shared, "She says she doesn't see herself as this, but I do see her as someone I can go to for advice."

Vicarious learning. In terms of observing other lead school counselors succeed or fail, there were few examples of note. Pam discussed Susan's simultaneous success at advocating for her students and failure at securing the support of the administration for a particular program. She stated:

> This idea, it becomes very challenging to get anybody else on board when you can't even get your leader to - and I'm not trying to talk bad about leaders, but it's just the deal of, like in Susan's position, it's for the sake of her students.

Period. And she's the only one there that can advocate for them.

Kim admired other lead school counselors for their ability to manage the technological demands of the position,

> They bring out the best in me because I learn more from those people. I'll use technology as an example, because that's not a strength of mine, but it's becoming one. And that's because I am surrounded by people who are very technologically savvy. What's happening is, like, Pam is - and she just whips it out. It makes me do one of two things, be like, I'm going to have to look this stuff up, or show me how to do that.

Job-induced emotional responses. Often, lead school counselors discussed job incidents that left them feeling dejected, hopeless, powerless, fearful, and anxious. Kim expressed her resignation at the thought of engaging in a negative interaction with her team members, "I'm not a fighter, I'm not a confronter. I don't get my energy from creating conflict or being in combat. I will retreat." She further conveyed hopelessness about effecting any change in her colleagues, "There's a small percentage of them in the scheme of things - you just can't crack that nut. No matter what you do or how you do it." A big theme that the lead school counselors described was change and their consequent feelings of powerlessness, fear, and anxiety. Pam stated, "I feel like that, maybe I've been on 2 campuses, where I've had 2 great principals where it's always been about the collaboration. And so to not be a part of the collaboration, I felt lost this year." Kim related:

> I likened it unto an arranged marriage. You don't know what you're going to get. 'I didn't know you were like that.' I didn't know what to expect. No one knew what to expect. We got together at the beginning of the year. We had to hold hands, go around a circle, and we were now married.

Again, Pam seemed disenchanted, stating:

> When I came to work, I enjoyed what I was doing because I was valued and because when I did what I did I could see my staff getting something out of it, I saw my kids getting stuff out of it… There was the parent and the input from the community. All of that, You were getting feedback about how much it was impacting student learning. All that this year was all taken away. I feel I don't want to say, I feel bored….I don't know how I got all the additional paperwork done last year, because we had all 504 last year. I still got all that done, I mean, I had an event every month last year that I was in charge of. It got done. It was amazing. It was fabulous. But, now this year, I'm like I don't know, I almost feel like I'm lost.

Susan expressed fear and anxiety when she shared:

> I think before the change occurred, we all worked together well. We knew each other's strengths and weaknesses. . But then all of a sudden, when, Sometimes we don't know what each other's roles are because of this massive change...it's almost like you have to set that aside... because that professionalism now is a whole different beast...I'm usually not afraid of change, but when there's mass change, even office staff feel it, which then goes to parents, kids feel it and everything all together.

Pam communicated, "There's a level of urgency, like every single task, there's a hard deadline, and if you miss it you can screw a kid up, and that can be very scary"

Qualitative Interview Findings: Impact of the intervention

The questions posed during the semi-structured interview portion of the study served as a guiding framework for the coding scheme used to analyze interview responses that referred to the impact of the intervention. Responses were organized according to the following thematic categories: usefulness; barriers to implementation; examples of application; enhancements; and counselor-team interactions.

Counselor-team interactions. Lead school counselors discussed a variety of

ways in which the coaching model had impacted interactions between them and their team members. Susan noticed improvements in her communications with her team. She shared, "It has taught me a little bit about how to have those critical kinds of conversations, especially with how to re-phrase things. I'm learning that one really well. And listening." Similarly, Pam said, "I would say the biggest thing is being able to have more open conversations. And...not necessarily telling [them] what to do but 'How can we work on this, more collaboratively?'...I think it has also built more trust." As for Kim, it appears that, although she had not begun implementing strategies with her team, she had entered a sort of planning phase in which she had begun reflecting on how being a coach would change her view of herself as a lead school counselor and formulating plans for the future. She related:

> As you introduced the concept of the coaching model, and I hadn't ever thought about that, as using any strategies like that with my team. And as I thought further about the coaching model...coming alongside the counselors, just implementing some of the things...To step outside of that is going to be a shift, for us moving from the, 'Well, this is what we're supposed to be,' and then coming alongside them. Acting as a coach, and you gave us what it means to be a coach…moving from intention to coach, allowing them to feel that we're there to be a coach versus 'We're here because we're over you guys.'

Usefulness. With regard to usefulness, in general, participants shared what they learned as a result of participating in the intervention and offered ideas about how the coaching model strategies would be helpful to them. Pam reported, "So this will give me an opportunity to try some of these things on new people and you know, really develop the relationships with them." Furthermore, she stated:

> I think it was very useful, and I do think that all lead school counselors should be required to sit through something like this to help with not just the collaboration piece but setting the tone, to get everybody on board, to get their feedback, and to

make sure there is open communication.

Susan found ways to use the coaching model both at work and in other settings, stating, "I think this is making me look at this as leadership skills. Leadership skills can even work in your home life as well." Kim also expressed a usefulness that was more generalized in impact:

> There aren't classes for lead school counselors. There's nothing like that. Even when...we do our lead school counselor meetings, we don't go over those strategies. We're talking about more deadlines and pushing more things out...We don't have anyone pouring into us. We're the ones who are out there, we have to direct and give.., but…nobody's pouring into us. So this... process with you has helped me to at least be challenged to think about some other, some ways I can pull some things off and especially some of the tough things - challenging things issues with people, how to handle different types of people on the team, how to motivate them, how to encourage them.

Barriers to implementation. In terms of barriers to implementation, lead school counselors noted that there are both internal (e.g., their own closed-mindedness, lack of confidence) and external (e.g., program changes, the dynamics of integrating new counselors, limited time to practice, others' unwillingness to change) factors to consider. Pam focused on external factors and "noticed that...there was hesitation and some negativity from those that are not willing to be open to feedback or change." Kim described primarily internal barriers, "But the barriers would be a lack of familiarity with it and not [being] confident in applying it just for that reason." Susan recognized both internal and external elements, observing:

> Well, I think that the biggest barrier…times when there's a lot of change, a lot of new people. It's kind of hard to have an open mind and be able to communicate that with each other and still stay in your role as a counselor.

Examples of Application. Regarding specific situations in which they could imagine using the strategies presented in the coaching model, lead school counselors liked the idea of starting the new school year with a fresh start. Kim believed that the best work situation to implement coaching strategies is the counseling services department's first meeting of the school year. Hoping to set the tone for coaching throughout the year, she envisioned:

> After we're back on contract and we're going over her plans for the year…when I get back to campus with my team, being able at that point to definitely be able to set the tone by implementing, well, explaining first some of these things...Being able to try to convey, that this is my style, this is what I am, this is how I'll be, this is what I'll be for you, this is what I'm here to do, this is how I'm here to help.

Pam agreed with this sentiment and added that establishing the stage for a coaching leadership style at the beginning of the year "lends itself to another way of doing team building and learning each others' strengths and weaknesses and who's willing to work with some else and the team." Susan discussed the possibility of using coaching strategies when she is feeling defensive, and she even experienced success when she made a fledgling attempt in her work environment. She stated:

> Basically, the other day I had to listen and not say 'This is the way we should do it,' but kind of listen and rephrase things, like you were telling us the other day. 'So, I hear that you're wanting us to do it this way,' - instead of blaming the person

She explained further,

> Once I gave it a try, it actually worked pretty well. Sometimes just having to put yourself in that leadership role - because as we said before, we don't really see ourselves as a leader - but just having to put ourselves in that position has made grow in that aspect.

Enhancements. The participants gave several ideas about how the intervention could be enhanced. Specifically, they all favored adding a component that discussed how to use the coaching strategies to have "critical conversations" to address "difficult people" and differences in opinion. Pam suggested, "It seems like there needs to be probably a specific session on how to deal with those people that don't understand constructive criticism." Kim emphasized the importance of providing more time to become familiar with the material. She explained:

> For me, it seems like it's all here, a lot of it is here. It's just now, the implementation of it and see how it looks, how it plays out, to be able to take what you've done as far as your research, and actually apply it... I think I just need to get to know this information, do it well, and then apply it. Know it really well and be confident in it.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this study that need to be highlighted. First, less than half of the available lead school counselors agreed to participate in the study. During the design phase of the study, several lead counselors expressed interest in the research, perhaps because of the researcher's administrator status and their perceptions about how lack of participation could affect their job status. However, due to their busy spring semester and perhaps the lack of sufficient extrinsic motivation, most of the would-be participants opted out of the study. The limited number of participants reduced the researcher's ability to obtain a varied perspective of the research variables.

The second limitation is the short duration of the study. The intervention was administered for only a four-month period during the Spring semester of the academic

year. A key to skill development is having sufficient time and opportunity for the application of the new skills. The short window of time during a very busy semester for school counselors meant there was a very limited amount of time to implement the intervention and few opportunities for the participants to put newly introduced skills into action.

A final limitation of the study has to do with response bias due to researcher influence. At the beginning of this study, the researcher had been working in District X for seven years and knew many of the staff very well, including the participants. As a result, some of the study participants may have been biased when giving feedback during focus groups and interviews. That is, social desirability, acquiescence bias, and sponsor bias all could have been affected the data responses.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This study represents an exploration of self-efficacy to lead in lead school counselors in a major suburban school district in Texas. The study also presents an assessment of the effectiveness of a coaching model intervention program, particularly with regard to its impact on lead school counselors' self-efficacy to lead their counselor teams. The researcher of this study addressed these issues by administering a survey of lead school counselors' role perceptions and by conducting focus groups and interviews related to the intervention and the ways in which it impacted their work. This chapter presents a summary of the study, discussion, and implications for the District's counseling services department and school principals in support of lead school counselors. Finally, this chapter will present the areas of future research that were discovered as a result.

Discussion

Research question 1: What are lead school counselors' levels of self-efficacy regarding their ability to provide supervision before and after their participation in a coaching model intervention?

Regarding the first research question, the findings indicate that the participants experienced a moderate level of self-efficacy regarding their leadership responsibilities prior to the coaching model intervention, which was higher than the researcher

expected. After the intervention, self-efficacy puzzlingly decreased for Pam who, in interviews reported having incorporated coaching strategies into her practice with some degree of success, but increased for Kim, who in focus groups conveyed a sense of apprehension and maybe even resistance about trying the strategies. It may be that, in light of the external barriers she encountered when interacting with team members in the role of a coach, Pam became more aware of and discouraged by the amount of effort it would take to counter the negativity displayed by the team. Kim identified time as a factor in her lack of confidence about implementing the new model and felt that once she mastered the concepts she would be able to employ coaching strategies; perhaps, she was more emboldened by the knowledge that she has control over her ability to perform key job related tasks with the new strategies introduced to her. While the quantitative measure of self-efficacy yielded mixed results, the qualitative data clearly showed evidence of the intervention's positive impact on the counselor's self-efficacy to lead and as a professional course on clinical supervision.

Research question 2: How do lead school counselors view the effectiveness of the coaching model intervention?

Lead school counselors reported that the coaching was effective at exposing them to new tools for supervision, providing a new way to view their role in the counseling services department, and empowering them to advocate more for a coaching role on their respective campuses. They also reported gaining sorely needed clinical supervision skills that are not typically addressed in their jobs or professional development.

Over the course of the intervention, lead school counselors discussed changes in how they viewed the potential for their role as leaders, shared their visions about what it would be like to apply coaching principles long-term, and discussed several instances in which they experimented with the strategies on their campuses. Although the participants expressed some apprehension about utilizing some of the coaching strategies, they also expressed a sense of hope about what they would be able to do differently as leaders.

Research question 3: How do lead school counselors' reports about the effectiveness of the intervention inform data about self-efficacy?

As limited in scope as they are, descriptive statistics indicate that, as a group, lead school counselors experienced an overall increase in leadership self-efficacy after the intervention. Moreover, there was less variability in their scores. This indicates that lead counselors evidenced more cohesion of thought due to engaging with peers who reported similar successes and failures. Based on focus group data, lead school counselors were influenced by the opportunity to interact with one another in a "therapeutic" setting, witness each other's subjective interpretation of their experiences, and provide each other support and encouragement. The sense of community and shared values really seemed to make a difference for them, and that was evident in the quantitative data. The intervention itself, provided a modality for induction of self-efficacy through modeling experiences and verbal persuasion.

Implications and Future Research

The research findings suggest that using a coaching model with lead school counselors is promising as a form of leadership training, preparation for providing clinical supervision, and as a boost for self-efficacy to lead. Future efforts to provide this sort of support to lead school counselors should involve a consideration of time factors. Researchers should provide ample time to introduce and explain concepts and multiple opportunities over a longer period of time for practice and implementation. Because the timing of the implementation could yield different results, researchers also should ensure that a leadership intervention be offered at off-peak times of the year.

Sessions promoting coaching strategies for supervision might be offered as a regular professional development opportunity for lead school counselors and/or as a training module for those general school counselors seeking to be appointed as lead school counselors. Future components of the intervention could involve how to communicate and build collaborative relationships with people who are difficult to engage since all participants reported weaknesses in that area. Additionally, given the common and frequent report of the influence and power that principals and deans of instruction have in shaping the role and activities of lead school counselors, a coaching model of supervision should seek to involve other stakeholders in the counseling services context, namely administrators. Perhaps the development of a component designed to assist with lead counselor – campus principal team building would be beneficial.

Throughout the course of this study, the researcher observed that lead school counselors demonstrated an unexpected degree of competency in servant leadership. This discovery warrants further investigation of lead counselor leadership competencies, as it holds promise for understanding how to support the development of future school counselor leaders better.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study may provide district administrators with preliminary information regarding a model for the delivery of clinical supervision training to lead school counselors. This study also may provide campus administrators with a basis for establishing a set criteria for choosing future lead school counselors that is based on clinical supervision and leadership principles. Finally, this study may provide lead school counselors with a clinical supervision model for becoming better equipped to manage and inspire their counselor teams.

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APPENDIX A

Project Title: Using a Coaching Model to Develop School Counselor Leadership Self-Efficacy

RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear Lead Counselors:

As a doctoral candidate at Texas A&M University, I am inviting you to participate in my doctoral research project. This study will explore whether and how the implementation of a coaching model impacts lead school counselor's leadership self-efficacy. The attached research consent form is provided to help you make an informed decision about your participation. Should you decide to participate, simply complete a brief survey (5-7 minutes) by clicking here or copying and pasting the following URL in your browser's address bar: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/coaching-presurvey. At that time, you will have an opportunity to read the informed consent document again and submit your electronic signature. You may complete the survey at any time before the introduction of the coaching model and again after the coaching model ends.

In addition to completing the survey, study participants also will be given access to four online modules (45-60 minutes each) addressing 4 counselor leadership areas. Each month from January to April, participants will discuss and practice strategies addressed in the online module in an hour-long, video-recorded, focus group meeting. Finally, at the conclusion of the coaching module, each participant will provide individual feedback in an audio recorded interview.

If you have any questions, please contact me by e-mail at jeffreymiller98@tamu.edu or by cell phone at 469-858-2509. Thank you in advance for your time and support.

Warmest regards,

APPENDIX B

Project Title: Using a Coaching Model to Develop School Counselor Leadership

Self-Efficacy

LEAD SCHOOL COUNSELOR DEMOGRAPHICS SURVEY
Demographics

1. What is your ethnicity?
   - o Hispanic or Latino
   - o Not Hispanic or Latino
2. What is your race?
   - o American Indian or Alaska Native
   - o Asian
   - o Black or African American
   - o Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
   - o White
3. What is your age? _____
4. What is your educational level?
   - o Bachelor's
   - o Master's
   - o Specialist
   - o Doctoral
5. What year did you graduate from your school counseling program? _____
6. Please check each certification you possess:
   - o Certified School Counselor
   - o Certified Teacher
   - o National Board Certified Counselor
   - o Registered Mental Health Counselor
   - o Registered Marriage and Family Therapist
   - o Licensed Mental Health Counselor
   - o Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
7. Are you a member of American School Counselor Association (ASCA)?
   - o Yes
   - o No
8. How long have you been a Professional School Counselor? _____
9. How many years of teaching experience did you have before becoming a counselor? ___
10. In which school levels do you have experience?
    - o Elementary
    - o Middle
    - o High
11. Approximately how many students are attending your school? _____
12. Approximately how many students are assigned to each counselor? _____

APPENDIX C

Project Title: Using a Coaching Model to Develop School Counselor Leaders

LEAD SCHOOL COUNSELOR ROLE SURVEY

	How important is this task as a school counselor leader? 1. Not at all 2. Minimally 3. Moderately 4. Significantly	To what degree do you feel competent or comfortable in this task? 1. Not at all 2. Minimally 3. Moderately 4. Significantly	How often do you perform this task? 1. Not at all 2. Minimally 3. Moderately 4. Significantly	To what degree would professional development enhance your performance in this task? 1. Not at all 2. Minimally 3. Moderately 4. Significantly
Facilitate counselor team meetings	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
Coordinate professional development for counselors	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
Serve as a liaison between the Campus and District office	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
Identify the developmental needs of counselor team members	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
Serve on school leadership team	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
Mentor new counselors	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
Address struggling counselors' development needs	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
Provide counselor team members with feedback	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
Coordinate the counseling team's support activities	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4

APPENDIX D

Project Title: Using a Coaching Model to Develop School Counselor Leaders Self-Efficacy

INTERVIEW/FOCUS GROUP SCRIPT
Investigator will collect consent forms.

For focus groups:
"Welcome and thank you for participating in this focus group."

For interview:
"Thank you for agreeing to speak with me today."
"The purpose of this focus group/interview is to get your feedback about how the leadership strategies covered in the online module could be appropriately implemented with other school counselors on your team. Specifically, we want to understand:

1. How have your interactions with your counselor teams been impacted as a result of the content presented in the module?
2. How did the content discussed in the module compare with your experiences?
3. How useful was the information presented in the module?
4. What barriers did you encounter when applying the content presented in the module?

The underlying assumption that we are working with is that all counselor leaders experience barriers as they interact with their counseling team members. Counselor leaders, like you, have a better understanding of what those barriers are. That is why we are talking with you.

5. Describe a work situation where you could apply the information presented in the module
6. What additional information or skills would help you address your described situation?

For focus groups:
- "We'd like to remind you that to protect the privacy of focus group members, all transcripts will be coded with pseudonyms and we ask that you not discuss what is discussed in the focus group with anyone else."
- "This focus group session will last about one hour and we will videotape the discussion to make sure that it is recorded accurately."
- "This interview will last about thirty minutes and we will audiotape the discussion to make sure that it is recorded accurately."
- "Do you have any questions for us before we begin?"