

School principal perceptions of the school counsellor's role: Traditional or transformed?

Olcay Yavuz¹, Carol Dahir² and Ali İlker Gümüseli³

¹*Southern Connecticut State University, USA;* ²*New York Institute of Technology, USA;* ³*Okan University, Turkey*

Abstract

There is a continued emphasis on the importance of building collaborative working relationships between school principals and counsellors to address the growing academic, career and college readiness, and social-emotional needs of students in K-12 schools. This study explored and analysed 1466 school principals' perceptions around important school counselling priorities, perceptions, and activities that are carried out in Turkish public and private schools. The study additionally explored school principals' expectations of school counsellors' roles and responsibilities as aligned with traditional and transformed school counselling programmes and practices. This study may be of value to school leaders, policy makers and educators interested in revising and improving their school counselling services to meet the complex academic and counselling needs of students in contemporary schools.

Keywords: *Collaborative leadership; transformed counselling; principal and counsellor partnership*

School principal perceptions of the school counsellor's role: Traditional or transformed?

Recent studies have revealed that a collaborative working relationship between the principal and the school counsellor plays an important role in improving student academic success as well as college and career readiness (Dahir, Burham, Stone & Cobb, 2010; Dimmitt & Wilkerson, 2012; Özabaci, Sakarya & Doğan, 2008). With an emphasis on improving every student's achievement outcomes and ensuring all students are college and career ready, the role of the principal is now, more than ever, paramount to student success. Key to ensuring these outcomes is the principals' understanding of the contemporary scope and practice of school counsellors and school counselling programmes.

Particularly, the purpose of this study was to explore, examine, and analyse 1466 school principals' thinking around important school counselling priorities, perceptions, and activities that are carried out in public and private schools. Therefore, the research questions explored the school principals' perceptions around their expectations of the professional school counsellors' roles as aligned with what was defined in the study as traditional and transformed school counselling programmes and practices. Particularly, based on the thinking of school principals, this study was designed to examine the interaction effects between school type, school level, and school principals' experience with the implementation of transformed and traditional school counselling activities.

Transformed school counselling in the United States

For years, researchers noted that when highly trained professional school counsellors work collaboratively with school principals and key stakeholders to deliver comprehensive and transformative school counselling programmes, students receive measurable benefits in academic, social-emotional, and career development (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012; Lapan, 2012). The contemporary role of the professional school counsellor is more clearly articulated in recent years by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), the Education Trust, the National Organization for School Counselor Advocacy, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the College Board and other organizations who have an interest in the important work of school counsellors. The transformed role of the school counsellor

as initially promoted by the Education Trust's Transformed School Counseling Initiative (TSCI) (1997) included delivering traditional counselling and consultation services, and the additional requisite skills and behaviours including: leadership, social justice advocacy, teaming and collaboration, data informed practice, management of resources, and use of technology.

Aligned with the vision of the TSCI that focuses on promoting high academic achievement for all students at all levels (Baker, 2000; Erford, 2015; Stone & Dahir, 2016), the American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) National Model (2012) provides a valuable road map and framework for professional school counsellors to initiate, implement, manage, and evaluate comprehensive school counselling programmes to support all students' academic, social-emotional, and career development. Like TSCI, the ASCA National Model (2012) encourages 21st century school counsellors to act as leaders, advocates, consultants, coordinators, collaborators, managers of resources, and facilitators to help every student become career and college-ready.

Furthermore, with an emphasis on improving every student's success in school, these transformed roles of school counsellors have become more universally accepted. The outcomes of improving student achievement and preparing every student for substantial postsecondary opportunities are of paramount importance for every secondary school principal. These specific roles are described below.

Counselling

As a foundational component of their scope and practice, school counsellors apply counselling theories and strategies to establish a trusting and confidential working relationship with a student or groups of students to develop goals resulting in behavioural changes. In counselling sessions the focus is on problem solving, decision-making, social-emotional development, and the personal issues and concerns that impact learning and development (ASCA, 2012).

Consultation

As Dahir and Stone (2012) noted, different from traditional school counselling services, consultation gathers experts and key stakeholders together in order to bring their collective knowledge to bear on resolving a situation for all students. Thus transformed school counsellors use their consultation skills that allow them to collaborate with internal and external key stakeholders such as mental health professionals, counselling agencies, parents and community members (Myrick, 2003). For instance, a school counsellor can consult with a substance abuse counsellor, school psychologist, or an external community agency to design and deliver comprehensive preventative programmes and interventions for students in need.

Advocacy and social justice

Transformed school counsellors act as social justice advocates and systemic change agents by focusing on closing the gaps in opportunity and achievement for under-represented and under-served students of colour, low-income and/or first generation college-bound students (Holcomb-McCoy, 2010). Research suggests that as student advocates, school counsellors play an important role in (1) improving post-secondary outcomes of college access and enrollment (Perna & Thomas, 2008); (2) increasing students' academic motivation, organisational skills and time management (Berger, 2013); (3) meeting students' mental health needs (Gruman, Marston & Koon, 2013); (4) improving a student's standardised test scores in maths and reading (Lapan, 2012); (5) lowering disciplinary incidents and suspension rates (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012); (6) increasing school attendance rates; and, (7) improving graduation rates (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012).

Leadership

In traditional school counselling practice, many counsellors did not see themselves as educational leaders (Stone & Clark, 2001). The ASCA National Model and TSCI encourage counsellors to use their unique opportunities

to assert leadership for student success and school improvement. Acting as leaders, critical change agents and key players in school reform, transformed school counsellors focus on helping students improve their academic, social-emotional, and career development. School counsellors are considered collaborative leaders when they are able to build and sustain relationships with principals, teachers, parents, and community members to design, plan, implement, and monitor student services (ASCA, 2012; Rubin, 2002).

In order to demonstrate how school counsellors act as collaborative leaders, Dahir and Stone (2012) focused on specific areas that operationalise the impacts of the school counsellors as leaders. First, in collaboration with school principals and key stakeholders, transformed school counsellors play a crucial role improving school climate by designing and implementing comprehensive harassment, intimidation, and anti-bullying programmes.

Second, school counsellors can successfully affect the instructional programmes analysing, interpreting, and sharing the results of college entrance exams and conducting staff development for teachers and parents in very important areas such as motivation, student appraisal, academic planning, study and organisational skills (Dahir & Stone, 2012). In addition, school counsellors can work with principals, teachers, and other key stakeholders to help students develop high aspirations and positively affect course enrolment, on time graduation, college and career readiness (ASCA, 2012; Carey & Dimmitt, 2012; Lapan, 2012; Yavuz, 2014).

Use of technology

Living in the digital age requires every school counsellor, school leader and educator to acquire extensive knowledge, skills, and competencies to utilise online resources, digital tools and current technologies to design and deliver comprehensive school counselling services that will help students acquire the attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary to become successful in school, college and life. Digital technology offers opportunities and efficiencies to school counsellors who support all stakeholders to improve the achievement of every student. Thus, transformed school counsellors develop their capacity to use technology as an efficient and effective way to help students access internet resources related to career guidance, the college planning process, and resources to support the guidance and counselling programme (ASCA, 2012; Dahir & Stone, 2012).

Coordination, collaboration and management of resources

Transformed school counsellors act also as coordinators, collaborators, and managers of resources to enhance the academic, social-emotional and career success of each student. School counsellors prioritise, organise, and deliver individual or group counselling sessions, school counselling classroom lessons, consultation services, career and academic advising, and systemic support (Dahir & Stone, 2012). With the emphasis on improving every student's achievement regardless of their income, race, ethnicity, language background, sexual orientation, ability or disability status, transformed school counsellors collaborate and team with school administrators, classroom teachers, parents, and community members. Furthermore, transformed school counsellors use time, evidence based practices and resources efficiently to serve every student. As managers of resources, they use their creativity to identify internal and external supports and engage all stakeholders to better deliver strategies and practices to enhance student success (Dahir & Stone, 2012).

Accountability and data-driven decision making

In this age of accountability, where teachers and school administrators are held accountable for every student's learning and growth, the ASCA National Model encourages all school counsellors to collect and use data to demonstrate how the school counselling programme positively impacts student achievement in measurable terms. With the goal of sharing accountability for school improvement and every student's academic, social-emotional, and career development, school counsellors analyse, interpret and utilise data. In many countries, principals, counsellors and teachers are all expected to use various results reports, performance evaluations, and a comprehensive programme audit to ensure and analyse the effectiveness of the student services. Based on

the collected data, as needed, many educators and school leaders also make systemic changes to improve their practices. Aligned with this statement, the ASCA National Model (2012) also recommends that K-12 school leaders, transformed school counsellors and related key-stakeholders utilise supported data driven decision making processes to improve student success.

As school counselling practice continues to evolve and transform in the United States, the influence of the ASCA National Model (2012), the ASCA National Standards (1997), and the Mindsets and Behaviors (ASCA, 2014) have generated interest specifically in nations that have positions in public and private schools titled school or guidance counsellor. The Turkish Ministry of Education has a long history of providing guidance and counselling to children and youth in both public and private school settings.

The role and history of school counselling in Turkey

Reforms, globalisation, technological advancements, and complex needs of students have influenced the structure and function of schools as well as school counselling services in Turkey. The roles and responsibilities of school counsellors have been continuously changing in Turkey, with specific influence coming from the United States of America. At the university level American counsellor educators influenced the Turkish counselling movement in the 1950s by preparing and presenting comprehensive reports, seminars, and conferences attended by professors from Turkey (Stockton & Güneri, 2011). During the 1950s while the ASCA was establishing school counsellors' credentials, role standards, and guidelines to meet the academic, vocational, and social emotional needs of all students in America, several counselling articles and books from the United States were translated into Turkish. In addition, the first guidance and research centres were opened in Turkey but the overall quality and the number of these centres were not adequate to meet all students' academic, social, emotional and career developmental needs (Dogan, 2000).

During the 1960s, Turkish Government encouraged many researchers, scholars, and interested educators to go to the United States to learn more about school counselling practices and policies (Yeşilyaprak, 2003). The Turkish Ministry of Education also trained counsellors by opening Educational Psychology and Guidance Departments in a few universities. In order to help Turkish students' academic and career development, some guidance and counselling programmes were implemented in Turkish schools. The majority of these counselling programmes were adapted from the school counsellor education models of the United States (Ozguven, 1990).

Furthermore, in 1970, the Republic of Turkey Ministry of National Education officially started to employ school counsellors in Turkish public schools (Dogan, 2000). Instead of offering comprehensive academic, career, social and emotional counselling services, the first appointed counsellors were considered as guidance teachers who delivered weekly broad guidance lessons (Ültanis, 2005). However, with the increase in the special education student population, counsellors in schools were also asked to address the complex needs of these students who have severe emotional, personal, social, cognitive and developmental challenges (Kepçeoğlu, 1996). Since Turkish public schools did not have systemic intervention and referral services for disabled students, counsellors were expected to deal with these students by focusing on the clinical-crisis oriented approach (Dogan, 1998).

As a result of increasing demands for school counsellors, the Republic of Turkey Ministry of National Education has continuously focused efforts to improve both the quality and quantity of school counselling services. The formal roles and responsibilities of school counsellors and counselling curriculum are centralised by the Republic of Turkey Ministry of National Education. In 2009, the Ministry of National Education issued the overarching roles and responsibilities of guidance and psychological counsellors which include: (a) conducting activities that are geared towards getting to know students in order to help with their educational, vocational and personal development; (b) delivering the school guidance and counselling services based on their schools' class levels, types and student needs; and, (c) guiding classroom teachers on how to implement the necessary and related parts of the guidance and counselling services.

As was the case in the U.S., the history of the Turkish school counselling system over the past six decades reveals a profession in search of an identity. The most recent directives from the Republic of Turkey Ministry of National Education (2009) described the general roles of counsellor but they do not address the essentiality for school counsellors to acquire and utilise the evolving and transformative skills that drive school counselling improvement in the U.S. which include: leadership, social justice advocacy, teaming and collaboration, data informed practice, and management of resources.

Do 21st century school systems need transformed school counsellors?

The concept of transformed school counselling is a new phenomenon in Turkey and in many other European countries. Therefore, there is minimal information, knowledge and understanding of the role of transformed school counsellors among school leaders and educators (Turkish Psychological Counseling and Guidance Association, 2016). As history revealed, it was U.S. influence that helped to establish school counselling in Turkey. The innovative school counselling improvements in the U.S., and evidence based school counselling initiatives encourage other countries to review and revise their counselling services to meet the complex needs of K-12 students.

Five major factors describe the benefits to the education systems with a shift from traditional school counselling to the evolving transformed trends in school counselling in the United States. The following five factors could encourage education leaders to rethink to shift to a greater, more impactful and focused role to improve school counselling services. These include: (1) pressures from the global economy; (2) swings and shifts in societal issues and values; (3) preparing all students to become career and college ready; (4) creating a safe and supportive school culture and environment; and, (5) the new vision and direction of 21st century schools and counselling programmes.

Pressures from the global economy

From an economic perspective, both federal and state governments provide millions of dollars each year for public K-12 and post-secondary institutions by allocating grants and subsidised loans as well as tax credits and deductions to help students significantly finance postsecondary education. However, if students are poorly prepared for their career and do not succeed in college, money as well as their talents, skills, time, and effort will be wasted, not only for the individual but for society as a whole. Transformed school counsellors play a crucial role in improving every student's academic and career development that will ultimately contribute the growth of the current economic and financial situation of Turkey (Education Trust, 2009). Implementing transformed school counselling services can be considered as investment in maximising every student's potential so they can be productive, creative, and develop stronger employment skills in the global economy (Bruce & Bridgeland, 2012). Parallel with the findings of previous research (Coskun, Zoroglu & Ghaziuddin, 2012), it is imperative that school leaders and school counsellors understand and apply the fundamentals of effective school counselling strategies to improve students' academic and social-emotional development (Güneri, Büyükgöze, Kavas & Köydemir, 2007).

Swings and shifts in societal issues and values

Social and cultural changes in countries continue to increase, particularly as hundreds of thousands of refugees have crossed the border from Syria to Turkey. The number was expected to rise to 3 million refugees according to The United Nations Refugee Agency (2016). With thousands of Syrian students attending Turkish public schools, culture and language are enormous barriers. These young refugees speak Kurdish or Arabic and face difficulties adapting to public schools where only Turkish is spoken. Turkish students have difficulties accepting Syrian students and building relationships with them. As social justice advocates, school counsellors could utilise

transformed school counselling practices and become more culturally competent while providing lessons in tolerance, respect, and peer relations (Klotz & Canter, 2006). Since there are significant swings and shifts in societal issues, the laws and by-laws regulating counselling services should be revised according to contemporary counselling principles and concepts (Dogan, 1998; Ilhan, Korkut-Owen, Furr & Parikh, 2012; Ozyurek, 2010; Turkish Psychological Counseling and Guidance Association, 2016).

Preparing all students to become career and college ready

The undergraduate access rate to higher education has increased dramatically in every country. For instance, in 1982, there were 27 public universities in Turkey; however, in 2015 the number had grown to 190 private and public institutions. Since 2006, more than 100 new state and private universities have been established (The Council of Turkish Institutions of Higher Education, 2016). Aligned with the growing number of universities, the number of applicants admitted to Turkish universities has greatly increased. For example, in 1980, approximately 467,000 students applied for the university entrance system and only nine percent of the applicants were admitted to universities in Turkey. Özoğlu, Gür and Gümüş (2016) discuss the rapid expansion of higher education in Turkey. For instance, in 2015-2016 academic year, the number of university students in Turkey was 6.2 million. In just one year, the number of university students increased by one million. It means that in 2016-2017 academic year, approximately 7.2 million students continue their post-secondary education.

As witnessed in the U.S., with the continuous increase in the number of high school students who apply for university entrance, school counsellors can utilise their transformed school counselling skills to focus on college and career readiness for all students (Erford, 2015; Martin, 2015). Higher education is the expectation, not the exception. We help all of our children fulfill their boundless potential to reach higher, and the goal is to inspire every young person in this country to complete their education beyond high school. Therefore, aligned with the transformed counsellors' roles, there is an emerging need to develop standards for comprehensive college and career readiness counselling practices (Nazli, 2006; Özyürek, 2010).

Creating a safe and supportive school culture and environment

It has been reported that in addition to the need to improve academic achievement, there has been an increase the use of drugs, inclination towards vandalism, and dropping out from school by children and youth (Gokler, 2009; Ultanis, 2005). Particularly, besides the increase in substance abuse, harassment, intimidation and bullying issues, youth suicide has increased significantly in recent years. Almost 50% of all female suicide victims in Turkey were of school age (Coskun, Zoroglu & Ghaziuddin, 2012). Therefore, in order to meet the diverse, complex, and emerging needs of students in the 21st century, the education systems need school counsellors who can design and lead proactive prevention and interventions for every student. Instead of acting as ancillary support personnel, school counsellors can serve as key contributors to effect change as leaders, social justice advocates, collaborators, coordinators and managers of resources (Chen-Hayes, Miller, Bailey, Getch & Erford, 2011). There is an urgency to implement developmental and preventive programmes to address the academic, career, social and emotional needs of students (Özyürek, 2010).

Exploring the vision and direction for contemporary school counselling programmes

Over the past ten years, the number of undergraduate, master and doctoral-level guidance and psychological counselling programmes has increased as demand and interest grew, which offer advanced study opportunities for pre-service development. Thus future Turkish counsellor educators can receive their master or doctoral degrees in counsellor education, psychological counselling and/or guidance programmes instead of enrolling in the U.S. universities as they had to do in the past. This has also resulted in less need to travel abroad to study the new paradigms of school counselling that are prevalent in the United States.

The changing direction of U.S. 21st century schools and the Every Student Succeeds Act hold all schools personnel accountable for improving every student's academic success, social-emotional development, and college readiness (Mathis & Trujillo, 2016). The literature reminds us that school counselling practice continues to move forward with the times as student academic, career, and college, and social-emotional needs escalate. Ongoing continuous improvement across all the disciplines redefines the role and responsibilities of school counsellors in the United States. Yet despite the many years of U.S. influence on school counselling, it remains unclear as to the current and future directions of Turkish school counsellors in school practice and in higher education preparation programmes.

Research methodology

Purpose of the study and research questions

The purpose of this study was to explore school principals' thinking around their expectations of the school counsellors' roles as aligned with the definitions of traditional and transformed school counselling programmes and practices. Thus, the first research question examined the interaction between school level, school type and principals' experience on the implementation of transformed and traditional school counselling activities. The second research question explored how traditional and transformed school counselling activities are differentiated by school level, school type and principals' experience.

Instrument

The survey questionnaire was designed by Dahir, Burnham, Stone and Cobb (2010) initially to assess United States school counsellors' and principals' awareness and understanding of critical school counselling priorities, perceptions, and activities, and has been used extensively by state departments of education in both large and small school systems. For purposes of this study, the survey was translated into Turkish. After the translation was completed, in order to check the accuracy of each translated item, a peer review process was conducted. A successful translation of each survey item was reviewed by professionals who are practitioner professional school counsellors and scholars from Turkey and America. Besides establishing an expert panel to review, the Turkish version of survey was piloted in Istanbul to assess questions' appropriateness to the Turkish context. After the expert panel reviewed the participants' inputs and initial results, the survey questions were finalised. It was noted that the majority of survey questions related to school counselling activities in Turkey. Three items that were not appropriate to the Turkish context were revised or removed from the survey.

Finally, the survey, the Changing Focus of the School Counsellor, consisting of 16 items, assesses the school counsellor's traditional roles (8 items) and transformed roles (8 items). In this article, the data regarding the changing focus of the school counsellors are presented in the results. Particularly, participants were asked to indicate the extent to which traditional and transformed counselling related statements of expectations and tasks accurately reflect the school counsellors' work.

Participants

Hard copies of the surveys from Istanbul City Ministry of National Education were mailed to school principals in December 2012 and the data collection process was completed in the late spring of 2013. All public and private school principals in Istanbul were asked to participate in the study. A total of 4285 surveys were distributed and 1466 school principals (34.21%) responded to the survey. Permission to administer the survey was granted by the Istanbul City Ministry of National Education. Table 1 summarises the demographics of the respondent participants.

Table 1. Participants by school level and school type

Categories	N	%
Elementary schools	253	17.3
Middle schools	721	49.2
Secondary schools	492	33.6
Public	1184	80.8
Private	282	19.2

Analyses

The collected responses were disaggregated by school type, school levels, and the school principals' years of experience. The data from participants were coded and statistically analysed using SPSS to examine the effects of interaction between and among school type, school level, and the years of the principals' experience working in schools. This method allowed the researcher to use simple descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations for each item, which were applied to analyse priorities, perceptions, student development, and expectations by school level, school type, and school principals' experience. Three-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilised to examine the main effects and interactions for school level, school type, and the school principals' years of experience.

The total scores of transformed and traditional school counselling services were determined and used as two continuous dependent variables. The 8 items on the traditional and transformed section of the survey were converted to numerical scores by assigning Likert-type values to each response. All "not at all accurate" responses were given a value of 1, "a little accurate" answers were given a value of 2, accurate answers were given a value of 3, "somewhat accurate" responses were converted to 4, and the value assigned to "very accurate" responses was 5. Therefore, since both traditional and transformed dependent variables have 8 items, the total scores are scaled between 0 to 40. This method allowed the researcher to quantify each participant's responses for further analyses.

Three independent variables were identified to determine how well they relate to school leaders' perceptions in terms of the transformed and traditional school counselling services. The first independent variable, which is categorical, is school type and was coded as private and public. Second, the school level which is an ordinal variable, was applied by group as elementary, middle/junior high, or high school. The last independent variable, which is continuous, was determined as the school principals' years of experiences (i.e., 0-3, 3-5 and 5+ years).

Recent analysis of the psychometric properties of the instrument showed high evidence of validity and reliability. Results were compared with results of a factor analysis to support the validity of the measures. Internal consistency was assessed by Cronbach's alpha coefficient, and it was determined that internal consistency was in an acceptable range for an exploratory study of .69 to .94. Particularly, Cronbach's alphas for the 8 transformed and 8 traditional items were .927 and .843, respectively. The overall instrument was found to be highly reliable (16 items; $\alpha = .881$). Since the concept of transformed school counselling is a relatively new phenomenon in Turkey, individualised item analysis for transformed and traditional counselling are presented in the results section.

Results

Utilising the three-way ANOVA, the results revealed that there was no statistically significant interaction between school level, school type and principals' experience on the implementation of transformed school counselling

activities, $F(4, 1465) = 1.391, p = .235$. The results also showed that the two-way interaction between school type and school level $F(2, 1465) = .679, p = .507$, school type and principal experience, $F(2, 1466) = .115, p = .891$ and school level and principal experience $F(4, 1465) = .547, p = .701$ had no significant effect on transformed counselling activities. However, it is important to note that compared to public school principals ($M = 24.86, SD = 7.85$), private school principals ($M = 27.29, SD = 7.34$) achieve higher mean scores on transformed school counselling activities (See Table 2).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for the transformed school counselling activities for school level, school type and principal experience

Factors	Categories	Mean	SD	N
School type	Public	24.86	7.85	1184
	Private	27.29	7.34	282
School level	Elementary	24.31	7.56	253
	Middle	25.29	7.79	723
	High	25.91	7.93	490
Principal experience	1-3 years	25.40	7.83	794
	3-5 years	25.05	8.09	295
	5 or more years	25.38	7.58	376

Similar to the transformed school counselling analyses, the three-way ANOVA results indicated that there was no statistically significant differences as revealed by the interaction among school level, school type, and principals' experience on the implementation of traditional school counselling activities, $F(4, 1465) = .386, p = .819$. The results also revealed that the two-way interaction between school type and school level $F(2, 1465) = .679, p = .507$, school type and principal experience, $F(2, 1466) = 1.635, p = .195$ and school level and principal experience $F(4, 1465) = .247, p = .911$ revealed no significant difference when examining traditional counselling activities. However, when compared to public school principals ($M = 24.77, SD = .228$), private school principals ($M = 26.24, SD = .631$) have relatively higher mean scores on utilising traditional school counselling activities. In addition, in terms of implementations of traditional counselling activities, high school principals ($M = 25.97$) had the highest overall mean scores, followed by middle ($M = 25.89$) and elementary schools ($M = 24.65$). However, once again, these differences among school levels means were not statistically significant (See Table 3).

Item analysis of transformed and traditional school counselling activities

To examine school principal perceptions around the transformed and traditional school counselling activities across school level, school type, principal's experience, and total scores, an item analysis was conducted with scores ranging from 1 to 5. Tables 4 and 5 summarise the individual mean items with comparisons in these specific categories. Table 4 also reveals that transformed school counselling items were rated at moderately higher levels by the new school principals with 1 to 3 years of leadership experience followed by school principals with 5 or more years of leadership experience and 3 to 5 years of leadership experience (See Table 4)

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for the traditional school counselling activities for school level, school type and principal experience

Factors	Categories	Mean	SD	N
School type	Public	24.77	.228	1184
	Private	26.24	.631	282
School level	Elementary	24.65	.783	253
	Middle	25.89	.402	723
	High	25.97	.489	490
Principal experience	1-3 years	25.72	.277	794
	3-5 years	25.90	.544	295
	5 or more years	24.88	.801	376

Table 4. Item analysis of transformed school counselling activities by school level, type and principal experience

Transformed school counselling activities	Elm	MS	HS	PR	PB	1-3	3-5	5+	Tot
1. Academic, career & personal-social counselling to support student learning and achievement, supporting student success	3.29	3.31	3.20	3.63	3.18	3.32	3.16	3.26	3.27
2. Academic / career and personal social development	3.20	3.33	3.41	3.69	3.25	3.36	3.29	3.35	3.34
3. Shift from "I" to the "We" mindset as a team player and collaborator with all educators and staff in the school	2.98	3.07	3.02	3.21	3.01	3.05	3.02	3.06	3.04
4. Proactive prevention and intervention for every student	3.25	3.46	3.44	3.73	3.35	3.42	3.43	3.44	3.42
5. Develop a programme of study with students based on education and career goals	2.58	2.75	3.28	3.05	2.87	2.89	2.93	2.94	2.90
6. Whole school and system concerns/issues model	2.75	2.85	2.90	2.94	2.83	2.88	2.82	2.84	2.85
7. All students career & college ready	3.30	3.31	3.32	3.69	3.22	3.30	3.33	3.36	3.31
8. Key contributor to effect change as a leader, social justice advocate, programme developer	2.96	3.21	3.33	3.38	3.16	3.21	3.19	3.21	3.21

By examining means of each item across all grade levels, it is noted in Table 5, the traditional school counselling items were rated at moderately higher levels by the middle school (ms) respondents than by the high school (hs) and elementary school (es) respondents. Results also imply that compared to public schools (pus), private schools (prs) are more likely to utilise traditional school counselling activities. These activities include: “Clinical model focused on student deficits” (prs M = 3.20; pus M = 2.88), “Student scheduler” (prs M = 3.62; pus M = 3.31), “Primary focus on personal/social development” (prs M = 4.16; pus M = 3.61). Finally, Table 5 shows that traditional school counselling items were rated at moderately lower levels by the school principals with 3 to 5 years of leadership experience followed by school principals with 1 to 3 years of leadership experience and 5 years or more of leadership experience.

Table 5: Item analysis of traditional school counselling activities by school level, type and principal experience

Traditional role focus	Elm	MS	HS	PR	PB	1-3	3-5	5+	Total
1. Individual students' concerns/issues	371	3.86	3.79	4.23	3.71	3.80	3.83	3.81	3.81
2. Primary focus on personal/social development	3.63	3.78	3.65	4.16	3.61	3.72	3.71	3.69	3.71
3. Clinical model focused on student deficits	2.92	2.98	2.90	3.20	2.88	2.95	2.98	2.99	2.94
4. Mental health provider	3.21	3.41	3.28	3.71	3.24	3.33	3.31	3.35	3.33
5. Post-secondary planning for interested students	2.64	2.91	3.34	3.15	2.98	2.99	2.96	3.09	3.01
6. Ancillary support personnel	2.73	2.75	2.77	2.84	2.73	2.77	2.83	2.67	2.75
7. Works in isolation; little collaboration with teachers	2.42	2.37	2.24	1.97	2.42	2.38	2.27	2.28	2.33
8. Student scheduler	3.38	3.42	3.30	3.62	3.31	3.41	3.28	3.37	3.37

Limitations of the study

As with all research investigations, there were limitations to this study. Although this study has a strong design, reliable instrument, and valid statistics analysis, it suffers from limited impact from factors such as being too population-specific in an urban centre. Particularly, the researchers looked at the thinking of principals around school counselling priorities, perceptions, and activities that are carried out in Turkish public and private schools in Istanbul, Turkey. Therefore, this study may be of value to school leaders, policy makers and educators interested in revising and improving their school counselling services to meet the complex academic and counselling needs of students in contemporary schools. Even though the limited range of data collected prevents the reader from understanding the Turkish principals' perceptions of current

and future needs, the findings can be still useful to the wider international readership. Since 1466 school principals from Istanbul participated in this study, school leaders who serve in metropolitan cities can relate the findings and discussion to their leadership practices. Furthermore, in order to improve international readership of these findings, a next step would be to replicate this study in other urban, suburban, and rural areas in with similar developing school counselling and guidance programmes in other countries including Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Europe.

In term of methodology, when interpreting the findings, the researcher team only collected quantitative data using survey research. Utilising anecdotal and open-ended interview questions may have further clarified the school principals' responses to specific survey questions and provided additional insight and details on the delivery of traditional and transformed school counselling activities.

Finally, the school level differences between the U.S. and Turkey can be considered as another limitation of the study. The survey was designed initially to assess United States school counsellors' and principals' awareness and understanding of critical school counselling priorities, perceptions, and activities. Even though a successful translation of each survey item was reviewed by multiple professionals and scholars, Turkish principals' perceptions about transformed school counselling activities might differ from the United States K-12 principals. Therefore, in addition to the information provided in the cover letter regarding changing school counsellor practice, information sessions or more detailed explanations could have helped the Turkish school principals better understand the differences between traditional and transformed school counselling activities.

Discussion

There is a continued emphasis on building a strong working relationship between the principal and the school counsellor to improve student academic success as well as college and career readiness (ASCA, 2012; Dahir, Burham, Stone & Cobb, 2010). This examination of school principals' priorities, perceptions, activities, and expectations of the work of school counsellors in Turkey revealed contradictory and sometimes confusing perspectives regarding the school counsellor's role and function. Therefore, the findings of this study offer new knowledge and important ideas in terms of implementation of transformed and traditional school counselling services. Particularly, as discussed in the results section, private school principals were rating descriptors of counselling practices at their schools as accurate and or very accurate. A similar pattern was also observed among public school principals. In general, compared to private school principals, public school principals indicated slightly lower mean scores for descriptors of counselling practices at their schools.

It appears that private schools are more likely to utilise both transformed and traditional school counselling activities. These results can be explained in two ways. First, compared to public school schools, private schools have relatively lower student to counsellor ratios which might enable school counsellors to assume more proactive roles in delivering transformed counselling services for all students. Secondly, Turkish public schools have a very strong centralised management, and lack flexibility in terms of developing their own curriculum, as well as counselling activities. The Ministry of National Education (MEB) is responsible for designing curriculum, managing administrators, teachers, and school support staff, as well as developing, selecting, and subsidising educational materials. Compared to public schools, private schools have a more supportive culture that might give school counsellors more flexibility to design and deliver their own student services.

Principals with greater years of service in their role responded differently on some traditional and transformed school counselling items. For example, compared to new principals, principals with longer years of leadership experience rated the following traditional school counselling activities relatively higher: (a) school counsellors act as mental health providers for individual and small group counselling, and (b) they

focus on post-secondary planning for interested students. Although there was no statistically significant interaction between school level, school type, and principals' experience on the implementation of transformed or traditional school counselling activities, the variation in the overall mean scores and item analyses revealed a need to further explore principals' perceptions around the scope of practice of school counsellors.

The history of school counselling in Turkey is closely aligned with the progress of school counselling development in the United States. Until recently, numerous counsellor educators received their doctoral degrees in the states (Tan, 2000). With the expansion of the public university system, and the proliferation of the private university system, that is no longer the case. The Turkish Ministry of Education has not provided further guidelines for the role or scope of practice of school counsellors since 2009. Thus, the fundamental question is, does school counsellor preparation in Turkey need to change or is it in alignment with current governmental expectations? Ultimately it needs to be determined, what do Turkish students need from a school counselling person to further their academic, career, and social-emotional development?

Results do suggest that the transformed school counselling way of work may be of interest to Turkish school leaders to improve student achievement and success in school, with a strong emphasis on college and career readiness (Martin, 2004; National Office for School Counselor Advocacy, 2010). Despite no significant differences in the mean scores and item analyses, the majority of the respondents chose "transformed" over "traditional" thinking, perhaps without awareness of the implications of their preferred choices.

What role does the principal play in effective school counselling outcomes? Years of research in the U.S. point conclusively to the relationship of counsellors and principals to effect positive school change and improved academic outcomes for students (Cisler & Bruce, 2013; Dahir, Burnham, Stone & Cobb, 2010; Korkut, Owen & Ballesterro, 2009)

As students' needs change and evolve, what is the skill set needed by school counsellors to perform both traditional and transformed activities? As the counsellor education university preparation system continues to evolve, it is no longer appropriate to rely on a United States model of standards and programme development to set the direction (Dahir, Hatch & Tyson, 2016).

School counselling progress will require the Ministry of National Education to address the contemporary needs of students in the K-12 schools in Turkey, the need to review the role of counselling in schools in light of the increase in the number of high school students attending post-secondary education institutions, and the changing needs of the Turkish workforce to meet the future expectations of a global economy. However, the Ministry will require the evidence to demonstrate that change is essential.

Although the Ministry of Education in Turkey is considering the redefining of standards and job descriptions of psychological guidance and counsellors, the thinking of school principals has the potential to strongly influence new regulations. Principals could encourage their school counsellors to embrace key transformed school counselling practices (Education Trust, 2009) and manage and collect data that shows positive impact on academic success and college and career readiness.

This study focused on urban Turkish principals' priorities and perceptions about implementation of traditional and transformational school counselling programmes. The results of this study have the potential to help principals collaborate with the school counsellors and key stakeholders to evaluate, design, and lead proactive prevention and intervention strategies for every student success. Therefore, this study may be of value to school leaders concerned with the impact of the current delivery of school counselling services by examining and revising current practice to ensure all students benefit from academic, college and career and social-emotional development. Additionally, incorporating the transformed skills of leadership, advocacy, teaming and collaboration, use of data, etc. may be essential to achieving measurable outcomes to demonstrate value and impact.

Conclusion

Since 1997, the movement in the United States to improve school counsellor practice and outcomes has been led by the American School Counselor Association and the Education Trust. As a result, individual states have taken the initiative to revise regulations and credentials that reflect the contemporary role and impact of school counselling practice as purported by the ASCA National Model (2012). As the Turkish educational system is nationally regulated, public and private school principals may be unable to change the role and function of the school counsellor without a change in policy by the Ministry of National Education. However, the results of this study provide school leaders with the knowledge and understanding to rethink and ultimately improve their school counselling services based on their prioritising and expectations of the counsellors' roles and the contemporary needs of Turkish schools.

School leaders, counsellor educators and researchers can fuel the momentum to ensure that every student in Turkey receives quality, impactful, and effective school counselling services to lead to a more highly educated and economically prepared global citizenry (Korkut-Owen & Güneri, 2013). Regulatory changes will ultimately influence preparation and practice. The results of this study of urban Turkish principals' perceptions, priorities, and expectations may assist the Ministry of Education to rethink the next iteration of roles, responsibilities and practices of a growing profession in Turkish public schools.

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Authors

Olca Yavuz EdD is assistant professor and programme coordinator in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Southern Connecticut State University. He has extensive teaching, counselling and leadership experience in K-12 American public schools. Dr. Yavuz's research focuses on improving school effectiveness and student success through innovative school reforms and comprehensive PD models. Prior to joining the faculty at Southern, Dr. Yavuz worked at New York University and Rutgers University and helped many schools to implement and assess research supported educational programmes.

Email: yavuzo1@southernct.edu

Carol Dahir EdD is professor and Chair of School Counseling at New York Institute of Technology and has extensive experience working with state departments of education, school systems, school counsellor associations and organizations. She served as the project director for the ASCA's National Standards and Planning for Life initiative and on the governing boards for the ASCA and the NCDA. Dr. Dahir continues to focus her writing, research, and presentations on comprehensive school counselling programmes, college and career readiness, accountability, principal-counsellor relationships, cultural competence, and continuous improvement for school counsellors.

Email: cdahir@nyit.edu

Ali İlker Gümüşeli PhD is professor and founding dean of the School of Education at Okan University, Turkey, and his research focuses on instructional leadership and conflict management in schools. As a school leader educator, over three decades, he has extensive experience in preparing and training school leaders for effective leadership and school improvement. Besides his university and departmental leadership roles, Dr. Gümüşeli also served as an executive board member and vice president of the Ministry of National Education in Turkey

Email: ilker.gumuseli@okan.edu.tr