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NASP STANDARDS AND ROWAN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATES:
DOES KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER TO ON-THE-JOB SKILLS?

By
Kristine E. DiPalo

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master of Arts Degree
Of
The Graduate School
at
Rowan University
05/01/2004

Approved by _____

Date Approved 5-1-04

ABSTRACT

Kristine DiPalo

NASP standards and Rowan school psychology graduates:

Does knowledge transfer to on-the-job skills?

2003/04

Dr. Barbara Williams, Advisor

Master of Arts in School Psychology

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether Rowan University is preparing their school psychology graduates to deliver school psychology services according to professional standards set forth by NASP. This study examined the relationship between intern's self evaluations and supervisor's ratings on a measure of job performance. The information gathered was further correlated with job satisfaction. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data from the questionnaires. The results from this study indicate that there is a correlation between self-ratings and supervisor's ratings of job performance. This does not correlate with job satisfaction. The graduates of the school psychology program at Rowan University appear to be competent professionals across all areas. Although this was not correlated with job satisfaction, many other factors can affect one's satisfaction with work.

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CHAPTER 1: THE PROBLEM

Need

The role of the school psychologist can vary from site to site. School psychologists are engaged in a multitude of different activities, all of which are aimed at helping children. All of these roles demand unique training and skills. Since a training program is only as good as its graduates, it is imperative that programs are re-evaluated periodically in order to assure that the qualities of its graduates are meeting the needs of the children they serve. Universities need to ensure that the skills that are being taught to school psychology students are relevant to the populations being served.

The goal of the school psychology program at Rowan University is to prepare qualified practitioners to deliver school psychology services according to professional standards set forth by NASP (National Association of School Psychologists). In accordance with these standards, this study hopes to address issues of preparedness of its graduates, and satisfaction of their employers.

Purpose

Evaluation and accountability give a profession merit. Rowan University would like to ensure that the school psychology graduates are capable of functioning in accordance with NASP standards in the workplace. This study was conducted to assess the qualifications of recent graduates by surveying current employers.

Hypothesis

The graduates of the Rowan University School Psychology program are prepared for employment and can meet the demands of their profession. The skills they learn during this program are easily transferable to knowledge on the job. Answers to questions regarding employer satisfaction helped to assess this hypothesis. Employers were queried in regard to graduates interpersonal skills and knowledge. Questions we were concerned with included:

- Does academic knowledge transfer to on-the-job skills?
- Does this training program uphold high professional standards?
- Do these standards meet the NASP standards of professionalism?
- Are the NASP standards measurable? What tools can be used?

We also asked post-graduates if they felt prepared for their jobs when they first started working.

Analysis of these surveys answered some of the most essential questions pertaining to this study. It allowed us to collect and analyze outcome data that will be invaluable during the reevaluation of the school psychology program at Rowan University.

Theory

Historically, school psychologists have come from any number of different backgrounds. These fields include clinical psychology, educational psychology and special education (Thomas & Grimes, 1995). The early years of the profession lacked regulation

in training, credentialing, and practice (Fagan & Wise, 2000). Due to this lack of regulation, school psychologists found themselves with little credibility or professional status. As schools began to grow, this lack of credibility as a profession became a much bigger issue. There were more and more students in need of services and there was a lack of qualified professionals to provide these services.

During the late 1960s school psychologists worked together to organize into a professional national organization. This entity became known as the National Association of School Psychologists. NASP represents and provides support for all member school psychologists. The main goal of NASP is to “enhance the mental health and educational competence of all children” (Fagan & Wise, 2000). In addition this association provides the standards that training, field placements, credentialing, and practice are based on.

In the late 1960s, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) was the first organization to give accreditation for school psychology. The American Psychological Association (APA) followed their lead, granting accreditation in 1971. It was not until the late 1980s though, that the use of standards for school psychology took effect (Fagan & Wise, 2000). The NASP training standards were originally approved by NCATE in 1982. According to Fagan and Wise (2000), the NASP standards include the areas of program values, knowledge base, training philosophy, goals and objectives, practica, internship, performance-based program accountability, and program level and structural characteristics. The standards that NASP has approved have furthered the growth of the field by setting guidelines for both credentialing and professional practice.

Periodically the NASP standards are reviewed and revised as necessary. The latest revision took effect July 15, 2000. The standards for training fall under five broad headings. The first heading is “Program Context/Structure”. This area lays out the core requirements of the university program. It includes the fact that the specialist degree should include three years of training, which will include 60 semester hours of study along with a minimum of 1200 clock hours of supervised internship. Program objectives and philosophy should be clearly expressed to potential students (NASP, 2000).

The second area falling under this standard encompasses the “Domains of School Psychology Training and Practice” (NASP, 2000). There are eleven areas that students should be competent in by the time they graduate. They are as follows:

1. Data-Based Decision-Making and Accountability
2. Consultation and Collaboration
3. Effective Instruction and Development of Cognitive/Academic Skills
4. Socialization and Development of Life Skills
5. Student Diversity in Development and Learning
6. School and Systems Organization, Policy Development, and Climate
7. Prevention, Crisis Intervention, and Mental Health
8. Home/School/Community Collaboration
9. Research and Program Evaluation
10. School Psychology Practice and Development
11. Information Technology

Being competent in these areas will prepare graduate students in school psychology to

perform their job adequately and professionally.

The third requirement is titled “Field Experiences/Internship” (NASP, 2000). This ensures the student a supervised internship in order to hone their skills. The standards spell out the proper avenues that an internship should follow. These internships will give confidence to the student and enable the student to eventually begin work with greater competency.

The fourth area listed is “Performance-Based Program Assessment and Accountability” (NASP, 2000). This standard is set forth to ensure that the student has been tested in their knowledge using a broad range of devices. The student assessments are then used as a way for the administrators of the school psychology program to evaluate the quality of its program. This ensures that the graduates will have the highest quality of impact on the children they will come into contact with.

The last area included is “Program Support/Resources” (NASP, 2000). This area is concerned with faculty. The ratio of students to faculty is monitored. The faculty is also afforded continuing education opportunities. The resources available to the student should also be adequate for the studies they are engaged in.

Professional evaluation and accountability are extremely important to the field of school psychology (Fagan & Wise, 2000). Universities admit students that they hope will become competent professionals. Some characteristics are easier to measure than others. Writing skills are easy to measure in an academic environment, but other characteristics such as interpersonal skills and maturity may prove to be more elusive.

Certainly someone who has trouble communicating will not be able to effectively consult with parents and educators when the need arises. By periodically evaluating their program, universities can see if the criteria they use to admit students are effective. Accountability will enhance the university program, and in return the services provided to children will be enhanced.

In 1988, in an effort to have uniform credentials across all states NASP developed a National School Psychology Certification System (NSPCS). This is a way for credentials to be based on nationally recognized standards (NASP, 2003). The perception is that this credential will promote consistent levels of training and encourage continuing professional development. This is yet another way for the field to gain autonomy and a higher level of professional recognition.

By continually reviewing accredited programs, NASP will help to ensure that qualified professionals are entering the field of school psychology. The regulation of the unique training and skills necessary for this profession will ensure that training programs in the field of school psychology are turning out professionals of the highest caliber.

Definitions

Accreditation – the procedure for evaluating the preparation of persons desiring to function as, and refer to themselves as, school psychologists.

Credentialing – the procedure for granting titles and functions to persons following the completion of their professional preparation.

NASP – The National Association of School Psychologists

NCATE – National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

NSPCS – National School Psychology Certification System; its purpose is to credential school psychologists who meet a nationally recognized standard.

Professional standards – minimally acceptable levels of quality professional care or services maintained in order to promote the welfare of those who make use of such services.

Assumptions

Primarily the researcher assumed that professional accountability is desirable. Although no single system of accountability can sufficiently evaluate all of the roles and functions of school psychologists, NASP has set desirable standards.

Limitations

One of the limitations of this study is the small sample size of the respondents. It was further limited by the return of questionnaires from both the employers and the employees. Fifteen of the sixteen surveys sent out were returned.

Both of the questionnaires used in this study were created just for this investigation. Therefore, there was no reliability or validity information available to assess the appropriateness of their use.

Summary

Chapter Two will be a thorough review of the available literature as it pertains to this study. Chapter Three will define the methodology used for data collection. This will include the type of measurement used and how the data was physically collected. Chapter Four will follow with an analysis of the data. This will include a definition of the statistics used and the outcome of these statistics. Finally, Chapter Five will conclude the study with inferences drawn from the research and statistics. A brief statement of the implications of this work will also be included.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Schools: Complex Challenges in a Rapidly Changing Environment

It is apparent to anyone who works in education that the children who go to school today are different from the children attending school in previous generations.

According to Thomas and Grimes (1995):

Today one can hardly be ignorant of the evidence that the world is changing in fundamental ways and, along with it, our American society.

We now refer to the economy in global terms, as we do much of our political life. Diverse cultures of the world are increasingly interdependent.

America is especially marked by diverse racial and ethnic groups. Large segments of our youth culture are in turmoil, causing increased violence in schools. Our society is no longer characterized by “traditional” family structures of a working father, stay-at-home mother, and two children.

Almost 1/4 of our youth live in single-parent families, and at least 1/5 of children live in poverty. Higher standards of living are no longer assumed for the next generation, and the economic gap between rich and poor seems to be increasing. (p. 325)

In this view of a changing society, public education is also changing. It is turning from an emphasis on resources and inputs of education, to a system of accountability for the outcomes and achievement reached by students (Thomas & Grimes, 1995). As valid assessment strategies are developed, the potential role of school psychologists will undoubtedly expand.

School psychologists are being called on to be the impetus in a changing educational environment. At the same time, broad changes are being required for the role of school psychologists. There has been an increased need for collaboration between school, family, and community. There has been a shift away from the practice of labeling students, and towards problem solving and interventions. The focus now is on success for all students. Solutions must be implemented for the success of all students (Ysseldyke, Dawson, Lehr, Reschly, Reynolds, and Telzrow, 1997).

The knowledge and skills necessary for these evolving roles may be different from the traditional education of school psychologists. Curtis and Batsche (1991) emphasize that the training of school psychologists must be more attentive to what parents, teachers, and administrators need. Additional care must also be taken in assessing what takes place in the classroom, including the academic and social needs of students.

Concerns about the traditional practice of school psychology, and the alternatives to these practices, have been widely debated over the last 20 years (Thomas & Grimes, 1995). According to Reschly & Wilson (1995), survey studies show that school

psychologists spend about two-thirds of their time engaged in activities for classification and placement. Slightly over half of the time is spent on standardized testing and individual assessment. According to Shinn and McConnell, it has become a complicated and difficult task to provide an effective school psychology service after all of the educational testing is completed. School psychologists' time might be better spent bringing new perspectives to students' learning problems and taking a preventative stance. In addition, they can be the disseminators of new information to parents and teachers, and help to implement valid practices and destroy the myths that surround current invalid practices in the classroom. School psychologists may be in the unique position to use their assessment and consultation skills to assist teachers in an analysis of classroom management and teaching practices in an effort to prevent the kinds of problems that lead to the need for special education and behavioral problems in the first place (Shinn & McConnell, 1994). The fact that school psychologists often work in several schools, makes them perfect for this kind of information exchange. They have the ability to reach many more students than if their time were spent solely on individual assessments and interventions.

Characteristics of Effective School Psychologists

School psychologists must have the knowledge base and skills to serve in these new and diverse roles. Skills and competencies for school psychologists change frequently

as the needs of children and families change. Along with the challenging changes that school psychologists are facing, come changes in the methodologies used in assessment and interventions (Desrochers, 2003). According to Desrochers, one thing that does not change is the ability of the school psychologist to see the student in an “integrated” way. School psychologists should be problem solvers who can combine varied sources to aid in interventions at various levels of the educational system.

Graduate schools should only accept students that have characteristics that match the characteristics of that training program (Knoff, Curtis & Batsche, 1997). Not every student is a match for every program. To gain the maximum benefits from a training program, goodness-of-fit should be considered.

There are five areas that students should be effective in. According to Knoff et al., these areas are knowledge, skill, confidence, objectivity and self-knowledge, as well as interpersonal relationship skills. Knowledge falls under the responsibility of the training program. University faculty should supervise students during their practicum to make sure that the knowledge they gained in the classroom is transferable to skill on the job and effective practice.

During the breadth of the training program confidence can be developed and strengthened. If students receive proper feedback and reinforcement during their practica, they will have the opportunity to develop confidence in their skills. A different type of confidence is personal confidence. Personal confidence is an internal skill which will help

professionals cope with an ever changing environment and handle any situation that might arise to the best of their ability (Knoff et al., 1997).

During the course of the graduate program requirements, students should gain an understanding of professional ethics and practice. These should be reinforced and referenced repeatedly throughout the program (Knoff et al., 1997). This will help the student to attain the objectivity and self-knowledge to evaluate information about themselves, their colleagues and the data that they collect without prejudice.

Students must learn to use their interpersonal relationship skills while working with diverse clients and colleagues. Everyone will not always share the same perspectives. Students should be given the opportunity to practice these skills during the course of their studies (Knoff et al., 1997). All the training in the world will not make up for poor interpersonal skills. If a psychologist cannot work well with others, they will never be accepted in the field.

School psychology programs should be committed to enhancing these skills during the training of future school psychologists. There are many complex challenges facing school psychologists in the future. The ability to respond to these challenges in a competent and professional manner is laid in the foundation of the training received in graduate school. NASP has provided standards to use as a framework when developing professional training programs. These standards provide a basis of accountability and credibility to school psychology programs.

NASP Standards

Although it is a complicated procedure, accreditation is important to the field of school psychology. It helps to determine both the content and structure of school psychology programs, and it establishes a basis for the psychologists' credentials (Fagan & Wells, 2000). NASP has become the authority in the setting of standards for school psychology. NASP has attained 30 years as a professional organization and has over 21,000 members (Fagan & Gorin, 2000). Its goal is to represent school psychologist across the United States. When NASP was founded, the field of school psychology was without national standards. In the meantime, NASP has not only developed national standards but tied them together with the National Certification System (NSCPS). This system allows for one credential that is recognized nationwide (Fagan, 1994), and it shows a uniformity between NASP standards, training, and the credentials that allow psychologists to practice (Dahbany, Massarelli & Fagan, 2003).

In the *NASP Guide for Performance-Based Assessment, Accountability, and Program Development in School Psychology Training Programs* (2000a), NASP has provided training programs with guidelines to assist with the development of quality school psychology preparation. In 2000, NASP standards were once again revised. These revisions enable the field of school psychology to keep abreast of the ever-changing requirements in the field. The most recent standards emphasize the critical thinking skills

and independence that will be necessary when students are ready to apply their knowledge in the schools (2000a).

According to *NASP Standards for Training and Field Placement* (2000b), entry level school psychologists should be able to demonstrate competency across several domains of practice. To be competent one must demonstrate a combination of both knowledge and skills. Effective school psychology programs should ensure that candidates have the necessary foundation of knowledge across several domains to ensure professionalism in the field. The domains that should be included in a thorough curriculum as taken from the NASP training standards document (2000b) are as follows:

Domain I: Data-Based Decision-Making and Accountability

This domain refers to skills in data collection and analysis, accountability, and measurement of educational outcomes.

Domain II: Consultation and Collaboration

This domain includes interpersonal skills used in communication and collaboration with students, families, faculty, and the community at large. It also includes expertise in consultation at all levels of the system.

Domain III: Effective Instruction and Development of Cognitive/Academic Skills

This domain refers to the application of cognitive and learning theory, and of empirically supported instructional processes to enhance student achievement.

Domain IV: Socialization and Development of Life Skills

This domain refers to the development of school environments which promote mutual respect, reduce alienation, and encourage a sense of community.

Domain V: Student Diversity in Development and Learning

This domain refers to the ability to apply knowledge about individual abilities and disabilities and diverse racial, cultural, biological, ethnic, socioeconomic, linguistic, and gender-related backgrounds to enhance student learning and development.

Domain VI: School and Systems Organization, Policy Development, and Climate

This domain refers to skills needed to organize schools in ways that promote learning, excellence, and community.

Domain VII: Prevention, Crisis Intervention, and Mental Health

This domain refers to the promotion of school-wide comprehensive programs of school psychological services which are available to all students.

Domain VIII: Home/School/Community Collaboration

This domain includes skills in collaboration with other professionals as well as in the design and implementation of programs to encourage home/school cooperation.

Domain IX: Research and Program Evaluation

This domain refers to skills in statistics, measurement, and research design as applied to meeting evaluating school programs and meeting the goals of the school system.

Domain X: School Psychology Practice and Development

This domain refers to the pursuit of the highest level of legal, ethical, and professional practice.

Domain XI: Information Technology

This domain refers to skills in the use of technology to enhance service delivery.

At this time, these requirements will enable entry-level school psychologists to enter the field with a foundation of knowledge and skills necessary to operate in an ever-changing environment. It is imperative that school psychologists continue their education as lifelong learners. It is also imperative that NASP continue to update their standards in an effort to enhance the skills and professionalism of a growing and changing field:

Characteristics of Effective Training Programs

An effective school psychology training program includes several components (Knoff et al., 1997). These include coursework, practica and internship experience. The philosophy of the program should be clearly stated. The students should understand the program philosophy and be chosen for the program based on compatibility. Supervision and mentoring by qualified professionals should be provided where appropriate.

According to Knoff et al. (1997) effective training programs should have strong philosophical and professional positions. They should be committed to advocacy

and have respect for individual differences. The programs should have a commitment to knowledge and competency and the practitioners should graduate with self-awareness and a thorough awareness of ethical practices.

Students should be assessed on the basis of the knowledge that they have and the requisite skills that go along with that knowledge. Assessment should be based on multiple sources. Examinations are only one part of assessment. Assessment can also be based on performance appraisals, case studies, simulations, portfolios, candidate and graduate questionnaires, exit interviews, and surveys of supervisors and employers (NASP, 2000a). It is important that programs not only assess knowledge, but also include assessment of the competencies that go along with the practical application of this knowledge.

The Standards for Training and Field Placement Programs in School Psychology (NASP, 2000b), emphasize performance based standards. They also place responsibility on the graduate program to document the program's philosophy, goals, and outcomes. Performance standards are intended so that graduating school psychologists are able to provide effective services to the children and families with whom they come in contact. A graduate program must meet the standards set forth by NASP to maintain accreditation. Accreditation is important to give credibility to the field and it enhances the development of training programs (Fagan & Wells, 2000).

Future Needs in the Field of School Psychology

There appears to be a conflict between what school psychology students are being taught in graduate school and the needs of the public school system. Although some school psychologists are comfortable with the assessment role they are currently filling, many school psychologists are frustrated by this role and would like to expand it to encompass a more complex role (Miller, 2001).

It is important to improve the educational system for all students (Shinn & McConnell, 1994). In the future, school psychologists' work should pertain more toward the instructional part of schooling (Thomas & Grimes, 1995). This includes curriculum, teaching process, and the learning environment. School psychologists must possess the knowledge about strategies that can enhance student performance. School psychologists are positioned to turn their understanding of current research into appropriate applications and practices in the classroom (Thomas & Grimes, 1995). Suggesting different instructional methods is one way to turn research into program development in schools (Thomas & Grimes, 1995).

Thomas and Grimes (1995) further state that "school psychologists can be some of the best trained professionals in schools to help teachers, schools, and districts implement and evaluate new types of educational outcomes." School psychologists not only work with parents and individual students, they are also able to initiate change

systemically. They have the opportunity to make changes by coming in contact with teachers and schools and affecting many more students at one time.

The profession of school psychology is currently facing a shortage of qualified personnel (Miller, 2001). NASP is engaged in an ongoing process to change this. One way that NASP is promoting the profession, is by trying to inform undergraduates about the profession. They are also generating new ideas in an effort to promote the profession to others who might not have considered the field. It is important to keep in mind that despite the fact that there is a personnel shortage, it is important to maintain standards and to produce qualified professionals to broaden the field of school psychology.

It has been established that the field of education and more specifically the field of school psychology is changing. The world today is not what it was when we were younger. The problems faced by kids today are different than the problems faced by prior generations. It is imperative that the field of school psychology keep up with these changes. NASP has established standards and credentials to give the field of school psychology greater accountability. The ten domains of school psychology were put into place so that all students can have positive outcomes. These outcomes depend on both the application of the knowledge and the practice skills of the school psychologists (Ysseldyke, et al., 1997). It is our responsibility to take those standards and put them in to practice and affect the changes that we know must take place.

CHAPTER 3: DESIGN OF STUDY

Sample

The sample consisted of 15 school psychologists. They are all currently enrolled in Rowan University's Colloquium in School Psychology course and are seeking national certification. All study participants were recruited through the school psychology program at Rowan University.

Measures

Two surveys were created to assess job performance and level of satisfaction with current position. A total of 16 questions were used to assess level of job satisfaction. Participants were asked to rate job satisfaction using a 5 point Likert scale. The survey included questions ranging from satisfaction with salary and working conditions to various professional opportunities. Answers ranged from (1) "very dissatisfied" through (5) "very satisfied" (see Appendix A).

The second survey was an intern evaluation form. This form was given to supervisors to rate the performance of the school psychology interns. There was a total of 58 questions rating the intern from (1) "poor" through (5) "excellent". The questions were grouped under nine broad categories. The categories read as follows:

1. Evaluation – Assessment
2. Interventions – General

3. Interventions – Consultation
4. Interventions – Counseling
5. Communication and Collaboration
6. In-service Training
7. Research/Program Evaluation
8. Multicultural Diversity
9. Professional Conduct

There was an additional question added for “overall rating of intern” using the same scale. Concluding the survey was an area for any general comments that the supervisor might have (see Appendix B).

This scale was also given to the interns to rate their perceived job performance. The purpose of this was to compare the supervisor and the intern rating’s using the same measure. This was then compared to the intern’s level of job satisfaction.

Since these questionnaires were developed for this study, the reliability and validity of these measures is unknown.

Design and Analysis

This study will examine the relationship between intern’s and supervisors ratings of job performance. This information will be analyzed to assess if job performance is correlated with job satisfaction. Descriptive statistics will be used to analyze data from the job performance questionnaire. Pearson’s product-moment correlation will be utilized to determine the significance between job performance and job satisfaction.

Testable Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis:

There is no correlation between self-rating and supervisor rating for job performance.

There is no indication that job satisfaction, as related to school psychology, is related to job performance.

Alternate Hypothesis:

Self-rating and supervisor rating for job performance is correlated.

Job satisfaction, as related to school psychology, is related to job performance.

Summary

The intern evaluation form will be used by interns and supervisors to assess job performance. The Level of Satisfaction with Current Position questionnaire will be used to assess the intern's level of satisfaction in their current position.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Null Hypothesis:

There is no correlation between self-rating and supervisor rating for job performance.

There is no indication that job satisfaction, as related to school psychology, is related to job performance.

Alternate Hypothesis:

Self-rating and supervisor rating for job performance is correlated.

Job satisfaction, as related to school psychology, is related to job performance.

Interpretation of Results

With respect to the first hypothesis, the data that were collected indicate a significant correlation between supervisor ratings and intern's ratings of job performance ($r = .04822$, $p < .05$). Based on these data we would reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis. Table 4.1 summarizes the descriptive statistics from the interns' self-rating of their job performance. Table 4.2 summarizes the descriptive statistics from the supervisors' ratings of the interns' job performance.

Table 4.1

Feedback from intern's self-ratings	Mean	standard deviation	range
Evaluation-Assessment			
a. cognitive	4.27	0.59	3-5
b. personality/social emotional	4.20	0.68	3-5
c. interviewing skills	4.13	0.74	3-5
d. behavioral assessment	3.93	0.59	3-5
e. ability to integrate data	4.07	0.59	3-5
Interventions – General			
a. practicality	4.07	0.70	3-5
b. relevance to context	4.07	0.70	3-5
c. appropriateness to problems	4.20	0.56	3-5
d. specificity of recommendations	3.80	0.56	3-5
e. provision for follow-up	3.73	0.88	2-5
f. implementation	3.73	0.70	3-5
g. actual follow-up	3.40	0.74	2-5
Interventions – Consultation			
a. entry and contracting	4.00	0.88	3-5
b. problem identification/definition	4.14	0.77	3-5
c. problem analysis	4.14	0.77	3-5
d. plan formulation	3.93	0.73	3-5
e. plan implementation	3.79	0.80	3-5
f. follow-up and evaluation	3.64	0.93	2-5
g. organizational consultation	4.00	0.88	3-5
Interventions – Counseling			
a. basic counseling	4.00	0.78	3-5
b. formulation of goals	3.86	0.86	3-5
c. individual counseling	4.00	0.78	3-5
d. group counseling	3.67	0.98	2-5
Communication and Collaboration			
a. interpersonal communication	4.50	0.65	3-5
b. listens well (listens to others, listens with empathy)	4.73	0.46	4-5
c. oral communication			
d. written communication (incl. report writing)	4.33	0.82	2-5
e. parent conferencing	4.53	0.52	4-5
	4.33	0.72	3-5
In-service training			
a. planning	4.10	0.74	3-5
b. implementation	4.00	0.82	3-5
c. follow-up and evaluation	3.70	0.95	2-5

Research/program Evaluation			
a. planning	4.00	0.53	3-5
b. implementation	3.75	0.46	3-4
c. follow-up communication	3.50	0.53	3-4
d. provision for participants' rights and confidentiality	4.00	0.76	3-5
Multicultural/Diversity			
a. knowledgeable about client's culture, values, world views and social norms	4.13	0.74	3-5
b. understands how race, ethnicity, and culture may affect client behavior and attitudes	4.07	0.70	3-5
c. uses culturally appropriate assessment and intervention methods	4.07	0.70	3-5
d. is aware of how own culture affects her/his work and how it impacts on others	4.20	0.77	3-5
e. works to increase the multicultural/diversity sensitivity of the school/agency	3.93	0.80	3-5
Professional Conduct			
a. maintains effective relationships with			
1. students	4.80	0.41	4-5
2. teachers	4.53	0.64	3-5
3. administration	4.60	0.63	3-5
4. psychological services staff	4.92	0.28	4-5
b. professional citizenship			
1. appreciates school/agency norms	4.47	0.64	3-5
2. has positive impact on public image of agency	4.53	0.64	3-5
3. adheres to applicable ethics codes and legal mandates	4.60	0.51	4-5
c. general performance characteristics			
1. enthusiasm and interest			
2. dependability	4.60	0.63	3-5
3. promptness	4.87	0.35	4-5
4. productivity	4.60	0.63	3-5
5. creativity	4.60	0.63	3-5
6. goes beyond basic requirements (takes initiative, persevering, hardworking, industrious)	4.47	0.74	3-5
7. adapts to change flexibly	4.60	0.63	3-5
d. supervision	4.50	0.65	3-5
1. prepares for supervision			
2. exhibits appropriate levels of independence			

3. uses supervision productively	4.25	0.62	3-5
4. follows constructive criticism objectively and professionally	4.54	0.52	4-5
	4.58	0.67	3-5
	4.69	0.48	4-5
Overall rating of school psychologist	4.27	0.46	4-5

Table 4.2

Feedback from supervisor ratings	Mean	standard deviation	range
Evaluation-Assessment			
f. cognitive	4.71	0.47	4-5
g. personality/social emotional	4.67	0.49	4-5
h. interviewing skills	4.77	0.44	4-5
i. behavioral assessment	4.67	0.49	4-5
j. ability to integrate data	4.60	0.63	3-5
Interventions – General			
h. practicality	4.67	0.49	4-5
i. relevance to context	4.71	0.47	4-5
j. appropriateness to problems	4.79	0.43	4-5
k. specificity of recommendations	4.71	0.47	4-5
l. provision for follow-up	4.67	0.49	4-5
m. implementation	4.67	0.49	4-5
n. actual follow-up	4.80	0.41	4-5
Interventions – Consultation			
h. entry and contracting	4.67	0.49	4-5
i. problem identification/definition	4.54	0.78	3-5
j. problem analysis	4.69	0.48	4-5
k. plan formulation	4.69	0.48	4-5
l. plan implementation	4.67	0.65	3-5
m. follow-up and evaluation	4.62	0.77	3-5
n. organizational consultation	4.92	0.29	4-5
Interventions – Counseling			
e. basic counseling	4.58	0.67	3-5
f. formulation of goals	4.42	0.90	3-5
g. individual counseling	4.73	0.47	4-5
h. group counseling	4.56	0.73	3-5
Communication and Collaboration			
f. interpersonal communication	4.93	0.26	4-5
g. listens well (listens to others, listens with empathy)	4.93	0.26	4-5

h. oral communication			
i. written communication (incl. report writing)	4.80	0.41	4-5
j. parent conferencing	4.86	0.36	4-5
	4.80	0.41	4-5
In-service training			
d. planning	5.00	0.00	5
e. implementation	5.00	0.00	5
f. follow-up and evaluation	5.00	0.00	5
Research/program Evaluation			
e. planning	4.75	0.46	4-5
f. implementation	4.86	0.38	4-5
g. follow-up communication	4.86	0.38	4-5
h. provision for participants' rights and confidentiality	4.86	0.38	4-5
Multicultural/Diversity			
f. knowledgeable about client's culture, values, world views and social norms	4.60	0.51	4-5
g. understands how race, ethnicity, and culture may affect client behavior and attitudes	4.67	0.49	4-5
h. uses culturally appropriate assessment and intervention methods	4.64	0.50	4-5
i. is aware of how own culture affects her/his work and how it impacts on others	4.80	0.41	4-5
j. works to increase the multicultural/diversity sensitivity of the school/agency	4.54	0.66	3-5
Professional Conduct			
e. maintains effective relationships with			
1. students	4.93	0.27	4-5
2. teachers	4.80	0.41	4-5
3. administration	4.73	0.46	4-5
4. psychological services staff	4.85	0.38	4-5
f. professional citizenship			
1. appreciates school/agency norms	4.80	0.41	4-5
2. has positive impact on public image of agency	4.87	0.35	4-5
3. adheres to applicable ethics codes and legal mandates	4.80	0.56	4-5
g. general performance characteristics			
1. enthusiasm and interest			
2. dependability	4.86	0.36	4-5
3. promptness	4.87	0.35	4-5

4. productivity	4.80	0.41	4-5
5. creativity	4.67	0.49	4-5
6. goes beyond basic requirements (takes initiative, persevering, hardworking, industrious)	4.69	0.63	3-5
7. adapts to change flexibly	4.67	0.49	4-5
h. supervision	4.67	0.62	3-5
1. prepares for supervision			
2. exhibits appropriate levels of independence			
3. uses supervision productively	4.86	0.36	4-5
4. follows constructive criticism objectively and professionally	4.93	0.26	4-5
	4.87	0.35	4-5
	4.80	0.41	4-5
Overall rating of school psychologist	4.71	0.47	4-5

With respect to the second hypothesis a significant correlation was not found in regard to job satisfaction and job performance. There is no correlation between job satisfaction and self-rating of job performance. Therefore we must accept the second null hypothesis. Table 4.3 summarizes the descriptive statistics from the job satisfaction survey.

Table 4.3

Feedback on Job satisfaction survey	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range
Working Conditions	4.40	0.91	2-5
Level of Challenge	4.29	0.83	2-5
Fit with career plans	4.33	0.72	3-5
Location	4.20	1.01	2-5
Job Security	4.33	0.90	2-5
Relationship with Supervisor	4.60	0.63	3-5
Relationship with co-workers	4.80	0.41	4-5
Opportunities for promotion	3.00	1.18	2-5
Opportunities for professional advancement	3.62	1.19	2-5
Opportunity to use knowledge and skills	4.33	.82	3-5

Opportunity to participate in decision making	4.13	1.06	2-5
Degree of freedom to work independently	4.60	.63	3-5
Amount of time for non-work activities	3.67	1.11	1-5
Orientation and training offered by employer	3.57	.94	2-5
Salary	3.93	.80	3-5
Benefits	3.79	.97	2-5

Summary

This study examined the relationship between the school psychology interns and their supervisors on a job performance rating scale. We also examined the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance for the interns. The sample consisted of first year school psychologists currently enrolled in Rowan University's Colloquium in School Psychology course. Results indicate a positive correlation between the job performance ratings of supervisors and interns. This correlation does not seem to have an effect on current job satisfaction.

The survey results indicate the supervisors were satisfied with their intern's job performance. The results also indicate that the interns feel confident in their abilities. It seems apparent that the interns were adequately prepared for the field of school psychology by Rowan University. The surveys that were analyzed indicate that the supervisors and interns were satisfied in almost all aspects of job performance.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The goal of the school psychology program at Rowan University is to prepare qualified practitioners to deliver school psychology services according to professional standards set forth by NASP. This study attempted to evaluate the qualifications of recent graduates by surveying current employers.

Previous research has indicated that the field of school psychology is rapidly evolving. Future practitioners will need to adapt to the changing needs of the field. Regulation of training and practice ensures that the university is held accountable for the training of school psychologists. Periodic assessment of current school psychology programs is necessary to ensure that these programs are graduating qualified and competent professionals.

The goal of this study was to assess the competence of the recent graduates of the school psychology program. We hoped to find out if the school psychologists were practicing at a level equal to current professional standards. We also tried to ascertain if the employers of the graduates were satisfied with the preparation that the school psychologists received at Rowan University.

The results of this study revealed that employers were in fact satisfied with their school psychologists. There was an area at the end of the survey for additional comments. Some of the data collected from this part of the survey indicate an overwhelming satisfaction with the skills possessed by the school psychologists. A brief listing of the comments follows:

“Exceptional in all ways”

“Very knowledgeable, great skills, and gets along very well with staff and students. Wish there were more like him”

“What a wonderful addition to our CST”

“..... demonstrates a high level of competency and professionalism in every aspect of her role as school psychologist”

Clearly this illustrates that the program at Rowan University is producing competent professionals.

Interestingly, the supervisors rated the school psychologists higher than they rated themselves. This was true for every question asked except for the one about “maintaining effective relationships with psychological services staff”. The mean score for the interns’ rating was 4.92 and the supervisors’ rating was 4.85. There is little difference between these two means.

Further scrutiny of the intern’s ratings shows that their lowest scores were consistently in the areas of follow-up. The supervisors rated the interns much higher in this area. This shows the level of commitment that the school psychologists have to their profession. Surely they would like to spend more time doing follow-up work, but their work load probably does not allow for the degree of follow-up they would like to see.

One thing that needs further explanation is the score for “in-service training”. Ten of the interns responded affirmatively to this question. Only two of the supervisors

answered this question for the interns. It is unclear whether there is a difference in the perceptions of what in-service training is, or if the intern's felt that they would do a good job if given this task to complete.

Although there was no correlation found between job satisfaction and supervisor's ratings of job performance, it appears that the graduates maintain their professional integrity. Even if their situation is not ideal, they still are able to perform their job duties at a high level. Of the sixteen questions asked on the job satisfaction survey, only five fell within the "somewhat satisfied" range. These questions included "opportunities for promotion/professional advancement", "amount of time for non-work activities", "orientation and training offered by employer", and salary and benefits. Some of the questions that received the highest ratings were those that pertained to relationships with colleagues and the degree of freedom to work independently. In the job satisfaction survey it was found that there was a wider range of responses, as well as a greater standard deviation for the reported scores. This can be explained by the fact that school psychologists work in a variety of different settings. Although few jobs are ideal, the personality of the school psychologist should fit with the environment that they work in.

Implications for further study

Although this study has shown that the current Colloquium students have been prepared adequately, further research should be conducted. The sample for our study was small, and a larger study would give a more definitive picture. It is also important to have continuing accountability for any program. If the program is not monitored it would be

impossible to be certain that the information being taught was applicable to the changing field of school psychology.

Academic ability and aptitude are easier to measure than some of the other desirable qualities of school psychologists. It would be advantageous to find a way to measure some of the more elusive qualities that good school psychologists should possess. These would include interpersonal warmth, flexibility, and stress resistance.

No single system of accountability can properly evaluate the variety of roles and functions of school psychologists. As a profession we should be continually questioning whether or not the children's needs are being met and reviewing credentials to make sure that training is producing the desired outcomes. This will help to ensure credibility as a profession and maintain that competent professionals continue to enter the field of school psychology.

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Appendices

Appendix A
Rowan University
School Psychology
Level of Satisfaction with Current Position

Intern: _____

Date: _____

Supervisor: _____

School/Agency: _____

Please use the following scale to rate your level of satisfaction

5	4	3	2	1	NA
Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	No Basis

Rating

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Working Conditions | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| 2. Level of Challenge | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| 3. Fit with career plans | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| 4. Location | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| 5. Job Security | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| 6. Relationship with Supervisor | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| 7. Relationship with coworkers | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| 8. Opportunities for promotion | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| 9. Opportunities for professional advancement | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |

Please use the following scale to rate your level of satisfaction

5	4	3	2	1	NA
Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	No Basis

Rating

10. Opportunity to use knowledge and skills	1	2	3	4	5	NA
11. Opportunity to participate in decision making	1	2	3	4	5	NA
12. Degree of freedom to work independently	1	2	3	4	5	NA
13. Amount of time for non-work activities	1	2	3	4	5	NA
14. Orientation and training offered by employer	1	2	3	4	5	NA
15. Salary	1	2	3	4	5	NA
16. Benefits	1	2	3	4	5	NA

Appendix B
Rowan University
School Psychology
Evaluation Form

Intern: _____

Date: _____

Supervisor: _____

School/Agency: _____

Please use the following scale to rate the school psychologist

5	4	3	2	1	NA
Excellent	Very Good	Satisfactory	Fair	Poor	No Basis

<u>Performance Area</u>	<u>Performance Rating</u>	<u>Comments</u>
--------------------------------	----------------------------------	------------------------

1. Evaluation – Assessment

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| a. Cognitive | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| b. Personality/SocialEmotional | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| c. Interviewing Skills | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| d. Behavioral Assessment | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| e. Ability to Integrate Data | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |

2. Interventions – General

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| a. Practicality | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| b. Relevance to Context | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| c. Appropriateness to Problems | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| d. Specificity of Recommendations | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| e. Provision for Follow-up | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| f. Implementation | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |
| g. Actual Follow-up | 1 2 3 4 5 NA |

Please use the following scale to rate the school psychologist

5	4	3	2	1	NA
Excellent	Very Good	Satisfactory	Fair	Poor	No Basis

Performance Area

Performance Rating

Comments

3. Interventions – Consultation

a. Entry and Contracting	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b. Problem Identification/Definition	1	2	3	4	5	NA
c. Problem Analysis	1	2	3	4	5	NA
d. Plan Formulation	1	2	3	4	5	NA
e. Plan Implementation	1	2	3	4	5	NA
f. Follow-up and Evaluation	1	2	3	4	5	NA
g. Organizational Consultation	1	2	3	4	5	NA

4. Interventions - Counseling

a. Basic Counseling	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b. Formulation of Goals	1	2	3	4	5	NA
c. Individual Counseling	1	2	3	4	5	NA
d. Group Counseling	1	2	3	4	5	NA

5. Communication and Collaboration

a. Interpersonal Communication	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b. Listens well (listens to others, listens with empathy)	1	2	3	4	5	NA
c. Oral Communication	1	2	3	4	5	NA
d. Written Communication (incl. report writing)	1	2	3	4	5	NA
e. Parent Conferencing	1	2	3	4	5	NA

Please use the following scale to rate the school psychologist

5	4	3	2	1	NA
Excellent	Very Good	Satisfactory	Fair	Poor	No Basis

<u>Performance Area</u>	<u>Performance Rating</u>	<u>Comments</u>
6. In-service Training		
a. Planning	1 2 3 4 5 NA	
b. Implementation	1 2 3 4 5 NA	
c. Follow-up and evaluation	1 2 3 4 5 NA	
7. Research/Program Evaluation		
a. Planning	1 2 3 4 5 NA	
b. Implementation	1 2 3 4 5 NA	
c. Follow-up Communication	1 2 3 4 5 NA	
d. Provision for participants' rights and confidentiality	1 2 3 4 5 NA	
8. Multicultural/Diversity		
a. Knowledgeable about client's culture, values, world views and social norms	1 2 3 4 5 NA	
b. Understands how race, ethnicity, and culture may affect client behavior and attitudes	1 2 3 4 5 NA	
c. Uses culturally appropriate assessment and intervention methods	1 2 3 4 5 NA	
d. Is aware of how own culture affects her/his work and how it impacts on others	1 2 3 4 5 NA	
e. Works to increase the Multicultural/diversity sensitivity of the school/agency	1 2 3 4 5 NA	

Please use the following scale to rate the school psychologist

5	4	3	2	1	NA
Excellent	Very Good	Satisfactory	Fair	Poor	No Basis

<u>Performance Area</u>	<u>Performance Rating</u>	<u>Comments</u>
-------------------------	---------------------------	-----------------

9. Professional Conduct

a. Maintains Effective Relationships with:

- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 2. Teachers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 3. Administration | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 4. Psychological Services Staff | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |

b. Professional Citizenship

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Appreciates School/agency norms | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 2. Has positive impact on public image of agency | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 3. Adheres to applicable ethics codes and legal mandates | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |

c. General Performance Characteristics

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Enthusiasm and Interest | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 2. Dependability | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 3. Promptness | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 4. Productivity | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 5. Creativity | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 6. Goes beyond basic requirements (takes initiative, persevering, hardworking, industrious) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 7. Adapts to change flexibly | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |

Please use the following scale to rate the school psychologist

5 **4** **3** **2** **1** **NA**
 Excellent Very Good Satisfactory Fair Poor No Basis

Performance Area **Performance Rating** **Comments**

d. Supervision

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Prepares for supervision | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 2. Exhibits appropriate levels of independence | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 3. Uses supervision productively | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 4. Follows constructive criticism objectively and professionally | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |

10. Overall Rating of School Psychologist 1 2 3 4 5

General Comments:

