

SOME ASPECTS OF COUNSELLOR EDUCATION IN CANADA WITH EMPHASIS ON CAREER DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The present study was initiated to examine some of the practices of graduate preparation of counsellors in Canadian universities. The intent was to provide data concerning a range of activities in this field with some emphasis upon career development. Faculty members of faculties of education responsible for the preparation of counsellors were interviewed. Information was obtained on the experiential background of counsellor educators, the theoretical orientations employed, the programs, career development courses, the theories of career development in terms of popularity, the skills needed in the training of counsellors, standardized tests used in career development, recent changes in the programs, the important components of counsellor education in career development, the importance of areas of career development in counsellor education, the kinds of decision-making strategies employed, changes in research in career development, the counsellor's changing roles, and future views of career counselling.

Résumé

La présente étude a été faite pour évaluer certaines des pratiques se rapportant à la préparation de conseillers diplômés dans les universités canadiennes. L'intention était d'ajouter d'autres données sur la gamme d'activités dans ce domaine tout en insistant sur le développement de carrières. Les répondants du questionnaire étaient des coordonnateurs et des membres de facultés de départements de formation de conseillers. On a obtenu des renseignements se rapportant aux cours en développement de carrières, aux théories utilisées en développement de carrières, aux compétences jugées comme étant importantes aux conseillers, à l'utilisation de tests normalisés en développement de carrières, aux tout derniers changements aux programmes, aux composants de la formation de conseillers en développement de carrières dans la formation des conseillers, aux moyens utilisés pour prendre des décisions aux changements dans le domaine de la recherche en développement de carrières, au rôle changeant du conseiller et à un regard vers l'avenir du conseiller en carrières.

The complex nature of counselling includes a base of specialized knowledge, specific and interlocking skills, and a set of values which constitutes a counselling perspective or ideology. There is no single definition of counselling which seems all-encompassing, although the term *facilitator of human change and development* (Peavy, 1976) would be acceptable to most authorities. School counsellors must provide for their students the most competent service possible. It is the responsibility of counsellor educators to develop and maintain programs to ensure that school counsellors have the required competencies. One of the areas of competence is career development counselling. The purpose of this article is to deal with some aspects of counsellor preparation with emphasis upon career development, and to look at the implications for school counselling.

The field of counsellor education in Canada has not been investigated in depth. Guttman (1973)

surveyed, by a mailed questionnaire, the universities which offered master's and doctoral programs. Her study excluded Francophone universities and consisted of a compilation of courses/programs offered at that time. A more comprehensive current study by Jevne (1981) examined the priorities held by counsellor educators in Canada. To date, the career development aspect of counsellor education has not been examined. Bedal (1979) studied futures in guidance in Canada through a structured interview but did not stress career education. Peavy (1973, 1976, 1979) documented standards for the graduate preparation of counsellors, statements of current operational status, and priorities for program improvements.

Method

The method used was to interview faculty members of the faculties of education responsible for the preparation of counsellors. Kerlinger (1964)

supported the structured interview which includes open-ended questions as the most effective method for gathering data.

The distinctions between career development and career education sometimes creates difficulty. Herr (1977) explained career development as an ongoing process which extends from infancy through adulthood, as a series of tasks which are differentially important at different life periods, and as a central theme of education at all levels. Career education is described as both learning technical or occupational task specific skills and examining and developing knowledge, skills, and attitudes about self-environmental options and the decision-making process.

Pietrofessa and Splete (1975) point out that facilitating career development, whether recognized by that term or not, has long been a goal of counsellors in a variety of settings. They define career development as "an ongoing process that occurs over the life span and includes home, schools and community experiences related to an individual's self-concept and its implementation in life style as one lives life and makes a living."

A number of Canadian studies have examined perceptions of counsellor role held by professionals-counsellors, counsellor educators, and administrators. These are largely limited to provincial educational jurisdictions and reflect different perceptions of the counsellor function expressed by significant others in these systems (Brown, 1974; Dragan, 1975; Mott, 1973).

The purpose of this study was to examine some of the practices of graduate preparation of counsellors in Canadian universities. The intent is to help provide data concerning a range of activities in this field with some emphasis upon career development. The ultimate concern is for the improved effectiveness of counselling for the clientele served by counsellors in a variety of settings.

Interview questionnaires were designed for the coordinators of counsellor education departments (containing 15 items) and for faculty members (containing 21 items subsumed under seven questions). The questions were tested and refined using a small sample of faculty members. Coordinators and one or two faculty members identified with the teaching of courses in career development or vocational theories were interviewed by the investigator following scheduling by letter and telephone arrangements. The on-campus visits were conducted in three phases — eastern, central, and western Canada.

Results

The subjects of the study completed demographic data forms. All were full-time faculty members of departments of counsellor

education/educational psychology in faculties of education in the Canadian universities which offer graduate programs in counselling. There was one exception where diploma programs only were offered, but master's programs were being planned. Of the 50 counsellor educators, 28 (56%) held the EdD or PhD from American universities, 15 (30%) held doctoral degrees from Canadian universities, 21 (42%) held American master's degrees, 28 (56%) held Canadian master's degrees, and 1 (2%) held two master's degrees from universities outside North America. Forty-four (88%) respondents were male and six (12%) were female. Of the six females, four were coordinators or chairpersons. Fourteen were assistant professors, 26 were associate professors, and 10 were full professors.

Experience

The experiential backgrounds of counsellor educators included teaching at elementary, secondary, and university levels. In addition, several reported work experience in psychological clinical settings. The counsellor educators' experience in counselling psychology varied from 2 to 28 years with a mean of 9.5 years.

Theoretical Orientations

Theoretical orientations were reported as eclectic 16 (32%), humanistic 14 (28%), client-centered 6 (12%), cognitive behavioral 5 (10%), existential 5 (10%), gestalt 2 (4%), reality 1 (2%), behavioral sciences 1 (2%), and social systems 1 (2%). Combinations also were reported. See Table 1.

Table 1
Academic Degrees and Theoretical Orientations of the
Counsellor Educators ($n=50$)

	Number	Percentage
Academic Degrees		
EdD/PhD — USA	28	56%
EdD/PhD — Canada	15	30%
MA/MEd — USA	21	42%
MA/MEd — Canada	28	56%
MA/MEd — Outside North America	1	2%
Theoretical Orientations		
Eclectic	16	32%
Humanistic	14	28%
Client-centered	6	12%
Cognitive behavioral	5	10%
Existential	5	10%
Gestalt	2	4%
Reality	1	2%
Behavioral sciences	1	2%
Social systems	1	2%

The Programs

Eight universities offer doctoral programs, PhD, EdD, or DPs (Laval, McGill, Montreal, Ottawa, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Alberta, Calgary, and British Columbia). Master's degrees were offered by 19 universities (Memorial, Acadia, Moncton, New Brunswick, Laval, Montreal, McGill, Ottawa, Queen's, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Western, Windsor, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Regina, Alberta, Calgary, British Columbia, and Victoria).

Career Development Courses

Within this setting of one- and two-year master's programs, the survey found that all but one offer at least one course clearly identified as career development or vocational theories. Courses varied from one to four ($M = 1.5$) with 50% reporting one course and 26.2% reporting two courses. Counsellor educators also reported two or more courses containing components of career development ($M = 2.58$). These were variously described as Theories of Counselling, Testing, Practicum, and Introduction to Guidance Services. See Table 2.

Table 2
Career Development Courses and Components Classified by Counsellor Educators

	Frequency	Percentage
Number of Counsellor Education Courses Classified as Career Development or Vocational Theories ($n=42$)		
0	4	9.5
1	21	50.0
2	11	26.2
3	4	9.5
4	2	4.7
Number of Counsellor Education Courses Containing Career Development Components ($n=41$)		
0	0	0
1	7	17
2	14	34
3	9	22
4	11	27

Theories of Career Development

Counsellor educators ranked Super as the leading theorist (3.98 on a 5-point scale) followed by Holland (3.53), Ginsberg (2.95), and Tiedeman (2.81). In Francophone universities, the theories of Pelletier, Noiseau, Bujold (Activation de Vocational Development), and Tetreau were regarded as very important. See Table 3.

Table 3
Importance of Theories of Career Development in Counsellor Education Programs Rated by Counsellor Educators ($n=41$)

Theory	Mean	Rank
Super	3.98	1
Holland	3.53	2
Ginsberg	2.95	3
Tiedeman	2.81	4
Trait/Factor	2.62	5
Roe	2.59	6
Hoppock	2.36	7
Psychoanalytic	1.95	8
Miller and Form	1.85	9
*Pelletier, Noiseau, and Bujold	1.72	11
*Tetreau	1.72	11

*Rated as very important in Francophone universities.

Skills in the Training of Counsellors

In response to the importance of specific skills in the training of counsellors, the respondents rated, in descending order: self-concept implementation, decision making, problem solving, career education programs, and cooperating with agencies. See Table 4.

Standardized Tests in Career Development

The faculty members reported that they used standardized tests for career development in their counsellor education programs as follows: Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory (87.8%), Differential Aptitude Test (82.9%), Kuder Occupational Interest Survey (80.5%), and General Aptitude Test Battery (73.1%). See Table 5.

Change in Program in Last Five Years

Counsellor educators were asked to indicate changes in their programs made within the last five years with respect to career development. They reported changes in emphasis from theoretical to applied. Another shift was from differentiation to integration of personal and vocational aspects in career development. Others mentioned the shift from information services to career counselling. There was an increase from the use of career components in other courses toward complete graduate courses in career education. A further change was from lesser to greater involvement in community agencies.

Components of Counsellor Education in Career Development

Respondents rated, on a 5-point scale, the Practicum (on campus) as the most important component ($M = 4.25$). The Internship (off campus) ($M = 4.18$) and Supervision (through pro-

Table 4
Importance of Skills in Counsellor Training Taught by Counsellor Educators ($n=41$)

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Self-concept implementation	4.29	1
Decision making	4.02	2
Problem solving	4.07	3
Career education programs	3.71	4
Cooperating with agencies	3.68	5
World of work — study of occupations	3.51	6.5
Test administration and interpretation	3.51	6.5
Assembly and dissemination of educational and vocational information	3.49	8
Work experience programs	3.34	9.5
Structured activities, e.g., life career game	3.34	9.5
Computerized information services	3.10	11
Conduct surveys of local resources	3.00	12

Table 5
Standardized Tests Used for Career Development Reported by Counsellor Educators ($n=41$)

<i>Test</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory	87.8	1
Differential Aptitude Test	82.9	2
Kuder Occupational Interest survey	80.5	3
General Aptitude Test Battery	73.1	4
Vocational Preference Inventory	58.5	5
Career Maturity Inventory	51.2	6
Jackson Vocational Interest Survey	31.7	7
Hall Occupational Orientation Inventory	24.3	8
Ohio Vocational Interest Survey	12.1	9

Table 6
Importance in Career Development of Components of Counsellor Education Rated by Counsellor Educators ($n=41$)

<i>Component</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Practicum (on campus)	4.25	1
Internship (off campus)	4.18	2.5
Supervision of skills (through process)	4.18	2.5
Assessment of knowledge (through testing)	3.59	4

cess) of skills and critiques were tied for second ($M = 4.18$). Assessment of knowledge (through testing) was rated fourth ($M = 3.59$). See Table 6.

Areas of Career Development in Counsellor Education

Counsellor educators, using a 5-point scale, ranked in importance the areas of career development: (1) Consultation strategies ($M = 4.12$); (2) Career development theory ($M = 4.07$); (3) Actual student assessment ($M = 3.90$); (4) Curricular combination (infusion) ($M = 3.59$); (5) Organizational development ($M = 3.49$); and (6) Information services ($M = 3.41$). See Table 7.

Kinds of Decision-Making Strategies

Respondents named a variety of decision-making strategies (Super, Carkhuff, Gelatt, Pelletier, Noiseau, Bujold, Holland, Jackson, Glasser). They regarded decision making as a key part of the counselling process and related it to the individual's life style, goals, and career development in the broad sense.

Changes for Research in Career Development

A general theme was the trend towards longitudinal outcome studies and developmental studies. Another trend was the extension of the target populations for career counselling to include post-adolescent, midlife, and post-retirement

Table 7
Importance of Areas of Career Development (n=41)

Area	Mean	Rank
Consultation strategies	4.12	1
Career development theory	4.07	2
Student assessment	3.90	3
Curricular combination	3.59	4
Organizational development	3.49	5
Information services	3.41	6

groups. Goldman's (1978) recommendations (field research, macro type of study, expansion of traditional scope, longitudinal studies) were cited by three respondents.

Counsellor's Changing Roles

Faculty members stressed consultation as critically important in the counsellor's role. They stressed the development of consultative skills in working with significant others in their clients' lives. A quarter of the counsellor educators stressed career development in different forms, including career infusion in curriculum, focus on vocational psychology, developing career strategies and direct delivery of career counselling. Counsellor involvement with groups as well as with individuals was also stressed. Expansion of the counsellor's clientele to include pre-secondary school and post-secondary school populations has implications for greater flexibility in counsellor preparation.

Future Views of Career Counselling

Coordinators were asked to indicate their response to the question: "In your perspective, what is the future of career development in the preparation of counsellors?"

Several themes came from the interview with coordinators. One was the increasing importance of the consultation role for counsellors in career development. A second relevant theme was the stress upon a generalist rather than specialist emphasis. A third theme was the increase in graduate courses dealing with career development and vocational theories. Coordinators stressed that counsellors must be involved in assisting their clients in the effective planning of careers and one means of implementing this is developing more significant graduate programs. A fourth theme was the trend towards more research in the direction of longitudinal outcome and developmental studies — more field research, macro studies rather than micro studies, and expansion of traditional scope.

Discussion

This study was limited by the subjectivity factors involved in the interview approach. Moreover,

it was relatively difficult to obtain agreement on the terms career development/career education. Counsellor educators in Canada have had difficulty in defining their positions with regard to counselling.

Regardless of the difficulties and limitations, this study did serve to show an increased awareness of the growing importance of career development. As evidence, the increase in graduate courses was cited. Research studies have not been sufficiently rigorous and the need for better design, criterion selection, and methodology continues to exist.

The counsellor educators of Canada have had difficulty in achieving common identity due to vast differences in setting. It is hoped that new efforts will produce a greater degree of agreement in objectives and understanding of counselling, and particularly with respect to the future of career development. Examples of the new efforts are "Guidelines for Formulating and Evaluating Graduate Programs in Counsellor Education" (Peavy, 1976), the C.G.C.A. Counsellor Educators' Committee chaired by Dr. Myrne Nevison in St. John's, Newfoundland, in 1979 and Ottawa in 1980, and the continuing meetings of provincial education officials responsible for guidance services.

Guttman's (1973) survey classified the counsellor education graduate programs offered then but did not include Francophone universities. This current study sought to include all Canadian universities offering graduate programs in counsellor education, including the Francophone universities. One Canadian university did not participate in the study. The present study also used on-site interview rather than mailed questionnaire and differs from the Guttman survey in focussing upon career aspects. It also found a greater emphasis in this area.

Bedal (1979) interviewed government officials in provincial departments of education in Canada. One of his recommendations was that counsellor educators consider putting greater emphasis on career education, testing and test interpretation, the consultative role, and group activities. One of his findings was that career development services

offer the greatest promise for future growth in school guidance. A finding of the current study was that a quarter of the counsellor educators emphasized career development in different forms: focussing on curriculum infusion, vocational psychology, career strategies, and direct delivery of career counselling.

Jevne (1981) found that one of the primary functions of an effective counsellor, rated by all groups, was career/vocational/educational counselling.

It appeared that counsellor educators have been identifying with the concepts of career development and seeking to implement these through curricular change and diversification of programs. The findings of the current study agree with those of Bedal (1979) and Jevne (1981) in noting the increased awareness and thrust in the area of consultative skills, career education, and career counselling as significantly important aspects of the role of the counsellor, as perceived by the counsellor educators in the survey.

However, there will continue to be different perceptions among counsellor educators concerning the definition of counsellor role and the ways of preparing counsellors. It should be noted that economics and accountability have influenced counsellor educators to examine their concepts of counsellor role in terms of the complex issues of career development, career education, and career counselling. Their programs, to meet the needs for better qualified school counsellors capable of dealing with the changing world, must be constantly examined, evaluated, and reformulated.

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