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<http://dx.doi.org/10.21220/W4Z595>

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**SCHOOL COUNSELOR INVOLVEMENT IN
PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES OF COLOR:
A SOCIAL COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE**

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Education
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Pamela N. Harris

April 2016

**SCHOOL COUNSELOR INVOLVEMENT IN
PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES OF COLOR:
A SOCIAL COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE**

by

Pamela N. Harris

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Dedication

*“It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and
there is strength”*

--Maya Angelou

This dissertation is dedicated to two of my favorite people in the world: my parents. Your love and support have helped me overcome so many obstacles. Though I always did not look like my peers, you both made me believe I could reach for the stars. Thank you for always making me feel strong and beautiful.

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Acknowledgements

When I was younger, I always thought about what I would write in my acknowledgements page once I was a “world-famous author.” I never imagined that I would be able to write one for my journey toward obtaining a Ph.D., and I have so many people to thank for that.

First of all, I have been blessed to have the greatest committee that I could ever have asked for. Dr. Shillingford, thank you so much for giving me a nudge when I needed it. You have encouraged me to have a louder voice, and to make myself known when I’m in a room. I will forever be grateful for that. Dr. Brendel, I’ve told you this before and I still mean it: I *always* feel better about everything whenever I leave your office. You have supported me through so many obstacles, and reminded me that I had everything I needed to overcome them. You make me feel like I matter, and I hope that I can do the same for others. Dr. Ward, thank you so much for your patience. I entered this program knowing that I would complete a qualitative study, but your perseverance pushed me toward this wonderful project. Thank you for taking so much time to remind me that I actually do know stats (at least a little), as well as for all your guidance during my job search. Finally, Dr. Bryan—when Dr. Shillingford suggested that you’d make a great fit for my committee, I thought that would be wishful thinking. You are such a rock star in the counselor education field to me, yet you are one of the kindest, most personable individuals I have ever met. Thank you for your support and expertise.

To the rest of the faculty in the Counselor Ed department—you all are so awesome. Dr. Foster, thank you for expanding my mind and helping me use mental muscles I didn’t even know I had! Dr. McAdams, thank you for molding me into a

stronger clinician. It has also been such a pleasure to have you as a professor, and I will certainly borrow some of your methods as a counselor educator. Dr. Gressard, you are such a calming presence—which is a godsend for an anxious lady like me. Thank you for reminding me to breathe.

To the best cohort ever: I heart you guys! Sharona, Amy (#pamy forever), Catie Greene, and Ster-Fry—you made this only child feel like part of a family. I will forever be fond of our times together, and I hope you don't mind staying in touch because you can't get rid of me now! Thank you, also, to the doctoral cohort ahead of me (Richelle, Clare, Kathy, Ben, and Victoria), whose guidance helped me get through my first year, and to the other doctoral students with whom I've had the honor to collaborate and attend classes.

Last but not least, to my amazing family. Mom, you have wiped away so many tears and have been my biggest cheerleader over the past thirty years. You are my best friend and I love you. Dad, no matter how old I get, I will always be your “snookums.” Thank you for being the best man in my life. Quita, you are not just my cousin and roommate—you are my sister. It will take as many pages as my dissertation to thank you for everything you've done for me. PaPam, you are my second mom. Thank you for being such a huge part of my childhood, and helping to mold me into the woman I am today. To both of my grandmothers who are no longer here with me: thank you for helping me survive this program. I talk to you both more than anyone will ever know. To the rest of my HUGE family, I wish I had the space to write each and every one of your names. I love you all very much, and I hope that you know the impact that you've had on my life.

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SCHOOL COUNSELOR INVOLVEMENT IN PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES OF

COLOR:

A SOCIAL COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE

ABSTRACT

School-family partnerships facilitate the academic and personal success of all students. Whereas forming these partnerships are a component of school counselor identity, school counselors are commonly unprepared to form and maintain such relationships. Additionally, shifting racial demographics within K-12 schools call for culturally responsive partnership-building, as the majority of school counselors continue to belong to the dominant culture. The purpose of this study was to explore the characteristics of school counselors as it relates to involvement in partnerships with families of color. Using a social cognitive theoretical framework, this study solicited a national sample of 155 practicing school counselors to examine self-efficacy, multicultural competence, and environment with regards to forming these diverse partnerships. The School Counselor Self-Efficacy (SCSE) scale, the Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey-Revised (MCCTS-R), and a modified version of the School Counselor Involvement in Partnerships Survey (SCIPS) were used to examine these characteristics. The results of this study indicated significantly positive relationships between self-efficacy, multicultural competence, and involvement in partnerships with families of color. However, only self-efficacy as it relates specifically to partnerships and multicultural knowledge served as significant predictors of involvement in these partnerships. Further, receiving previous coursework in multicultural counseling or family-related content did not make any significant

differences in involvement. The outcomes suggest that school counselors may benefit from more practical experiences in diverse settings to encourage involvement in partnerships with families of color. Findings also support the integration of the social cognitive theoretical concept of triadic reciprocal determinism into training curricula.

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School Counselor Involvement in Partnerships with Families of Color: A Social
Cognitive Perspective

Chapter One

Introduction

Students' academic and personal successes are not defined solely by what occurs in the classroom; contextual factors such as family and community also influence performance (Leonard, 2011; Paylo, 2011). With families having such a significant impact on student learning outcomes, partnering with parents and other family members is a necessary skill for school counselors. That is, effective student interventions include consideration of families' values and input. Yet with so many school counselors belonging to the dominant culture, collaborating with families requires not only family systems knowledge, but also awareness of multicultural considerations. Fostering new knowledge on meeting the multicultural needs of students may be daunting for school counselors as, systemically, school counseling as a profession has been functioning on a long history of role ambiguity.

Statement of the Problem

In the fall of 2014, racial and ethnic minority students reached a milestone by becoming the majority population within schools (Hussar & Bailey, 2014). By 2022, projections are that White students' enrollment in public and private elementary and secondary schools will decrease, whereas enrollment of Blacks, Latinos, Asians/Pacific Islanders, and students of two or more races is expected to rise (Hussar & Bailey). Specifically, between the years 2011 and 2022, enrollment of Asian/Pacific islander students is expected to increase by 20%, Latino students by 33%, and students of two or more races by 44%. Despite this shift in student racial demographics, 84% of today's teachers are White, 7% are Black, and Latino teachers make up 6% of the educational

system (Feistritz, 2011). Although the specific racial demographics of professional school counselors have not been determined, the literature indicates that those entering school counselor training programs continue to be from the dominant culture (Cannon, 2010).

The evolving demographics of student population indicate a need for culturally competent school environments. In order to facilitate cultural competence, school counselors may consider partnering with a diverse team of teachers and stakeholders, conducting cultural competence needs assessments, implementing culturally sensitive school-wide interventions, and collaborating with administrators to lead these initiatives (Nelson, Bustamante, Wilson, & Onwuegbuzie, 2008). In fact, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA; 2010) asserts that collaboration with families enables school counselors' goals of designing data-driven, comprehensive programs that support all students. Students of color, in particular, benefit both academically and emotionally from familial involvement in the learning process (Bryan, 2005; Mitchell & Bryan, 2007; Moore-Thomas & Day-Vines, 2010). In order to meet the needs of students and families of color, school counselors need to be aware of the problems that prevent these collaborative relationships. Thus, this chapter will highlight existing educational imbalances, barriers that prevent families of color to partner with schools, and the lack of training school counselors have to form school-family partnerships. This chapter will also discuss the impact of integrating a social cognitive perspective into the school-family partnership process.

Educational Inequities

Astramovich and Harris (2007) found that the challenges faced by minority students fall under three categories: academics (such as disproportionality in remedial and special education courses), career development (such as limited job skills and Westernized values related to career counseling), and personal/social development (such as ignoring the contextual factors of family and community that impact minority student success). Even when Black students are identified as academically gifted, they have limited opportunities due to frequent disciplinary consequences, deficiency of available advanced classes, and lack of parental access to school functions (Henfield, Washington, & Byrd, 2014). Hispanic students face similar disproportionalities within schools. Guiberson (2009) completed an extensive literature review on Hispanic representation in special education courses and found that Hispanic students were overly referred for special education testing, and commonly labeled as learning disabled or speech-language impaired. Further, opportunity and achievement gaps between Hispanic and White students may be due to deficit thinking from educators (Bruton & Robles-Pina, 2009). Thus, school counselors may need to consider a resiliency and/or strengths-based approach to promote achievement within the Black and Hispanic student populations (Day-Vines & Terriquez, 2008; Sheely & Bratton, 2010).

School counselors and other educators may disregard the needs of Asian American students because they have the highest graduation rate than other racial minority groups (McCarron and Inkelas, 2006), and generally attend the most competitive colleges (Lam, 2014). These academic achievements contribute not only to overrepresentation in advanced classes, but also to the “model minority” label (Panelo,

2010). That is, Asian American students are considered more likely to excel in school compared to their minority peers. Yet, these high expectations may result in serious psychological impairments such as suicidal ideations (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008), symptoms of anxiety (Ruzek, Nguyen, & Herzog, 2011), and substance abuse (Kim, Chen, & Spencer, 2012). School counselors need to be aware of the academic pressures faced by Asian Americans, as well as how parental influences may add to and/or alleviate these stressors.

Additionally, students of color in general expect less support in college preparation from high school counselors than their White peers (Dockery & McKelvey, 2013). That is, even if these students want to pursue postsecondary options, they do not believe that school counselors can encourage this process. Dockery and McKelvey (2013) also found that parents had the greatest influence on college decision-making for all students. Therefore, since family plays a significant role for all students, especially students of color, school counselors need to include parents and other family members during the academic, career, and personal counseling process.

Barriers to Partnerships for Families of Color

School counselors need to consider the unique needs and values of families of color in order to include them into the counseling process. For example, African American parents report providing more structure at home than their White counterparts, and African American students seem to benefit both academically and mentally from this structure (Wang, Hill, & Hofkens, 2014). Additionally, African American parents do not seem to value independence from their children as much as European Americans, which may conflict with the autonomous nature of Westernized school systems (Moore-Thomas

& Day-Vines, 2010). Deficit thinking from educators disempowers African American parents, as well as prevents academic success of African American students (Moore-Thomas & Day-Vines, 2010). Additionally, Moore-Thomas and Day-Vines suggested that a lack of innovative and culturally relevant strategies prevent partnerships with African American families, and school counselors may fail to take leadership roles to change systemic issues that prevent these partnerships from forming.

When schools try to address the specific cultural concerns of students and families, they may fail to consider other critical issues. Smith-Adcock, Daniels, Lee, Villalba, and Indelicato (2006) found that pupil personnel administrators relate cultural barriers for the Latino student and family population to the need for Spanish-speaking counselors. Administrators identified the need for counseling-related services, such as collaborating with families and training school staff on cultural awareness; yet, they more commonly provided services that only addressed language barriers. Whereas language obstacles concern Latino parents, they also consider schools' emphases on individualism as another barrier in forming effective partnerships with the school (Dotson-Blake, 2010). However, administrators do not typically confront this concern.

Regarding Asian American students and families, school counselors may need to consider that this population commonly supports counseling interventions that incorporate multicultural competencies, such as sensitivity toward client feelings of oppression, or completing psychoeducation sessions on the counseling process (Wang & Kim, 2010). Additionally, Asian Americans consider multiculturally competent therapists to have higher ratings of general counseling competence. Thus, providing interventions

that respect the values and traditions of Asian American students may be more effective for student achievement and the partnering process as a whole.

Even though research addresses cultural sensitivity, schools in which students of color are the majority (and, most commonly, have high poverty) generally do not have comprehensive school counseling programs (Dimmitt, Wilkerson, & Lapan, 2012). Comprehensive school counseling programs include being able to meet critical personal and social needs of students, while also providing equal access to resources and information. As previously addressed, meeting the needs of students include involving parents and other family members into the counseling process. Yet, school counselors commonly lack the formalized training to create and maintain these collaborative relationships.

Lack of Training

Perusse, Goodnough, and Noel (2001) found that less than half of school counseling programs required students to take courses in couples and family counseling. Additionally, only 20.1% of graduates were required to take coursework specializing in consultation, and just 1.1% in parent education. Perusse, Poynton, Parzych, and Goodnough (2015) completed a similar study approximately 15 years later and found that out of 126 school counselor preparation programs, only 36.5% required school counseling students to take coursework in couple and family counseling. Further, only 9.5% of these programs designed family counseling courses specifically for school counseling students. In a content analysis of family coursework requirements in southern CACREP-accredited school counseling programs, Joe and Harris (2014) found that 60% of these programs did not mandate three-credit-hour courses on family content.

Additionally, of the 40 programs that did require family-related coursework, 65% offered courses in family counseling and/or therapy—a skill that is beyond the scope of school counselor training (Holcomb-McCoy, 2004b).

Since a crucial component of training is field experience, assessing family-related preparation through practicum and/or internship courses is also necessary. In a content analysis of counseling internship course syllabi, Akos and Scarborough (2004) found that only 17% of the content area featured in syllabi focused on systemic intervention (also known as collaboration or consultation). Additionally, the same study revealed that only 18% of internship courses included consultation as an onsite requirement. This suggests that even if family coursework is a requirement in school counseling preparation programs, students are not commonly provided opportunities to practice this knowledge prior to graduation.

Other school personnel, such as teachers and administrators, may also lack the preparation to form school-family partnerships. Epstein and Sanders (2006) surveyed administrators of schools, colleges, and departments of education and found that participants strongly agreed that both school principals and counselors should be competent in forming partnerships. Yet, these same participants strongly agreed that only 7.2% of teachers, 19.1% of principals, and 27% of school counseling graduates from their programs were prepared to take on this task. These results suggest that whereas school counselors may be in an ideal position to create school-family partnerships, lack of preparedness from key school personnel members may make the formation of standardized partnerships programs more challenging. That is, if both teachers and

administrators are also not prepared to form partnerships, putting partnership programs into place may be a daunting task for school counselors.

The findings regarding the lack of partnership training are alarming, especially considering that partnership-related training is significantly positively correlated to school-counselors' perceptions of involvement in school-home partnerships (Bryan & Griffin, 2010). In other words, when school counselors have an understanding of school-family partnerships, they are more likely to identify involvement. Knowledge of these partnerships through training impacts both school counselor role perceptions (Brott & Myers, 1999) and self-efficacy (Barnes, 2004). That is, partnership-related training may enable school counselors to not only articulate professional identity, but also become active participants and leaders in the partnership process.

The Impact of Self-Efficacy

Bandura (1982) believes that those with low self-efficacy are more likely to focus on their weaknesses, whereas those with high self-efficacy prefer to focus on the actual challenging situation. In other words, low self-efficacy can lead to self-blame, while increased self-efficacy involves studying the challenge in order to overcome it. Hence, higher self-efficacy can improve performance. Counselor self-efficacy, specifically, serves as a significant predictor of counseling performance (Jaafar, Mohamed, Bakar, & Tarmizi, 2009). When school counselors believe they are able to cope with challenges, they are more likely to complete tasks that go beyond profession-related duties (Holcomb-McCoy, Gonzalez, & Johnston, 2009). Thus, high self-efficacy may contribute to higher involvement in school-involvement partnerships (Bryan & Holcomb-McCoy,

2007; Bryan & Griffin, 2010), even if forming these partnerships may not be a task assigned to school counselors by administrators.

Self-efficacy can also be related to perceptions of justice. Particularly, the more self-efficacy school counselors have, the more likely they will have positive perceptions of equity within their schools (Bodenhorn, Wolfe, & Airen, 2010). That is, school counselors with high self-efficacy believe that they promote unbiased access to resources for all students. Inversely, school counselors with low self-efficacy were less likely to be aware of data related to achievement gaps within their schools. These relationships between self-efficacy and equity may provide ramifications for partnering with families of color, in that school counselors that lack self-efficacy may also lack awareness of how to include diverse families to help close the achievement gap. Related, those with higher self-efficacy were more likely to incorporate elements of the ASCA National Model (2012) within their school counseling programs (Bodenhorn et al., 2010). Inclusion of aspects of the ASCA National Model is vitally important as the Model strongly promotes school counselor partnership with families of all students.

School counselor preparation also has an essential relationship with self-efficacy and, ultimately, building collaborative relationships. The more prepared school counselors feel about completing a task, the more self-efficacy they may have (Sawyer, Peters, & Willis, 2013). Though Sawyer and colleagues focused on beginning counselors' preparedness to work with clients in crisis, the findings that more preparation increases counselor self-efficacy may provide ramifications for forming partnerships with families of color. Additionally, training and coursework contribute to counselor self-efficacy (Barbee, Scherer, & Combs, 2003; Tang et al., 2004). Yet, 60% of programs accredited

by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) do not require students to complete family-related coursework (Joe & Harris, 2014). Moreover, though CACREP (2016) includes “Social and Cultural Diversity” in its standards, no evidence exists regarding whether multicultural issues are addressed in graduate counseling programs beyond one required multicultural counseling course.

If school counselors receive training in both family collaboration and multicultural competence, their self-efficacy may increase enough to actually engage in partnerships with families of color once in the field. Thus, multicultural competence and self-efficacy are potential predictors in school counselor involvement in partnerships, in that the more exposure to coursework and training in collaborating with racial minority populations may be associated to perceived ability in forming and maintaining these partnerships. Taking a social cognitive theoretical viewpoint will enable exploration of the possible relationships between these three factors.

Theoretical Rationale for a Social Cognitive Framework

Supported by Albert Bandura (1986), social cognitive theory (SCT) emphasizes that behavior is learned through social contexts. Specifically, observation and interaction with others shape behavior. SCT has an underlying assumption of triadic reciprocal determinism, which purports that human performance is formed by behavioral, personal, and environmental factors (Bandura, 1989b). Additionally, this theoretical framework consists of several core concepts, including outcome expectations and perceived self-efficacy. In fact, these two concepts were positively associated with vocational rehabilitation counselors’ willingness to use evidence-based techniques (Tansey, Bezyak, Chan, Leahy, & Lui, 2014). Namely, expecting positive outcomes for actions can be used

as a motivator, and high levels of self-efficacy can increase belief that individuals can complete these actions (even if positive outcomes are not immediately expected).

The theory of self-efficacy, which is derived from SCT, has been previously examined in counselor education. The literature illustrates that experience related to doctoral research (Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011), crisis intervention (Sawyer, Peters, & Willis, 2013), feedback (Motley, Reese, & Campos, 2014), and pre-practicum service-learning (Barbee, Scherer, & Combs, 2003) are positively correlated with self-efficacy. Namely, when knowledge and practice are provided, individuals may have higher self-efficacy in completing certain tasks.

Using the SCT framework to view school-family partnerships may provide insight as to what influences school counselor involvement. As previously addressed, school counseling trainees do not receive much preparation related to partnering with families, and may only take one course in multicultural counseling that will assist in partnering with families of color; thus, an SCT perspective may identify additional personal and environmental factors that may contribute to effective partnerships. Moreover, expecting positive outcomes from school-family partnerships (such as student success), as well as having a strong belief that these partnerships can be formed and maintained, may impact how often and in what capacity school counselors are in these relationships. Further, when partnering with families of color, SCT can be viewed through a multicultural standpoint. Multicultural self-efficacy involves creating and implementing tasks that promote equity for students of all backgrounds (Holcomb-McCoy, Harris, Hines, & Johnston, 2008). Thus, as thoroughly addressed by the literature, an aspect of fostering equity among students of color is including parents and other family members into the

counseling process. Exploring the potential associations between self-efficacy, multicultural competence, environment, and school counselor involvement in partnerships with families of color through an SCT viewpoint may provide implications for counselor education, as counseling trainees with higher self-efficacy are more likely to have interest in encouraging justice within their schools (Miller & Sendrowitz, 2011). One component in facilitating justice is to understand the challenges students and families of color may face (Li & Vazquez-Nuttall, 2009), which may enable partnerships with this population.

Justification for the Study

Purpose of the Study

Considering the significant shift in racial demographics in K-12 student enrollment, as well as the overwhelming need of culturally responsive school personnel, a further exploration of the relationships between school counselor self-efficacy, multicultural competence, and involvement in school-family partnerships with families of color is warranted. Moreover, according to Bandura's concept of triadic reciprocal determinism, environmental factors, such as culture and setting, may be associated with the actual behavior of forming these partnerships. Thus, the following questions were examined: (a) What is the relationship between school counselor self-efficacy, multicultural competence, environment, and involvement in school-family partnerships? and (b) How do practicing school counselors differ in self-efficacy, multicultural competence, and involvement in school-family partnerships based upon demographic variables?

Overview of the Study

This study included a sample from the ASCA national roster, with intentions to represent school counselors in urban, rural, and suburban regions of the United States, as well as in three levels of school (elementary, middle, and high schools). Along with the informed consent and demographic questionnaire, the participants were asked to complete three formal assessments: (a) the School Counselor Self-Efficacy scale (SCSE), (b) the Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey-Revised scale (MCCTS-R), and (c) the School Counselor Involvement in Partnerships Survey (SCIPS). An online survey tool gathered the responses, and the responses were analyzed through statistical software.

Definition of Terms

Families of color. For this study, families of color will refer to individuals who identify as non-White. These classifications include Black/African Descent, Hispanic/Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American/American Indian, or those with two or more racial identifications. Additionally, the term “racial/ethnic minority” may sometimes be used interchangeably with “people/students of color.”

School-family partnerships. These partnerships are collaborative, cooperative relationships between school personnel (for this study, school counselors) and families of students in which both parties take active roles in reaching the shared goal of student achievement.

School counselor self-efficacy. A school counselor’s belief in being able to complete the expected tasks of a school counselor (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005).

Multicultural competence. A counselor's attitude, knowledge, and skills in working with culturally and ethnically diverse individuals (Sue et al, 1998).

Limitations

Limitations of this study may be related to sampling and instrumentation, as an equal representation of elementary and secondary school counselors was not sought. Additionally, since the majority of school counselors are from the dominant culture, the sample did not provide high responses from school counselors of color. With regards to instrumentation, since the surveys were issued through email, the researcher could not control for the testing environment. Completion of this survey took approximately 20-30; yet, participants may not have had time allotted to complete all of the assessments. Thus, to address these limitations, the researcher attempted to obtain a sample of at least 100 participants, as an a-priori sample size calculation for multiple regression with seven potential predictors indicated a minimum requirement of 103 participants. As an incentive for participation, effort, and time, participants had an opportunity to win one out of ten Visa gift cards.

Summary

Chapter one described the shift of racial demographics in United States schools, and how this shift may impact familial involvement and partnerships. Additionally, an overview of school counselor self-efficacy was addressed, as well as how this concept may influence school counselor involvement in partnerships. This overview of self-efficacy supported the use of a social cognitive framework this study. Finally, a brief summary of the proposed study was included. Chapter two will provide a literature review of additional key components of this study.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

Extensive research confirms the importance and benefits of school-family partnerships. Regarding academic achievement, creating a partnership climate has encouraged increased performance in both competence and testing. For example, implementing math-related activities that involve both the family and community has predicted not only enhanced participation from parents, but also the number of students that demonstrate proficiency on math achievement tests (Sheldon, Epstein, & Galindo, 2010). Urban schools, in particular, benefit from collaborative relationships with families and community members in that increased efforts to involve these stakeholders can predict passing levels on state achievement tests (Sheldon, 2003). Hence, family involvement both correlates with and predicts academic success, especially concerning students and families of color.

Effective partnerships between schools and students' home environments have also shown potential in decreasing the achievement gap (Holcomb-McCoy, 2010), improving school completion rates (Ziomiek-Daigle, 2010), and empowering parents to become leaders in school decision-making processes (Holcomb-McCoy & Bryan, 2010). Attendance similarly seems to benefit from these collaborations, as schools that have made attempts toward implementing formal partnerships have demonstrated improvements in daily attendance, as well as decreases in chronic absenteeism (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Henry, 2014; Sheldon, 2007). Further, interventions that are implemented in both the school and home environments are more effective in producing long-term behavior changes (Eppler & Weir, 2009). These continuing positive behaviors,

or second-order changes, are apparent in the shifting discipline patterns within schools. Increased parental involvement and satisfaction with schools decreases the prospect of school exclusion (McElderry & Cheng, 2014), and parental involvement at an early age can also lower risk of illicit substance use (Chen, Storr, & Anthony, 2005).

School counselors are in a unique position to form partnerships between schools and families. In fact, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA, 2012) emphasizes that collaboration between school personnel and families is essential in not only forming effective school counseling programs, but also in facilitating student achievement. Moreover, the 2016 Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) asserts that school counselors should understand their roles in consultations with families (G.2.b) and be able to examine connections between familial involvement and student achievement (G.3.h). An understanding of contextual factors, such as home and community influences, can assist school counselors in restructuring the organization of counseling departments to ensure the needs of underserved student populations are being met (McKillip, Rawls, & Barry, 2012).

Taking on the roles of facilitator, collaborator, and advocate in partnerships can enable school counselors to promote resiliency in racial minority and low-income students (Bryan, 2005). More specifically, when shifting roles to align with the themes of the ASCA National Model (leadership, collaboration, advocacy, and systemic change), school counselors have assisted in decreasing student dropout rates, and increasing student pass rates (Salina et al., 2013). However, school counselors may face obstacles that prevent involvement in partnerships that can facilitate these changes; additionally, certain characteristics may be associated with increased partnership involvement. Before

exploring these hindrances and potential predictors, a formal definition of school-family partnership will be discussed.

Defining School-Family Partnerships

In general, a partnership refers to a relationship between two or more people or groups that involve shared cooperation and respect toward the achievement of a common goal (American Heritage Dictionary, 2012). A partnership between school and families essentially involves the same components: *cooperation* and *respect* between school personnel and family members, and movement toward accomplishing a *shared goal*, which is student achievement. Reschly and Christenson (2012) specified this common goal even further by asserting that the purpose of these partnerships is to enhance academic, social, and emotional outcomes for students. That is, designing assessments, interventions, and consultation efforts through an ecological systems theory lens can improve the aforementioned learning outcomes. Williams, Sanchez, and Hunnell (2011) were also proponents of the ecological systems mindset of school-family partnerships, and added that the contexts and actions of both parties in these relationships should be highlighted. Within this emphasis, members of both parties (i.e., school and family) will be able to evolve through interactions, and thus become active participants in assisting with student achievement.

Though the language differs, Epstein and Van Voorhis (2010) used the theory of overlapping spheres (or that students are more successful when parents, school personnel, and community members recognize and act upon common goals for student achievement) to define involvement in partnerships. Six types of involvement exist: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community (Epstein, 1995). Whereas school counselors can take an active role in

each of these areas, additional work needs to be completed to overcome challenges and to activate the types of involvement to ensure an effective partnership program (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2010). Additionally, though an ecological systems perspective may be helpful in conceptualizing student concerns, the broad nature of this lens may be beyond the scope of school counselors' abilities and duties. Thus, for the purposes of this paper, effective school-family partnerships consist of "bridge-building and gap-closing activities designed to build relationships and understanding between school personnel and families" (Bryan & Griffin, 2010, p. 81). That is, this paper will address school counselors' characteristics and efforts that both hinder and promote establishing and maintaining school-family partnerships.

Current School-Family Partnership Frameworks

Several frameworks exist that outline school-family partnerships, though most incorporate the additional component of community involvement. Epstein (2006) acknowledged that a team-based approach could help children of all ages both academically and socially. Thus, her framework consists of six types of involvement:

- Parenting, or assisting families in completing interventions at home,
- Communicating, or maintaining contact with family and community members,
- Volunteering, or recruiting family and community members to participate in school events,
- Learning at home, or giving families the tools for students to engage in learning activities at home,

- Decision making, or encouraging families to become active participants in school policies and procedures, and
- Collaborating with the community, or providing resources to families from local businesses and groups (or even encouraging students and families to provide support to these institutions).

Epstein's framework has been implemented by a number of educators, including school counselors. Yet, Griffin and Steen (2010) found that school counselors' interactions in partnerships more frequently stemmed from the parenting and collaborating with the community types of involvement, indicating four other areas in which school counselor involvement may need to improve.

Bryan and Henry (2012) constructed a model to specifically help school counselors navigate through the partnership process. The authors proposed a school-family-community partnership framework that is based on four principles: democratic collaboration, empowerment, social justice, and a focus on strengths. Additionally, the partnership process is outlined in seven stages:

1. Preparing to partner
2. Assessing needs and strengths
3. Coming together
4. Creating a shared vision and plan
5. Taking action
6. Evaluating and celebrating progress
7. Maintaining momentum

Though considerations involving school climate and professional identity may need to be considered, this model provides a template for how school counselors may begin the collaborative process with families.

Most school-family (and community) frameworks are grounded in an ecological systems perspective. This theoretical viewpoint emphasizes the influence of contextual factors, such as home, school, and the community, can have on individual development (Reschly & Christenson, 2012). School counselors, specifically, have adopted this approach to conceptualize cases and to provide intentionality to interventions (Paylo, 2011). The systems lens can be used to provide psychoeducational support to parents of minorities (Troutman & Evans, 2014), to work with aggressive students (McAdams, Foster, Dotson-Blake, & Brendel, 2009), and to build effective collaboration (Eppler & Weir, 2009). Yet, despite the benefits of a systems approach, as well as the continuing development of models that are rooted in this theory, school counselors still face challenges in implementing partnerships with families.

Challenges in Partnering with Families

For several years, ASCA has stressed the importance of school counselors acting as leaders and advocates to collaborate with parents; however, school counselors still have difficulties in forging such connections. These challenges have ranged from time restraints, to larger-scale obstacles such as principal expectations and school climate (Bryan & Griffin 2010). However, the literature identifies three common themes in school-family partnership challenges: school counselor role ambiguity, parental concerns, and lack of appropriate training.

School Counselor Role Ambiguity

Role ambiguity occurs when school counselors complete tasks that are not in alignment with the standards set forth by ASCA, such as scheduling, disciplinary functions, and clerical duties (Fitch, Newby, Ballestero, & Marshall, 2001). School administrators are commonly not aware of the ASCA standards, or even state-specific frameworks of school counseling (Graham, Desmond, & Zinsser, 2011); additionally, principals have ranked non-school counseling responsibilities such as test interpretation, assisting in special education services, and managing student records as important tasks for school counselors (Bardhoshi & Duncan, 2009). This lack of awareness can contribute to role confusion as administrators usually assign school counselor duties.

Teachers also have misconceptions about the role of school counselors. In a study of public high school teachers from rural, urban, and suburban settings, teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that school counselors should engage in tasks such as registering and scheduling students, administering tests, computing grade-point averages, and maintaining student records (Reiner, Colbert, & Perusse, 2009). Additionally, a survey of 188 Southwestern K-12 certified teachers illustrated that 40% and 38% believed school counselors were inadequate in family and multicultural counseling, respectively (Beesley, 2004). These results are profound in that teachers' perceptions impact the views of administrators, students, and parents of the school counseling program (Clark & Amatea, 2004). Thus, if teachers believe that school counselors should engage in these duties, others may also support this definition of the school counseling role.

However, school counselors may also play a part in role ambiguity. In a qualitative study of administrators' conception of school counseling, the findings suggest that confusion from administrators may be due to school counselors' lack of advocacy for role identity (Amatea & Clark, 2005). That is, if school counselors are not assertive in discussing and performing tasks in alignment to ASCA and additional school counseling-specific models, administrators and other school personnel may have a difficult time in determining the function of school counselors. Yet, school counselors may not be able to advocate for themselves because they are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with their professional identities. In a phenomenology study on school counselors' ability to meet the needs of underrepresented students, school counselors faced challenges when trying to articulate their roles (Schaeffer, Akos, & Barrow, 2010). Further, they were not able to fully respond when approached with the terms "advocacy" or "systemic change," both of which represent ASCA's assertion of the essential components of the school counselor identity. Notably, though, school counselors consider involvement in partnerships to be very important (Bryan & Holcomb-McCoy, 2004; Bryan & Holcomb-McCoy, 2006). However, if school counselors are not aware of their roles in systemic change, they may be faced with obstacles when trying to build partnerships with students' home environments—which are extensions of students' systems.

An exploration of school counselors' roles in forming school-family partnerships includes addressing school counselors' comfort and actual involvement in these partnerships. Griffin and Steen (2010) found that 30% of school counselors were not comfortable in their abilities to form partnerships, and 58% did not actually participate in partnerships. An operational definition of school-family-community partnerships was not

provided to participants in this study; yet, the results indicate that school counselors may perceive they are not prepared enough to form these partnerships.

Bryan and Griffin (2010) completed a study that examined the dimensions related to school counselors' involvement in school-family-community partnerships, as well as associated factors. After surveying over 200 counselors, the researchers found that three dimensions of involvement existed: involvement in school-home partnerships, involvement in school-community collaboration, and involvement in collaborative teams. Further, collaborative school climate, school principal expectations, school counselor self-efficacy, role perceptions, time constraints, and hours of partnership-related training are related to involvement. That is, though internal motivators influence involvement (such as self-efficacy and role perceptions), external factors also impact partnerships (such as school climate and time constraints).

Schaeffer, Akos, & Barrow (2010) completed a phenomenology study of high school counselors' advocacy for underrepresented students as it relates to college access. The participants valued family involvement, but also blamed families for poor academic achievement or indifference about education. Additionally, school counselors admitted to taking on a parental role if parental support was lacking for students. Whereas generalizability is a concern due to the small sample size, the results indicate that school counselors appreciate family input. However, this appreciation is generally not extended if students are falling below expectations. The "blaming" mindset can be detrimental to the school-family partnership process as it may indicate a lack of cultural responsiveness.

In a study on involving low-income and parents of color in college readiness services, Holcomb-McCoy (2010) found that school counselors generally favor parental

and community involvement as it relates to college preparation. Additionally, the participants initiated contact with parents and spent time conferencing with parents about the college process. However, they also admitted to not commonly attending parent-related activities within the school. Again, limited sample size may impact generalizability. Yet, the results of most of these studies related to school counselors' perspectives on their roles in partnerships indicated two factors that have not been directly studied alongside school-family partnerships: self-efficacy and multicultural competence.

Parental Concerns

Apprehension from parents and other family members may also serve as a barrier for school counselors in forming partnerships. In particular, cultural considerations regarding what may best meet the needs of families of color may need to be explored before the partnership process can begin (Moore-Thomas & Day-Vines, 2010). For example, due to contextual stressors that African American families may face, counselors must be willing to recognize and include environmental conditions (such as social, political, and socioeconomic) into interventions (Hines & Boyd-Franklin, 2005). Hines and Boyd-Franklin (2005) also assert that counselors must be mindful of the perceptions that African Americans have about counseling or therapy, especially due to the invasive nature of other agencies in which these individuals may have been involved. These wary perceptions of counseling have also been adopted by American Indians, as helping relationships have commonly consisted of changing their value systems (Sutton & Broken Nose, 2005). Thus, a more beneficial approach for school counselors may be to first listen to understand the family's principles (Hess, Molina, & Kozleski, 2006).

Asian Americans typically have the lowest rates of utilizing mental health services, which is due to stigma, lack of financial means, and lack of culturally responsive services (Lee & Mock, 2005). School counselors, therefore, need to be aware of this perspective of shame regarding counseling services and adapt partnership efforts when attempting to form collaborative relationships with Asian American families. Increased awareness also transcends to working with Latino families, in that the ability to differentiate between ethnic groups within the Latino culture is a major treatment consideration (Garcia-Preto, 2005). Yet, despite the differences that may exist between Latino ethnic identities, Garcia-Preto (2005) also stresses the importance of family as a common value. Thus, not including families into the interventions of a Latino student would be an error on the part of the school counselor.

There are additional parental anxieties that address cultural considerations. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) constructed a model on parental involvement in children's education and initially found three major constructs: parents' role construction (or what parents believe they are supposed to do for their children's education), parents' self-efficacy (or perceptions that their involvement will positively influence their children's learning outcomes), and contextual invitation (or perceptions that schools actually want parents involved). Walker, Shenker, and Hoover-Dempsey (2010) extended this study to provide implications for school counselors, and asserted that school counselors can target these three constructs by preparing parents for involvement, creating a welcoming environment for all parents, inviting parents to share their expertise on their children, and addressing barriers to parental participation (amongst other suggestions). Thus, maintaining awareness of parents' motivations for involvement, such

as parents' self-efficacy and school responsiveness to needs, may encourage stronger partnerships. Also, creating an inviting environment that considers cultural needs of parents may also be conducive for partnerships.

The necessity for school responsiveness is reiterated elsewhere in the literature. Williams, Sanchez, and Hunnell (2011) completed a study in the United States, focusing on an inner-city high school with a predominantly African American population. A case study of 15 parents revealed a need for school personnel to adapt to parents' needs in order to improve collaborative efforts. Namely, parents wanted more support from schools in overcoming barriers to collaboration. For instance, transportation may be a key obstacle as to why parents may not be able to attend school functions, so alternatives presented by school personnel are greatly needed. Though the small sample size suggests that results cannot be generalized, this study may have ramifications for school-family partnerships.

Finally, Griffin and Galassi (2010) interviewed 29 parents from a rural middle school in the southern region of the United States and found that barriers to involvement related to lack of the following: communication with the school, individualized interventions from educators, and access to resources. Additionally, the theme of self-efficacy was once again emphasized, as parents did not have a clear understanding of how to become more active and involved in children's academic success. As with the aforementioned studies, the sample size prevents generalizability to the larger population. However, the implications of this study can enable school counselors, additional school personnel, and counselor educators to make considerations of how to build bridges with families with limited self-efficacy.

Lack of Training

As addressed in chapter one, school counselors lack the appropriate training to form partnerships as it relates to family coursework. However, multicultural counseling may also be limited in graduate programs. Though CACREP (2016) requires that social and cultural diversity be included in core curriculum, applying the skills learned in this content area is not mandated. Moreover, school counselors commonly do not receive sufficient supervision regarding working with diverse student populations during training (West-Olatunji, Goodman, & Shure, 2011). That is, even if school counseling students obtain opportunities to work with diverse populations, the supervision they receive may not be effective in challenging them on their biases and assumptions. This lack of sufficient supervision continues after training, as practicing school counselors typically receive administrative supervision as opposed to clinical supervision (Perera-Diltz & Mason, 2012). Specifically, school counselors tend to receive feedback from administrators on compliance with policies, record keeping, and work habits (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006). Thus, if school counselors are not being supported and challenged about their multicultural competence, the prospect of growth in this area is limited (Ober, Granello, & Henfield, 2009).

As a response to limited training in applying culturally appropriate interventions, counselor educators may integrate experiential learning into curricula (KAGNICI, 2014). For example, Villalba and Redmond (2008) suggested that adding the film, *Crash*, into the multicultural counseling curriculum could facilitate class discussions and enhance student self-awareness. Moreover, in a narrative analysis of three graduate counseling students, Hipolito-Delgado, Cook, Avrus, and Bonham (2011) found that developing a

cultural immersion project that mandated students to engage with culturally diverse communities increased multicultural knowledge, awareness, and skills. That is, providing opportunities for counseling students to observe, gather information, and interact with culturally diverse populations improved multicultural competence of these students.

Completing these experiential activities during class time, however, may not always be an option; thus, many instructors have adopted flipped learning to support these experiences (Fulton & Gonzalez, 2015; Stone, 2012). Flipped learning is a teaching method that enables students to learn content at home and apply what has been taught during class time (Green, 2015). Even though previous findings have demonstrated the positive impact flipped learning has on creativity (Abdulrahman & Al-Zahrani, 2015) and active learning (McLean, Attardi, Faden, & Goldszmidt, 2016), research of this teaching tool integrated into counseling curricula has been limited (Fulton & Gonzalez, 2015). Hence, it is unclear whether school counselors in training have been exposed to this style of learning. Moreover, though graduate counseling students gain practical experience through practicum and internship courses, a survey of 125 school counselor programs found that 57.6% of these programs provided fieldwork opportunities prior to these clinical experiences (Perusse, Poynton, Parzych, & Goodnough, 2015). Additionally, 97.6% and 92% of these programs required practicum and internship courses, respectively, but only 79.5% of the programs mandated that the practicum experiences be completed in schools. The experiences that practicum students and interns have at their clinical sites are not regulated. As addressed in chapter one, a review of 59 school counseling internship syllabi indicated that only 17% included content related to systemic intervention, or learning to consult and collaborate (Akos & Scarborough, 2004). Thus,

even though CACREP (2016) requires that all graduate students receive at least 100 hours of practicum experience and 600 hours of internship experience, what occurs at these clinical sites may vary—including the amount of time allotted on collaborating and consulting with families of color.

The Gap in the Literature

Previous literature has highlighted the strengths of school-family partnerships. However, the research also indicates a need for something beyond the frameworks that currently exist. School counselors' role confusion and lack of preparation in working with diverse populations are significant obstacles; additionally, minority parents have reported feeling misunderstood during communication with school personnel. Thus, a social cognitive theoretical lens that emphasizes school counselor multicultural competence, self-efficacy, and environment may provide a new perspective on school counseling involvement in school-family partnerships.

Using a Social Cognitive Theoretical Lens

The literature on school counselors' roles in school-family partnerships has highlighted two key elements: lack of school counselor advocacy inhibits partnership involvement, and school counselors may not be sufficiently prepared to work with diverse families. Additionally, the literature examined specific perceptions on partnerships from urban and rural parents and families. Hence, a social cognitive approach that explores the relationships between school counselor self-efficacy, multicultural competence, environment, and involvement in partnerships with families of color is proposed. Bandura (1986) asserts that social cognitive theory is grounded in triadic reciprocal determinism as opposed to linear causation. That is, human

performance is formed by behavior (B), personal factors, such as cognitive, affective, and biological events (P), and environment (E). These three components vary in strength and do not materialize concurrently; rather, one factor may gradually emerge and influence the others. Thus, personal factors such as self-efficacy and multicultural competence (P) may influence school counselor involvement in diverse school-family partnerships (B), especially if this school counselor works in a school where the population of the students and families are culturally diverse (E). An exploration of school counselor self-efficacy, multicultural competence, and environment as it relates to partnerships follows.

Personal Factors

Personal factors are characterized by “instincts, drives, traits, and other motivational forces” (Bandura, 1978, p. 344). Specifically, personal factors include characteristics that an individual possesses that may have provided satisfaction in the past, such as specific personality traits and cognitive factors. As this study seeks to examine characteristics that may be associated with school counselors forming partnerships with families of color, two personal factors will be discussed. First, school counselor self-efficacy will be reviewed, as examining how well school counselors believe they can form these partnerships may be crucial. Second, multicultural competence will also be explored, as previous literature has addressed the need for school counselors to work with culturally diverse individuals (such as families of color).

Self-efficacy. Ambiguity about school counselor identity from teachers and administrators may hinder the formation of school-family partnerships. Further, if school counselors do not believe they are able to build partnerships, then it is unlikely that their schools will have a strong partnership program. Belief about one’s ability is related to

self-efficacy. According to Bandura (1977), believing in the capability to complete a task increases the likelihood of persistence in completing this task, despite any difficulties. Betz (2004) simplified this notion even further by asserting that self-efficacy involves approaching a task rather than avoiding it. Thus, based on these definitions, school counselors who believe they are able to connect with families are more likely to accomplish this task, and not abandon it despite obstacles.

School counselor self-efficacy, in particular, is a crucial component in building effective school-family partnerships, as school counselors' self-efficacy about partnerships is significantly positively correlated to involvement in school-home partnerships (Bryan & Griffin, 2010). That is, those who believe they can form school-family partnerships are more commonly involved in these unions. In fact, the second largest subscale in the School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale measures collaboration, which focuses on interactions with stakeholders, both inside and outside of the school systems, to meet the needs of students (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005). Thus, self-efficacy seems to have relational value in the formation of school-family partnerships.

The relationship between self-efficacy and collaboration has been previously explored throughout the literature. In a study examining the relationship between school counselor self-efficacy and burnout, Gunduz (2012) found that counselors who receive more social support are less likely to experience burnout. Social support includes positive messages from personal friends and families, as well as colleagues within the school setting. Positive perceptions from colleagues can contribute to improved collaborative relationships (ATICI, 2014). Whether these collaborative relationships extend to families cannot be assumed, as it was not measured in either study. However, these findings once

again highlight how a positive environment may influence self-efficacy for school counselors to take active stances in their duties (such as forming partnerships).

Bodenhorn, Wolfe, and Airen (2010) completed a national study of more than 800 ASCA members and found that school counselors with higher self-efficacy were more likely to be aware of achievement gap information within their schools. Further, participants with higher self-efficacy reported that achievement gaps were narrowing in their schools, which suggests that those with higher self-efficacy are more likely to attain goals to close these gaps. Though this study addressed community involvement, again, it did not exclusively explore the relationship between school counselor self-efficacy and school-family partnerships. Yet, the ramifications suggest that increased self-efficacy is related to taking active roles in meeting the needs of diverse populations.

Despite the limitations, Bodenhorn et al.'s study did find that the majority of the participants were aware of ethnic achievement gaps in their schools. In fact, the relationship between multicultural awareness and self-efficacy has also been explored in the literature. Owens, Bodenhorn, and Bryant (2010) examined self-efficacy and perceived multicultural competence of school counselors and found that the cultural acceptance subscale of the School Counselor Self-Efficacy scale is a statistically significant predictor of all three multicultural competencies, which include terminology, knowledge, and awareness. Holcomb-McCoy, Harris, Hines, and Johnston (2008) expanded upon the relationship between self-efficacy and multicultural competence by constructing the School Counselor Multicultural Self-Efficacy Scale (SCMES). Multicultural self-efficacy refers to the "perceived abilities...to carry out and perform tasks that are relevant and specific to equity among students in K-12 schools, and the

ethnically and culturally diverse needs of K-12 students” (p. 167). Additionally, the SCMES includes six factors or subscales, four of which are related to forming partnerships with families of color:

- Knowledge of Multicultural Concepts relates to designing culturally appropriate interventions (which may involve the family),
- Using Data and Understanding Systemic Change includes using data (such as students’ home environment) as tools to narrow the achievement gap,
- Developing Cross-Cultural Relationships specifically addresses the ability to form relationships with culturally diverse individuals (i.e., students and their families),
- Multicultural Counseling Awareness emphasizes how the school counselor’s own culture may impact interactions with students (and, possibly, students’ families).

Though evidence has established a relationship between self-efficacy and multicultural competence, no literature exists that discusses how this relationship potentially impacts school-family collaboration. The succeeding section will both define multicultural competence, and review the existing literature on how multicultural competence may influence school-family partnerships.

Multicultural competence. According to Sue et al. (1998), multicultural competence refers to counselors’ attitudes, knowledge, and skills in working with

ethnically and culturally diverse individuals. Further, three general competencies exist (Sue & Sue, 2013):

- Being aware of personal assumptions, values, and biases,
- Understanding worldviews of culturally diverse clients,
- Developing culturally appropriate interventions.

These competencies relate to forming partnerships with families of color, as well. In order to meet the needs of diverse students, partnering with family members while remaining aware of the multicultural competencies may make for more effective collaboration. Thus, reviewing the literature on school counselor multicultural competence, and how it may impact partnerships, is necessary.

The importance of multicultural competence in the school counseling field has been thoroughly explored. So much so, that an actual instrument to measure school counselors' multicultural competence has been constructed. Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines (2004) revised the Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey (MCCTS-R), and found that it measured three perceived areas of competence:

multicultural terminology, multicultural knowledge, and multicultural awareness.

However, this instrument does not assess multicultural counseling skills—an important area in developing culturally appropriate interventions for students and families.

Holcomb-McCoy (2004a) conducted a theme analysis of multicultural school counseling and expanded upon the competencies, finding nine areas of importance. The areas most related to working with racial minority families include multicultural consultation, multicultural family counseling, social advocacy, developing school-family-

community partnerships, and understanding cross-cultural interpersonal interactions. In other words, “School counselors must be aware of norms that stem from the majority culture in assessing attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of students’ parents and families” (Holcomb-McCoy, 2004a, p. 180). A lack of awareness may lead to one of the aforementioned challenges of school counselors building partnerships with families of color.

An understanding of both cultural humility and cultural reciprocity may assist school counselors in creating partnerships with these formations of families. Hook, Davis, Owen, Worthington, and Utsey (2013) defined cultural humility as an other-person stance in interpersonal relationships in which respect is given to an individual’s cultural background and experience, as well as a humbleness to learn more about this background. Further, Hook et al. (2013) also found that clients’ perceptions of therapists’ cultural humility is positively correlated with developing a strong working alliance. In other words, if clients feel that a counselor is respectful of cultural similarities and differences, a stronger relationship between counselor and client may evolve. This association may provide implications in partnering with families of color, in that willingness to learn about these families’ cultural experiences may strengthen the partnership. Building cultural reciprocal relationships with families involves similar motivation, as well as the ability to recognize the uniqueness of each family and understand that these partnerships may reflect the interactions between both the school counselor and family’s cultural identities (Kalyanpur & Harry, 2004). Hence, respect and awareness may contribute to multicultural competence, and thus, stronger partnerships with families of color.

The literature has identified multicultural competence as a significant contribution to the school counseling field; additionally, research also asserts the importance of school counselors taking active roles in forming collaborative relationships with families. However, little empirical research has been completed that explores the relationship between multicultural competence and school-family partnerships. For example, Moore-Thomas and Day-Vines (2010) explored cultural competence as it related to effectively collaborating with African American students, families, and communities. This article discussed the barriers of partnering with African American families, as well as reviewed current partnership programs within African American communities. Whereas the authors provided implications in improving these partnerships, they did not quantitatively nor qualitatively assess the relationship between cultural competence and school-family partnerships. Mitchell and Bryan (2007) completed similar research on creating partnerships with Caribbean immigrant families. Again, whereas the authors provided significant literature on the cultural backgrounds and challenges of Caribbean students and families, as well as suggestions for school counselors to form partnerships with this population, empirical evidence was not provided to evaluate the effectiveness of these suggestions.

Williams, Sanchez, and Hunnell (2011) interviewed parents and school personnel of an inner-city high school about their descriptions and experiences of school-family partnerships, and found concern related to the school's inability to adapt to meet parents' needs. As previous literature suggests, certain minority cultural groups may have barriers that prevent school involvement; thus, if school personnel are not flexible to these culturally specific needs, partnerships may be damaged. Though this study did address

both successes and barriers in forming school-family partnerships with diverse students, the school personnel did not specifically include school counselors. Further, multicultural competence was not directly explored.

Dotson-Blake (2010) also conducted a qualitative study on school-family partnerships, though this one included the perspectives of Mexican nationalists in Veracruz and Mexican immigrants in North Carolina in addition to school and community personnel in both settings. Awareness seemed to be the common barrier in establishing effective partnerships, with educators listing language barriers as contributing to ignorance of how to forge relationships. Though multicultural awareness is one of the proficiencies of school counselor multicultural competence, this study does not specifically address multicultural competence.

Aydin, Bryan, and Duys (2012) conducted a quantitative study that examined factors that predicted school counselor involvement in partnerships with linguistically diverse students. The results indicated that school principal expectations, school counselor role perceptions about partnerships, time constraints, and partnership-related training were positively related to school counselor involvement in partnerships with these families. That is, the more support school counselors receive from principals and partnership-related professional development, as well as the more they identify their roles as participants in partnerships, the more likely they were involved in forming collaborative relationships with linguistically diverse families and communities. Whereas observing the importance of factors such as role identity and time constraints are important, this study does not directly examine how multicultural competence relates to forming partnerships with these families. Additionally, the study only included school

counselors from one Midwestern state, which may not be representative of school counselors in other regions of the United States. Thus, the research indicates how both self-efficacy and multicultural competence possibly interacts with forming partnerships with culturally diverse families, no existing study examines the relationship between all three factors.

Environmental Factors

Environment is another component of triadic reciprocal determinism, and “becomes an autonomous force that automatically shapes, orchestrates, and controls behavior” (Bandura, 1978, p. 344). In other words, an individual’s surroundings can mold particular behaviors. Regarding forming partnerships with families of color, a consideration of both school location and culture must be considered, as both components may potentially influence the nature of these involvements.

Physical setting. Research has indicated differences between the amount of parental or familial involvement in urban, rural, and suburban school districts (Ma, Shen, & Krenn, 2014). For example, in a comparison study of urban and rural Head Start programs, urban families scored significantly higher on parental involvement surveys compared to rural families (Keys, 2015). The findings suggest a need for culturally responsive family engagement policies that considers community as a factor in forming partnerships. As students enter K-12 educational settings, the need for family involvement programs that are culturally aware becomes more pertinent. For instance, an analysis of 7380 public schools (1650 urban schools, 3180 suburban schools, and 2550 rural schools) found that whereas parent-initiated parental involvement illustrated significantly positive relationships with schools making adequate yearly progress (AYP),

school-initiated parental involvement demonstrated significantly negative relationships with AYP in urban and suburban schools (Ma, Shen, & Krenn, 2014). This same study also found that urban schools reported both a wider range and stronger importance of parental involvement, whereas rural schools reported weaker scores in both areas.

Suburban schools reported parental involvement scores that were consistent with rural schools (Ma et al., 2014). Even though this study did not take into account the potential influence of student demographics, it does emphasize that when parents feel welcomed to initiate contact with schools, academic achievement improves. Additionally, the study emphasizes a climate of unity and belongingness that may be more apparent in urban schools.

Similar school-family relationships in urban schools were found in other studies. Specifically, a quantitative survey comparing secondary teacher candidates' perceptions of family engagement in urban and suburban schools found that candidates placed in urban settings had significantly more ideas about partnering with families (Bergman, 2013). Whereas this study focuses on a sample of teachers and not school counselors, the implications are relevant for all school personnel in that it addresses the influence of fieldwork placement.

Understanding the community in which schools are located is an important step in forming partnerships (Bryan & Henry, 2012). Rural, urban, and suburban schools have both similarities and differences of which school counselors need to be aware. Rural schools commonly face challenges such as isolation (Arnold, Newman, Gaddy, & Dean, 2005), as well as having inexperienced teachers and staff, inadequate resources and facilities, and a low percentage of teacher retention (Howley & Howley, 2004). Despite

these challenges, rural locations tend to have a strong sense of community and take pride in student achievements (Lin, Isernhagen, Scherz, & Denner, 2014). School counselors attempting to form partnerships with families in these areas must understand the needs of these families, as well as respect the community pride. Griffin and Galassi (2010) recommend that in order to facilitate the success of rural students, school counselors: (a) participate in school-family-community collaborative activities, (b) recognize parents as experts or resources, (c) bridge the communication gap between parents and schools, and (d) create a list of resources for both parents and school staff. While applicable to most settings, these suggestions emphasize the importance of community in rural areas, as well as the need for access to resources.

Urban areas also have a strong sense of community. The challenges of urban schools have thoroughly been documented throughout the literature. In particular, urban schools suffer from low graduation rates, increased poverty, inadequate instruction, and lack of access to resources (Lee, 2005). Moreover, urban school counselors struggle to implement effective school counseling programs due to increased workloads, family instability, and lack of preparation to create culturally responsive interventions for diverse student populations (Lee, 2005). These challenges perpetuate deficit perceptions of families in that school personnel feel the need to provide emotional, instructional, and material support (Biag, 2016). That is, because of the awareness of potential economic and family hardships of students in urban areas, school personnel are more likely to complete additional tasks beyond given duties and responsibilities to facilitate success. Biag's (2016) study of 17 school personnel (consisting of teachers, administration, the school counselor, and the school nurse) in an urban middle school also found that

participants did not believe that urban and/or poor and ethnic minority families value education. Cole and Grothaus (2014) found similar negative perceptions about low-income families in a phenomenological study of 10 urban school counselors. Participants in this study reported that low-income families did not know how to facilitate academic achievement, and also lacked motivation and parenting skills. Yet, the literature suggests that a strengths-based approach may be more effective in working with ethnic minority families (Bryan & Henry, 2008; Sheely & Bratton, 2010). Hence, whereas school counselors may need to be aware of the needs of urban families when forming partnerships, emphasizing assets is also a necessity.

Suburbs are described as “districts outside the city center with a substantial population of residents commuting to the metropolitan center for employment” (Chapman, 2014, p. 312). Though historically the suburbs have been inhabited by predominantly White high-income families, the population has increased dramatically in the past 20 years and includes more families of color as residents (Orfield & Luce, 2012). Further, approximately one-third of students of color living in the suburbs attend majority White schools (Chapman, 2014). Suburban schools, thus, are characterized as majority white and affluent (Chapman, 2013; Ispa-Landa, 2013). Essentially, White students in integrated suburban schools develop more cultural awareness and empathy for individuals of different races (Tefera, Frankenberg, Siegel-Hawley, & Chirichigno, 2011). Despite these benefits, students of color tend to have a negative perception of the support received from adults in suburban schools (Chapman, 2014). In a focus group of approximately 100 students of color in four different suburban districts, Chapman (2014) found that these students commonly perceived low expectations from teachers and school

counselors, and also believed their disciplinary consequences were harsher than their White peers. Regarding familial relationships, research has demonstrated that parental involvement in suburban schools have not been statistically significant (Ma et al., 2014), or that parents feel a weak connection with these schools (Droe, 2014/2015). A case study of a suburban elementary school even found that increased levels of parental involvement led to more conflicts between parents and school administration (Lareau & Munoz, 2012). Thus, the common theme for all physical settings of schools appears to be that school counselors must be aware of the specific needs of the community and tailor partnership efforts to meet those needs.

School climate. School climate has long been explored as a factor related to school-family partnerships. In fact, collaborative school climate may predict school counselors' involvement in school-home partnerships (Bryan & Griffin, 2010). School climate may also influence the extent to which parents feel included in forming and continuing these partnerships. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) proposed a model in which invitations from the school served as a major construct for parental involvement. One of the major sources of invitations to involvement are generated from school climate (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Specifically, positive school climate can lead to the perception that parental involvement is supported and welcomed (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's contextual factor of invitations has been consistently examined through several studies. A study of urban, Latino parents found that invitations from schools predicted involvement from the participants (Walker, Ice, Hoover-Dempsey, and Sandler, 2011). An additional study which examined the parents

of sociodemographically diverse high school students found that school outreach efforts, including having a welcoming environment, were strongly related to school-based involvement—or attendance at school meetings and events (Park & Holloway, 2013). Finally, in reviewing specifically African American fathers' involvement, Abel (2012) found that invitations from teachers, schools, and their children influenced home-based involvement—or assisting with homework and other school-related tasks in the home environment. Whereas the aforementioned studies do not specifically focus on school counselors' roles in partnerships, the findings demonstrate the importance of sense of belonging as it relates to parental involvement. Thus, school counselors may want to consider their roles in creating inviting environments to facilitate partnerships.

Yet collaborative or positive school climate consists of more than just invitations. Griffith (2001) also indicated the importance of principal support, as manifested through efforts to meet the needs of school personnel, students, and families, and consistently advocating for school improvements. In a study of 155 teachers in 31 elementary schools, Kelley, Thornton, and Daugherty (2005) found statistically positive correlations between teachers' perception of principals and school climate. In other words, the more positive the perception, the more positive the school climate. Though the schools included in this study were considered small in nature and only represented rural areas, the implications are significant in that when teachers respond positively to administration, the climate of the school is also perceived more positively. Tschannen-Moran, Parish, and DiPaola (2006) also examined school climate through providing the School Climate Index assessment to middle school faculty members. The findings indicated that teachers perceived collegial leadership, or the supportive role of the administrator, to be

significantly related to community engagement, both of which the authors suggest as facets of school climate. Hence, the more supportive the principal, the more plausible constructive relationships will be formed between schools and external stakeholders (including families).

School counselors' perceptions of principal support has also been explored in the literature regarding school climate and partnerships. In a study examining the perceptions of principals' roles, Cisler and Bruce (2013) found that both school counselors and principals in training and practicing agreed that creating a safe climate was an important responsibility for principals. Further, this study found that school counselors and principals believed that creating a supportive environment for students and staff was essential for an effective school setting. Whereas this study does not specifically address partnerships with families, female school counselors and principals, both practicing and in training, reported that involving parents was an important aspect of principal's duties (Cisler & Bruce, 2013). Thus, principals are expected by their peers and school counselors to create supportive environments that may facilitate parental involvement. In constructing a measurement on school counselor involvement in partnerships, Bryan and Griffin (2010) found principal expectations to be a significant (as well as the strongest) predictor in school counselor involvement in school-home partnerships. That is, when school counselors work in an environment where the principal not only supports but also anticipates partnerships with families, involvement in these partnerships are more likely to happen.

Conclusion and Implications for the Present Study

School-family partnerships have been extensively reviewed throughout the literature. Both the benefits (Holcomb-McCoy, 2010; Sheldon et al., 2010) and multicultural considerations (Bryan, 2005; Holcomb-McCoy, 2004a) of these partnerships have been addressed, as well as the school counselor's role in creating these partnerships (ASCA, 2012; CACREP, 2016). Further, frameworks have been recommended to examine school-family collaborative relationships, varying from the types of parental involvement (Epstein, 2006), ecological perspectives (Reschly & Christenson, 2012), and even a process model focusing on how school counselors can form partnerships (Bryan & Henry, 2012). Yet, despite this thorough review of the literature, the social cognitive theoretical lens has not been used to explore school counselor characteristics as it relates to forming partnerships, particularly with families of color.

Social cognitive perspectives, however, have been integrated into both school counseling and counselor education research, primarily through the context of self-efficacy. For example, self-efficacy has been found to be a predictor of school counselors' career satisfaction (Baggerly & Osborn, 2006), school counselor data usage (Holcomb-McCoy, Gonzalez, & Johnston, 2009), programmatic service delivery (Mullen & Lambie, 2016), and even burnout (Gunduz, 2012). Further, significantly positive relationships have been found between self-efficacy about partnerships and school-home partnerships (Bryan & Griffin, 2010). Regarding counselor education, Lambie and Vaccaro (2011) found that higher research self-efficacy was positively associated with higher interest in research, as well as scholarly publication experience. Moreover,

Barbee, Scherer, and Combs (2003) found that acquiring field experience early in training was significantly and positively related to counselor self-efficacy.

The concept of triadic reciprocal determinism serves as a foundation of Bandura's social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1978, 1989a) and examines the relationship between personal factors, environment, and behavior. Yet, this concept has limited integration into counseling research. In fact, it has been almost twenty years since a counselor training framework using triadic reciprocal determinism was introduced (Larson, 1998). Whereas Gordillo (2015) addressed the significance of triadic reciprocal causation, multicultural self-efficacy served as the social cognitive framework integrated into the study that examined the relationships between counselor demographics, work experience, training, and self-efficacy. Yet, outside of the counseling field, this concept has been used to ground phenomenological studies on the cyberbullying of college students (Rivituso, 2014), as well as to examine creative performance (Phelan, 2001) and the relationship between principal self-efficacy and fifth grade reading achievement (Lockard, 2013). These studies all examined the interaction of the three components of reciprocal determinism—a viewpoint that is absent from counselor education literature.

Thus, the present study was designed to examine personal factors and environment as it relates to the behavior of school counselor involvement in partnerships with families of color. As self-efficacy has served a significant predictor or correlate in previous counseling research, its potential influence was also measured in this study. Further, as student racial demographics continue to shift in schools, school counselors do not mirror this diversity; hence, multicultural competence was also examined in the present study. Finally, an exploration of environment was integrated, both through

physical settings as well as school climate. This research sought to demonstrate how integrating a social cognitive perspective into the study of school-family partnerships might benefit both the school counseling and counselor education fields.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology for the present study. This study incorporated a postpositivism approach, as variables were identified to objectively examine relationships and to answer predetermined research questions (Creswell, 2014). A quantitative method was used that explored the relationships between school counselor self-efficacy, multicultural competence, environment (as defined by school location, collaborative school climate, and principal support) and involvement in partnerships with families of color. This chapter serves two purposes: first, to discuss the modification of one of the instruments used in the study, and second, to describe sample selection, the method of data collection, instrumentation, research questions and hypotheses, and methods of data analysis. An informed critique will also be addressed.

Phase One

In phase one, the researcher modified the language of the instrument used to assess school counselor involvement in partnerships with families of color. The School Counselor Involvement in Partnerships Survey (SCIPS; Bryan, 2003; Bryan & Griffin, 2010) was created to both assess school counselor involvement in partnerships with families and community members, and to measure school and school counselor factors potentially related to involvement. Because no other instruments specifically measured school-family partnerships with families of color, in this study the survey was modified to include the phrase, “of color” (e.g., As a school counselor, I think that my involvement in partnerships with families *of color* is important). A previous study examining school

counselor involvement with linguistically diverse families used a similar approach (Aydin et al., 2012).

Population and Sample

For this phase of the study, convenience sampling was utilized by contacting school counselors (n = 62) with affiliations to the College of William and Mary in Virginia (e.g., those that have completed a clinical faculty training program or served as site supervisors for school counseling practicum and internship students). Additionally, 500 school counselors were randomly selected from the Virginia School Counselor Association (VSCA). Overall, these two approaches yielded a response from 17 participants.

Data Collection

Prior to the data collection process, this study received approval by the Institutional Review Board at the College of William and Mary. Participants were asked to review and acknowledge an informed consent statement (which addressed their rights, risks, and purpose of the study), as well as to complete a demographic questionnaire. Additionally, participants were asked to complete the SCIPS, with the added phrase “of color” to several items in the questionnaire. At the end of the survey, participants were asked to share any concerns they may have had with the inclusion of the phrase “of color” to the instrument. All information was collected through the online survey tool, Qualtrics.

Data Analysis

In order to gauge the appropriateness of using the modified SCIPS for phase two, inter-item reliability was measured using Cronbach’s coefficient alpha. The coefficient of

the whole scale, as well as the six subscales, was then compared to the results from the exploratory factor analysis of the SCIPS (Bryan & Griffin, 2010). Prior to moving forward with the modified version of the SCIPS, coefficients within the range of .79-.94 were sought, as these were the original values in the principal factor analysis of the instrument (Bryan & Griffin, 2010).

Phase Two

After analyzing the data from the amended SCIPS (addressed in chapter four), the researcher examined the primary purpose of the study. The research questions that guided the study were: (a) What is the relationship between school counselor self-efficacy, multicultural competence, environment, and involvement in school-family partnerships? and (b) How do practicing school counselors differ in self-efficacy, multicultural competence, and involvement in school-family partnerships based upon demographic variables, such as location and racial/ethnic identity? The social cognitive theoretical concept of triadic reciprocal determinism served as a foundation for the construction of both the research questions and hypotheses.

Population and Sample

The target population of the present study included current professional school counselors in the United States. Participants represented various regions across the United States (urban, rural, and suburban), as well as three levels in the school counseling field (elementary, middle, and high schools). For a national sample, the researcher used random sampling to recruit participants from the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) national roster. The researcher used a filtering option on the ASCA website to only include members that were current school counselors in the field; this search yielded

approximately 20,000 members from which 2,000 were randomly selected. Additionally, the researcher also posted a link to the study on the ASCA Scene forum, which is an online medium used by school counselors to connect with other professionals and students in the field. Though not all school counselors are members of ASCA, this organization provided an accessible sample as well as ensured homogeneity due to the demographic representation of the members.

Correlational studies generally require at least 30 subjects, though using the largest sample possible is recommended for quantitative research (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Additionally, an a-priori sample size calculation for a multiple regression with seven potential predictors indicated a minimum requirement of 103 participants. Thus, potential participants were solicited from the ASCA national roster as well as via the ASCA Scene online forum, and yielded a total of 155 completed datasets.

Data Collection

Participants were asked to acknowledge receipt of an informed consent, and then completed a demographic questionnaire along with three additional assessments: (a) the School Counselor Self-Efficacy scale (SCSE; Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005), (b) the Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey-Revised scale (MCCTS-R; Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004), and the modified School Counselor Involvement in Partnerships Survey (SCIPS; Bryan, 2003; Bryan & Griffin, 2010; Bryan, Young, & Kim, 2015). All instruments, including the informed consent and the demographic questionnaire, were made available through the online survey tool, Qualtrics. Participants received invitations through email and the ASCA Scene forum, and were also provided with one reminder approximately three weeks after the initial invitation. Invitations

included information about the study, how to contact the researcher if needed, as well as a link to the actual survey.

Instrumentation

Informed consent (Appendix A). The informed consent form included a standard set of components that identified the rights of participants. Sarantakos (2005) branded these elements as identification of the following: researcher, sponsoring institution, purpose of the study, benefits of participation, and level and type of participant involvement. Potential risks, confidentiality concerns, researcher contact information, and acknowledgement that participants could withdraw at any time were also addressed (Sarantakos). Further, the researcher included a statement informing participants that of completion of the instruments would take approximately 30 minutes. Participants who completed all of the surveys were eligible to enter a drawing to win one of ten \$25 Visa gift cards.

Demographics questionnaire (Appendix B). Demographic information was collected to inform descriptive statistics and make comparisons within the sample. Using the demographic questionnaire, participants were asked to share the following demographic information: gender, race/ethnicity, number of years as a professional school counselor, school location (rural, urban, or suburban), school setting (elementary, middle, high school, or other), student caseload, whether the participant attended a CACREP-accredited graduate program, and whether the participant completed any training in family-related and/or multicultural counseling content.

School Counselor Self-Efficacy scale (SCSE; Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005) (Appendix C). The SCSE scale specifically measures the self-efficacy of school

counselors, or the belief that the participant is able to perform the expected functions of a school counselor (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005). The SCSE scale consists of 43 items using a five-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = not confident, to 5 = highly confident). Additionally, the instrument consists of five subscales: Personal and Social Development, Leadership and Assessment, Career and Academic Development, Collaboration, and Cultural Acceptance. After issuing the scale to 226 practicing school counselors, Bodenhorn and Skaggs (2005) assessed the reliability of the scale and found a coefficient alpha score of .95. The validation study also revealed that school counselors with three or more years of experience scored higher than individuals with less experience (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005).

For the present study, the researcher asked participants to complete all 43 items in this instrument. Overall scores were used in data analysis to determine whether and to what degree relationships exist among the other two formal measurements (the Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey—Revised and the School Counselor Involvement in Partnerships Survey—Revised). This instrument also served as a potential predictor of school counselor involvement in partnerships with families of color.

Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey-Revised scale (MCCTS-R; Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004) (Appendix D). Whereas the original MCCTS (Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999) measured the multicultural competence level of all counselors, the revised scale was designed specifically for school counselors by replacing some of the language to reflect the school counseling field, such as by replacing “client” with “student” (Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004). The

MCCTS-R consists of 32 items on a four-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = not confident, to 4 = extremely confident), and has three subscales: Multicultural Terminology (or the ability to define multicultural-related terms), Multicultural Knowledge (or having an understanding of other ethnic groups), and Multicultural Awareness (or awareness of one's own cultural background and how it may impact the school counseling role). Cronbach's alpha was used to assess reliability, with the subscales receiving coefficients of .97, .95, and .83, respectively. The limitations of the development of this instrument include a small sample size of 209 school counselors, as well as a need to validate the construct of multicultural counseling competence (Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004). However, this instrument has been used extensively by other researchers to examine the relationship between school counselor multicultural competence and school counselor self-efficacy (Owens, Bodenhorn, & Bryant, 2010), as well as school counselors' perceptions of multicultural counseling competence (Holcomb-McCoy, 2005). In the current study, the complete instrument served as a way to examine relationships between school counselor self-efficacy, as well as environment and involvement in school-family partnerships. Further, this instrument served as a way to measure prediction of involvement in partnerships. The mean scores of each of the three subscales was used during data analyses.

School Counselor Involvement in Partnerships Survey-Modified (SCIPS; Bryan et al., 2015) (Appendix E). The SCIPS was designed to examine school counselors' perceptions about their involvement and roles in partnerships, as well as perceptions about partnerships within their schools (Bryan, 2003; Bryan & Griffin, 2010). A Principal Factor Analysis of the revised SCIPS produced several factors related to

involvement, which include (but are not limited to) collaborative school climate, principal expectations, role expectations, self-efficacy, and attitudes about partnerships and families. Cronbach's alpha was also used to assess reliability in this instrument, with high coefficients ranging from .79 to .94. The initial version of this instrument was used to examine school counselors' perceptions in working with linguistically diverse families, and found positive correlations between principal expectations, school counselor role perceptions about partnerships, time constraints, partnership-related training, and school counselor involvement in school-family-community partnerships (Aydin et al., 2012).

A recent confirmatory factor analysis (Bryan et al., 2015) yielded one factor that measures school counselor partnership involvement (16 items with a Cronbach's alpha of .89), 30 items measuring school and school counselor factors (subscales included principal support, attitudes about partnerships, collaborative school climate, self-efficacy about partnerships, attitudes about parents and families, and commitment to advocacy, with reliability ranging from .74 to .94), as well as three single items that measured principal expectations, role perceptions, and time constraints. Overall, the instrument included 49 items.

The SCIPS was modified to include the phrase "of color" in order to better represent the focus of the study. All 16 items on the SCIPS perceived involvement subscale were used in assessing school counselor partnership involvement and to examine relationships between multicultural competence, school counselor self-efficacy, and environment. Additionally, the involvement subscale served as a target variable to indicate predictive relationships. The subscales of "collaborative school climate" and "principal support" represented the environment component of the study, and the

subscale of “self-efficacy about partnerships” served as an additional possible predictor of school counselor involvement in partnerships with families of color.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The purpose of this study was to examine the following research questions: (a) What is the relationship between school counselor self-efficacy, multicultural competence, environment, and involvement in school-family partnerships? and (b) How do practicing school counselors differ in self-efficacy, multicultural competence, and involvement in school-family partnerships based upon demographic variables, such as location and racial/ethnic identity? The researcher had the following hypotheses:

1. Participants’ scores on both the SCSE and MCCTS-R will be positively correlated with the *SCIPS-Modified* subscale score of involvement in partnerships with families of color.
2. Scores on the SCSE, MCCTS-R, and the *SCIPS-Modified* subscale scores of self-efficacy about partnerships, principal support, and collaborative climate will act as predictors for scores of school counselor involvement in partnerships with families of color.
3. There is a statistically significant difference in involvement in partnerships with families of color based upon school location (rural vs. urban vs. suburban).
4. Participants that have taken family-related coursework will have significantly higher scores on the subscale of involvement in partnerships with families of color.

5. Participants identified as racial/ethnic minorities will have significantly higher scores on the MCCTS-R and the subscale of involvement in partnerships with families of color.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was completed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), a statistical software program. First, descriptive statistics were obtained to identify patterns of normality or non-normality, especially with regards to the results from the demographic questionnaire. To determine sample distribution characteristics, the researcher reviewed mean, median, mode, standard deviation, variance, range, kurtosis, and skewness of the data. Bivariate and multivariate analyses were also conducted to review outcome measures. Pearson's r coefficients were calculated to determine whether statistically significant relationships existed between school counselor self-efficacy, multicultural competence, and involvement in school-family partnerships. Additionally, t -tests and ANOVAs were conducted to determine statistically significant differences in scores on the three formal instruments within the sample. Finally, multiple regression analyses were completed to conclude whether, and to what degree, self-efficacy, multicultural competence, and/or environment (as determined by principal support and collaborative school climate subscale scores) served as predictors in school counselor involvement in partnerships with families of color.

Informed Critique

Phases of this study were limited by sample size. In the first phase, convenience sampling was used; additionally, only school counselors in Virginia completed the SCIPS and provided feedback. Though the second phase included participants throughout the

United States, there was not equal distribution of location (rural versus urban versus suburban), race/ethnicity of participants, nor school setting (elementary versus middle versus high school). Additionally, due to the electronic invitation to complete the study, the participants were not in a controlled environment which may have increased the threat of external validity. The amount of time needed to complete the survey may have facilitated participant mortality, in that participants had to respond to 124 items in total (in addition to the demographic questionnaire). Finally, the content of the study, and in particular the use of the phrase “of color,” may have caused hesitancy to participate.

Though these challenges may have existed, chapters four and five will address how the sample is reflective of national demographics of practicing school counselors. Further, the results of this study contribute to both the school counseling and counselor education professions. As noted in chapter one, recent shifts in demographics have changed the racial composition of students attending K-12 schools. Additionally, research has addressed the benefits of not only familial involvement, but actual partnerships between schools and families. The results of this study provide information as to how prepared current school counselors are in partnering with families of color, and also the characteristics that relate and may predict actual involvement with these families. Self-efficacy and practice, in particular, seem to play unique roles in school counselor preparedness to form partnerships. Chapter four highlights the results of this study in detail.

Conclusion

Previous research has explored the benefits and importance of school-family partnerships, and addressed the increasing need of culturally competent school

counselors. Most research has addressed school-family partnerships through an ecological systems viewpoint, which is useful in conceptualizing student behavior and academic performance (Paylo, 2011). This study sought to fill the gap in addressing both school counselor characteristics and external factors that may facilitate and maintain these partnerships. Through administering the SCSE, MCCTS-R, and SCIPS, this study examined relationships between self-efficacy, multicultural competence, and environment, as well as the predictive nature of these variables toward school counselor involvement in partnerships with families of color. Additionally, demographic factors were explored to address significant differences in involvement in partnerships with these particular families.

School counselors serve a variety of roles, including partnering with students' families in order to promote successful academic and emotional outcomes. Though there are increasing numbers of racial minority students, school counselors consistently continue to be from the dominant culture. Thus, it is necessary to examine how involved current school counselors are in these partnerships, and the factors that may contribute to this involvement. The findings of this study provide insight so counselor education programs may better prepare school counselors how to create and maintain culturally responsive school-family partnerships. Additionally, the study provides a new framework in which to examine school-family partnerships so that school counselors are able to take on more active roles.

Chapter 4

Results

Chapter four describes the results from the study, including both the demographic information of the participants as well as the statistical analyses of each hypothesis discussed in chapter three. Specifically, this chapter will provide further information of how the sample was selected, the descriptive nature of the sample, and the statistical findings from the instruments that were completed by the participants. Statistical analyses were completed in this study through the use of bivariate and multivariate correlations, independent samples *t*-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and linear regression. The significance level used for most analyses in this study was $p = .05$, which is a commonly used alpha level in both educational and psychological research (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). However, deviations from this significance level are clearly noted.

Description of the Study

Sampling

This study examined the relationship between multicultural competence, self-efficacy, environment, and school counselor involvement in partnerships with families of color. Thus, the researcher recruited subjects that were currently in the school counseling profession. In the first phase of the study, the researcher contacted local and state school counselors to test reliability and provide feedback for amending the language of the School Counselor Involvement in Partnerships Survey (SCIPS; Bryan and Griffin, 2010). Specifically, the phrase “of color” was added to the items to assess involvement in partnerships with families of color, as no other instruments measured partnership with this particular population. Data collection began in August 2015 and continued for six

weeks. In total, over 500 school counselors were contacted during this phase, and yielded 17 complete responses.

During the second phase of the study, the researcher randomly selected 2000 current school counselors to contact through email from the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) national roster, which listed approximately 20,724 members after filtering the extended search options to include only members with the “Job/Position” of school counselor. This was to ensure that only practicing school counselors were contacted for the study. Additionally, the researcher posted a message on the ASCA Scene forum, an online medium for ASCA members, as a recruitment tool. Invitations to participate in the study begin in October 2015 and remained active for two months (with a reminder email and post on ASCA Scene sent three weeks after the initial invitation). Two hundred twenty-four school counselors began the survey, one participant chose not to consent to complete the study, and 17 participants were not current school counselors and, thus, were not permitted to complete the surveys. Out of the remaining 203 school counselors, the researcher obtained 155 complete datasets that could be used for analyses—yielding approximately an eight percent response rate.

Instrumentation

The study required participants to provide informed consent, complete a demographic questionnaire, and then to respond to three formal assessments. All information was collected through Qualtrics, an online survey tool. The three formal assessments used in this study included: (a) the School Counselor Self-Efficacy scale (SCSE; Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005), (b) the Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey-Revised (MCCTS-R; Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004), and (c) a

modified version of the School Counselor Involvement in Partnerships Survey (SCIPS-*Modified*; Bryan, Young, & Kim, 2015). Since no other formal instrument measured school counselor involvement specifically with families of color, the researcher completed a pilot study to obtain feedback and reliability of this instrument when including the phrase “of color” using the 71 items from Bryan and Griffin’s (2010) principal factor analysis of the instrument. Seventeen practicing school counselors provided feedback, and an inter-item reliability analysis of all 71 items indicated a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .96. Bryan and Griffin (2010) and Bryan et al. (2015) found an inter-item reliability coefficient for the 16 items measuring overall perceived involvement of .89; the present pilot study found a reliability coefficient of .92. For the items measuring collaborative school climate, both Bryan and Griffin (2010) and the pilot study indicated a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .89. For the principal support subscale, Bryan and Griffin (2010) found a reliability coefficient of .94, whereas the pilot study found a reliability coefficient of .95. Finally, regarding the self-efficacy about partnerships subscale, Bryan and Griffin (2010) found a reliability coefficient of .84, whereas the pilot study found a coefficient of .85. Thus, a comparison of the results suggests that the reliability of the instrument was not altered due to the addition of the phrase “of color.”

A review of the open-ended responses about participants’ concerns or questions with the inclusion of this phrase indicated that one school counselor would prefer to use the term “multicultural population or group.” However, previous literature suggests that using terms such as “multicultural” can be used to include oppressed cultures in general, such as sexual minorities and other marginalized voices (Kellner, 2011). Since this study

sought to examine school counselor involvement with families of color in particular, the researcher determined that “multicultural” would be too inclusive to use.

Demographic Information

Total Sample

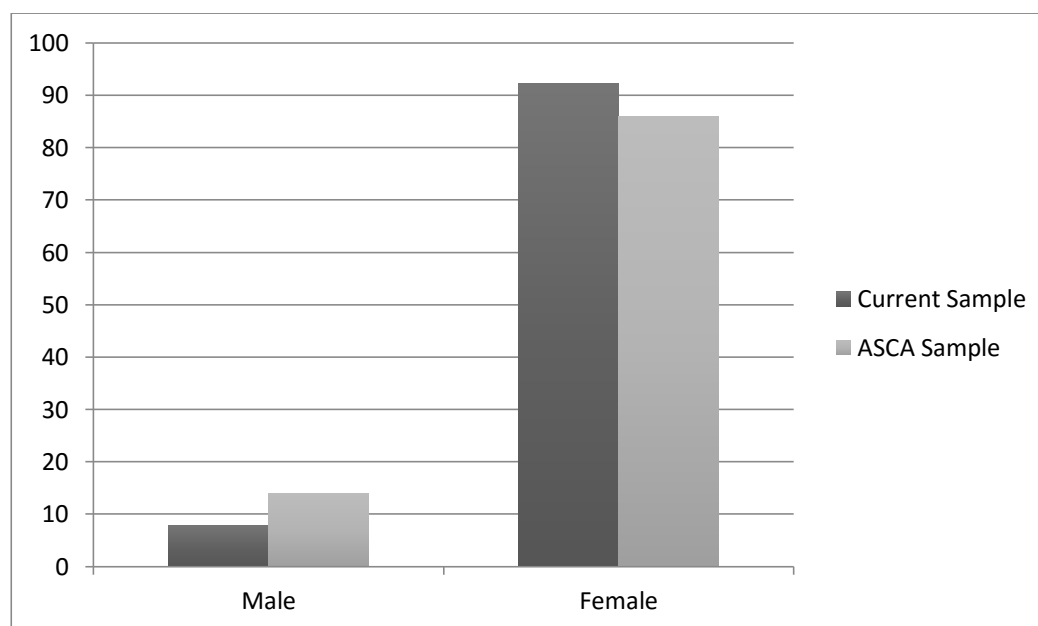
Participants completed a demographic questionnaire for this study, which was used to make comparisons within the sample, as well as comparisons to school counselors nationwide. Demographic information requested in the questionnaire included: gender, racial/ethnic background, years of school counseling experience, and information related to the participants’ respective schools such as type (e.g., public or private), setting (e.g., elementary or high school), location (e.g., rural or urban), and student caseload. Additionally, participants were asked to describe their levels of training by indicating whether they took graduate coursework in family-related content, multicultural counseling, and whether they attended a CACREP-accredited institution.

Years of Experience and Gender

Participants were asked to indicate years of school counseling experience by checking one of the following categories: (a) 0-5, (b) 6-10, (c) 11-15, (d), 16-20, or (e) over 20. Fifty-two participants (33.5%) had 0-5 years of experience, 52 participants (33.5%) had 6-10 years, 25 participants (16.1%) had 11-15 years, 17 (11%) had 16-20 years, and 9 (5.8%) indicated having over 20 years of experience. Thus, the majority of participants had between 0-10 years of school counseling experience. As school counselor data is not commonly collected (Scarborough & Culbreth, 2008), the researcher reviewed previous studies with larger sample sizes that best represent the population of the present study’s sample. Aydin (2011) surveyed 916 school counselors

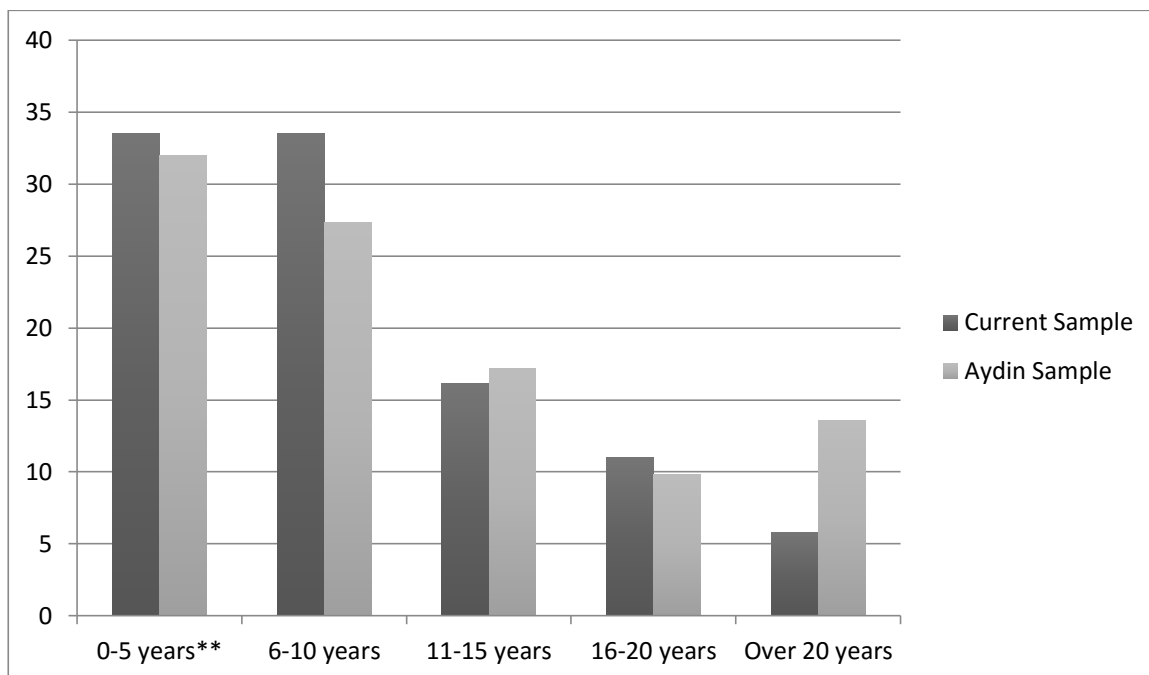
from the ASCA membership database, and found that 293 participants (32%) had 1-5 years of experience, 250 (27.3%) had 6-10 years, 158 (17.2%) had 11-15 years, 90 (9.8%) had 16-20 years, and 125 (13.6%) had over 20 years of school counseling experience. Thus, both the present study's sample and Aydin's (2011) sample indicate more representation from school counselors with 0-10 years of experience. Regarding gender, 143 participants in the present study (92.3%) identified as female, whereas twelve participants (7.7%) identified as male. ASCA reports that 14% of its current members are male, and that 86% are female (Whitaker, 2015). Thus, in terms of gender, this sample is similar to the population of school counselors that are current members of ASCA nationwide, in that the majority of participants identified as female. The demographic questionnaire in this study did not provide an option to allow participants of the study to respond as transgender. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 illustrates gender and years of experience data, respectively.

*Figure 4.1. Gender: Current Sample and ASCA Sample**



Note. *Whitaker (2015)

Figure 4.2. Years of Experience: Current Sample and Aydin Sample*



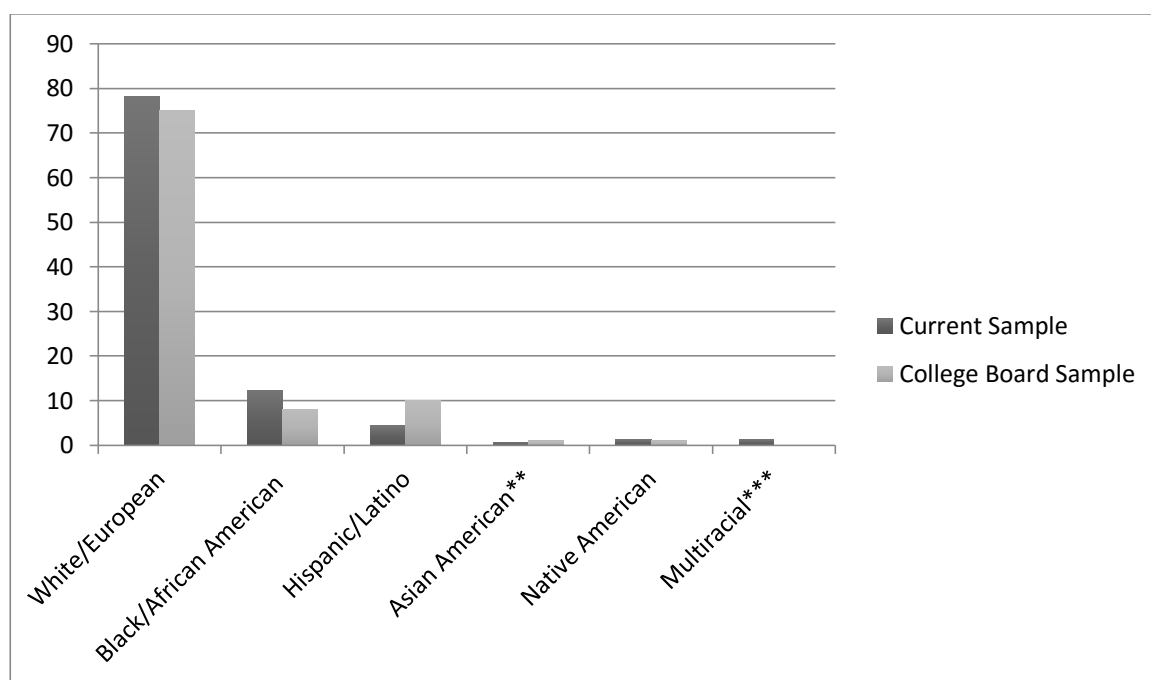
Notes. * $N = 916$. **Aydin (2011) study used a range of 1-5 years.

Race and Ethnicity

In this sample, the majority of participants identified as White/European ($n = 121$, 78.1%). The second largest racial/ethnic background identified in this study was Black/African American ($n = 19$, 12.3%). Seven participants (4.5%) identified as Hispanic/Latino, three (1.9%) identified as Asian American/Pacific Islander, and one participant (.6%) identified as Other. An equal number of participants identified as Native American ($n = 2$, 1.3%) and Multiracial ($n = 2$, 1.3%). Race/ethnicity information on current ASCA members could not be obtained, nor were racial/ethnicity subgroups identified in Aydin's (2011) study. However, in 2011, the College Board surveyed 5,308 middle and high school counselors (the largest national study of school counselors to date), and found that 75% of the participants identified as White, 10% identified as Hispanic/Latino, eight percent identified as Black/African American, one percent equally

identified as Asian American or American Indian, and less than one percent identified as Pacific Islander. Thus, even though the College Board (2011) did not include elementary school counselors, the racial/ethnic demographic data in this data seem to be representative of the race and ethnicity nationwide, in that White school counselors make up approximately three-fourths of the population. Figure 4.3 illustrates the comparative data.

Figure 4.3. Race/Ethnicity: Current Sample and College Board Sample*



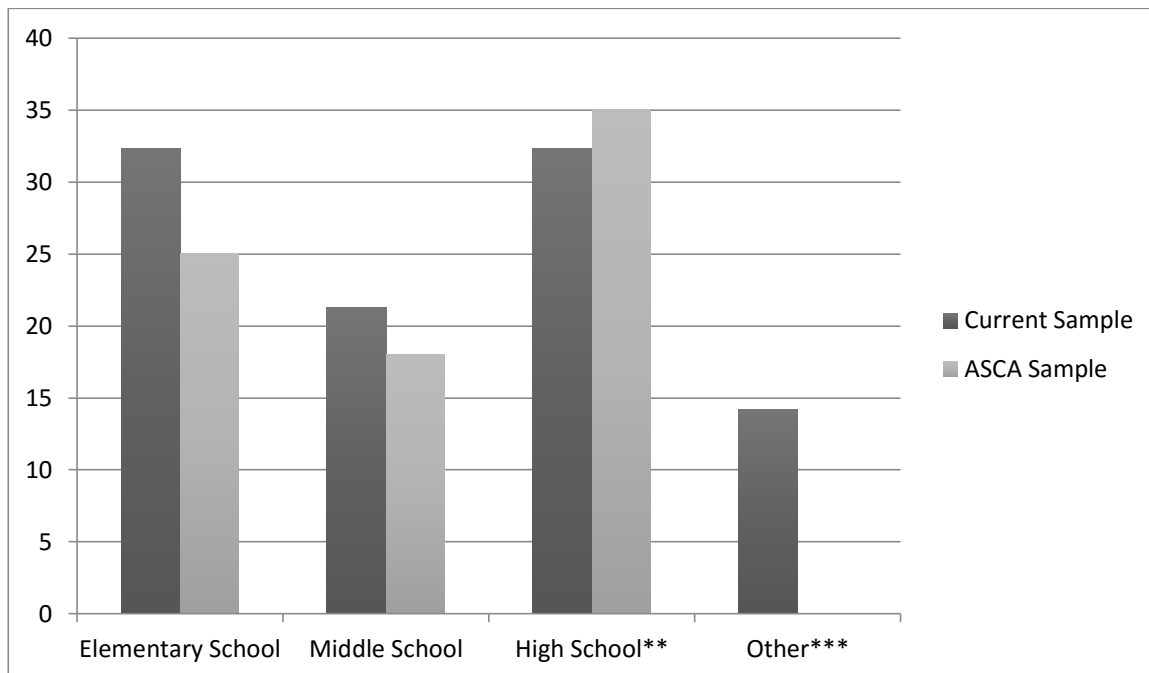
Notes. *College Board (2011). **Reported differently in College Board. ***Not reported in College Board.

School Information

The following demographic data were collected regarding school information: setting, type of school, location, and student caseload numbers. An equal number of participants worked in the elementary setting ($n = 50$, 32.3%) and the high school setting ($n = 50$, 32.3%). Thirty-three participants (21.3%) worked in middle schools, and 22

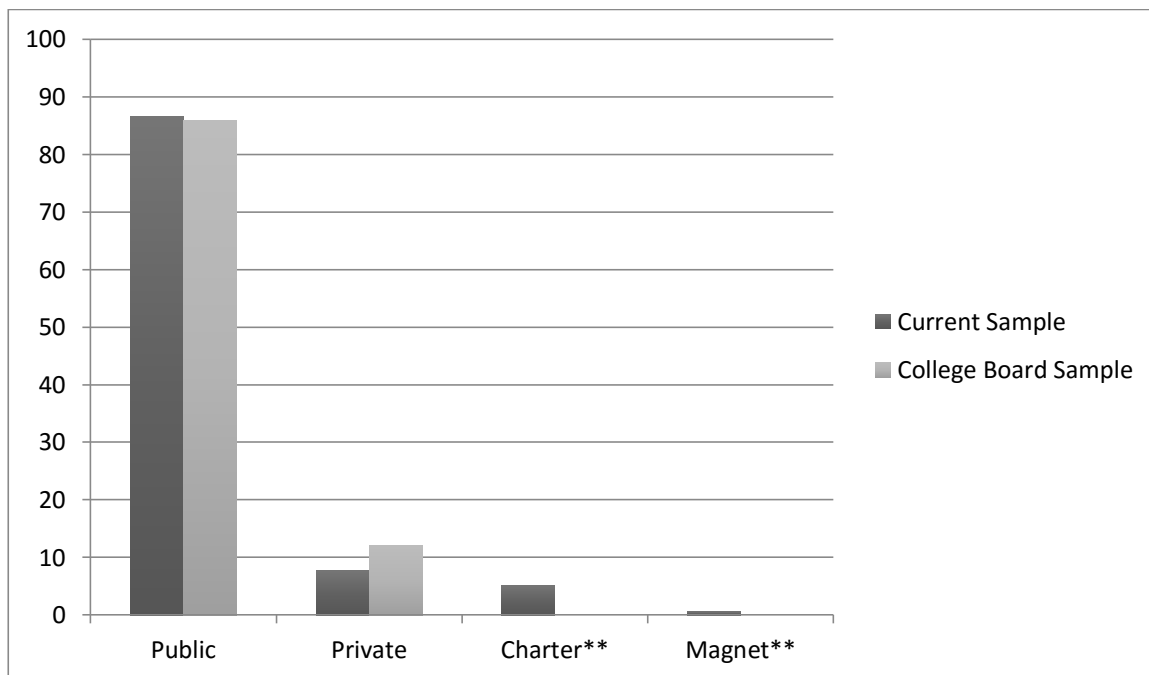
worked in “other” settings (14.2%). Some of the settings the participants identified as “other” included schools that combined elementary and middle school, middle and high school, and even K-12. One participant identified the setting as a “career and technology center.” ASCA (Whitaker, 2015) reports that 25% of its current members ($n = 4496$) identify as elementary school counselors, 18% ($n = 3365$) identify as middle school counselors, and 35% ($n = 6162$) identify as secondary school counselors. Thus, similarity exists between the sample and population in that middle school counselors represented the lowest number of participants. Figure 4.4 illustrates comparative data of school setting. Regarding types of schools, the majority of participants in the present study worked in public schools ($n = 134$, 86.5%), whereas 12 worked in private schools (7.7%), eight worked in charter schools (5.2%), and one participant worked in a magnet school (.6%). The College Board (2011) indicated that 86% of school counselors work in public schools, versus 12% working in private schools. Thus, in terms of school types, the sample is similar to school counselors nationwide. Figure 4.5 illustrates comparative data about school type.

Figure 4.4. School Setting: Current Sample and ASCA Sample*



Notes. *Whitaker (2015). **Reported as “Secondary Schools” by ASCA. ***Not reported by ASCA.

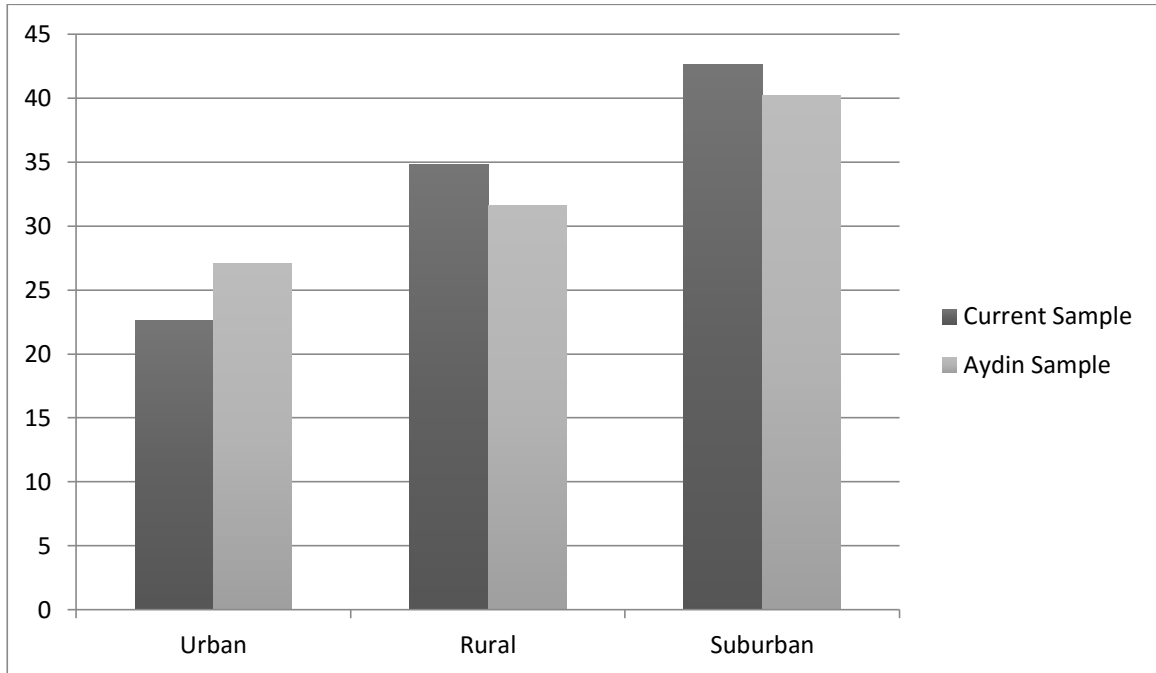
Figure 4.5. Type of School: Current Sample and College Board Sample*



Notes. *College Board (2011). **Not reported by College Board.

School location information was also collected. The majority of participants worked in suburban school districts ($n = 66$, 42.6%), 54 worked in rural school locations (34.8%), and 35 worked in urban school locations (22.6%). Aydin (2011) also reported that the majority of participants worked in suburban schools ($n = 368$, 40.2%), whereas 289 (31.6%) worked in rural communities, and 248 (27.1%) worked in urban schools. Figure 4.6 illustrates comparative data between the present study's sample and Aydin's (2011) sample. Finally, student caseload ranges were also collected. The majority of participants had caseloads of 251-500 students ($n = 75$, 48.4%), and an equal number of participants had caseloads of 0-250 ($n = 40$, 25.8%) and over 500 students ($n = 40$, 25.8%). The College Board (2011) found that 25% of school counselors had caseloads between 201-300 students, and 26% had caseloads between 301-400 students, and 17% had caseloads between 401-500 students. Hence, the sample is representative in that the majority of the population of school counselors have caseloads within the 201-500 range. Figure 4.7 illustrates the present study's caseload percentages, whereas Figure 4.8 demonstrates the College Board's (2011) caseload percentages.

Figure 4.6. School Location: Current Sample and Aydin Sample*



Note. *N = 916

Figure 4.7. Student Caseload Numbers: Current Sample

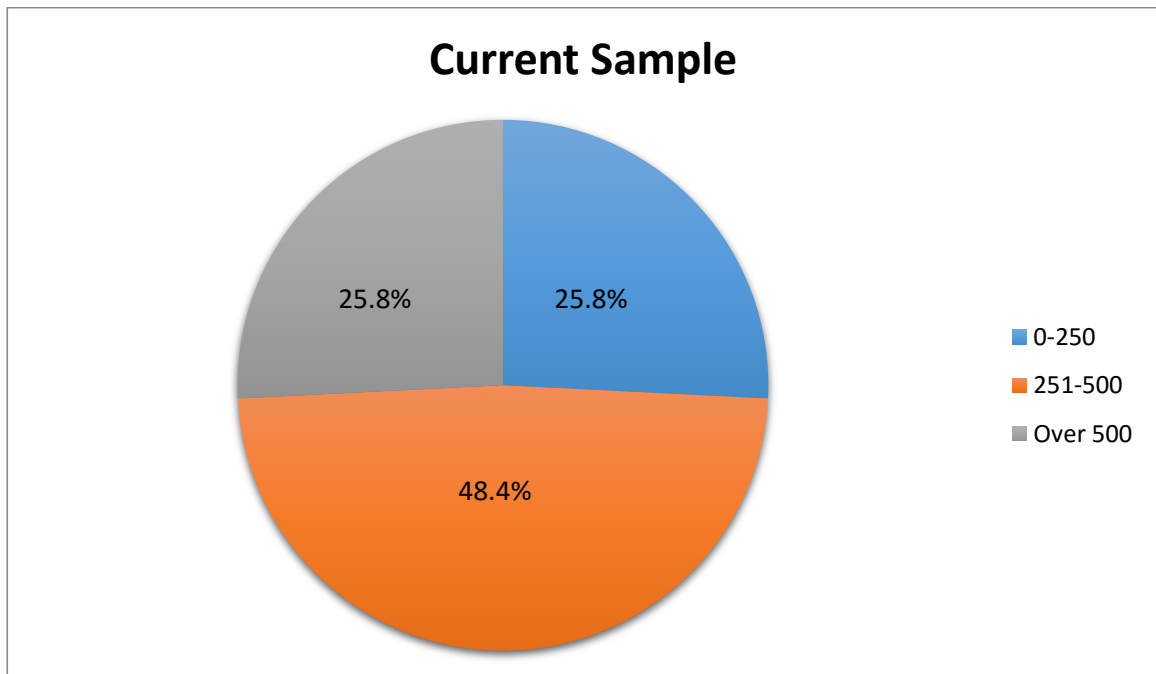
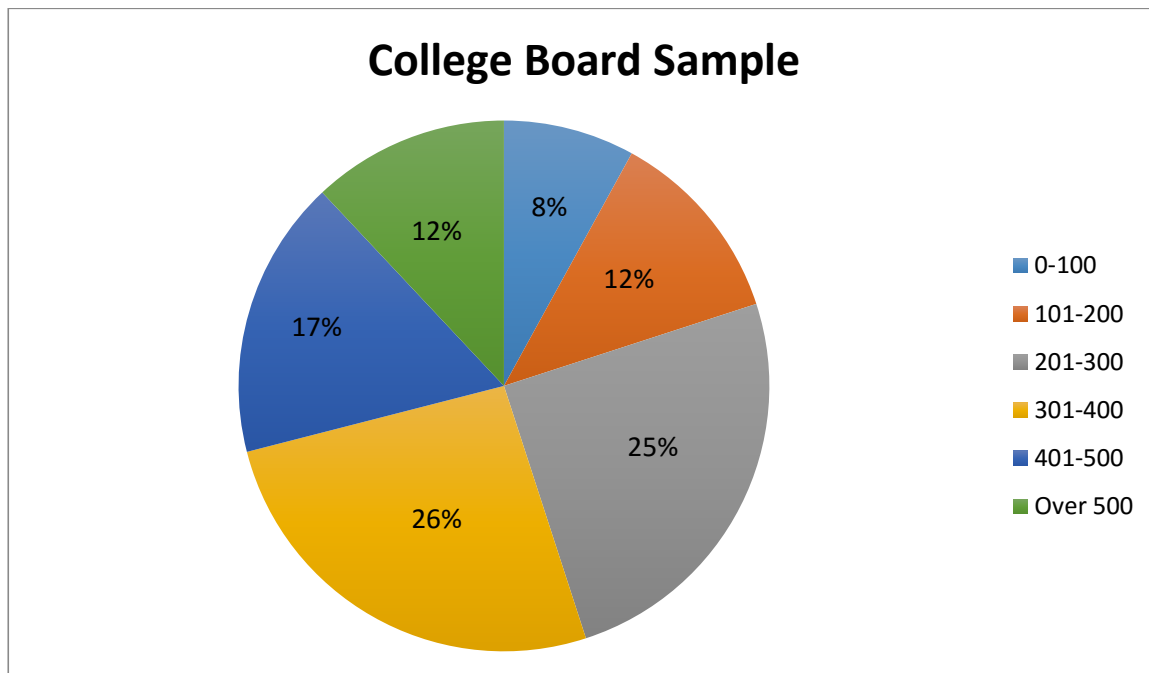


Figure 4.8. Student Caseload Numbers: College Board Sample*



Note. College Board (2011)

Previous Training

The researcher sought to examine previous graduate coursework participants received in both family-related content and multicultural counseling. One-hundred and eleven participants (71.6%) took a three-credit hour graduate course that featured family content, and 26 did not receive any coursework or training in family content (16.8%). The remaining participants attended workshops with either family or partnership-related content ($n = 18$, 11.6%). Though not a direct comparison, Bryan and Griffin (2010) found that 39.6% of the 217 school counselors they surveyed across the United States did not receive any partnership-related training. Regarding multicultural counseling, 142 participants (91.6%) took a three-credit hour graduate course with this content, whereas eight did not receive any coursework or training in multicultural counseling (5.2%). Five participants attended workshops on multicultural counseling (3.2%). Comparable data on

multicultural counseling coursework was not found. Finally, the majority of participants attended CACREP-accredited institutions ($n = 118$, 76.1%), 21 participants (13.5%) did not, and 16 were not sure (10.3%). Aydin (2011) found that 58.1% ($n = 532$) of school counselors attended CACREP-accredited institutions. Aydin did not provide “did not attend” or “not sure” as options for participants.

Instrument Descriptive Statistics

Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey-Revised (MCCTS-R)

The MCCTS-R was created by Holcomb-McCoy and Day-Vines (2004) and consists of 32 items to measure multicultural competency of school counselors. The three subscales used in this instrument include: multicultural terminology, multicultural knowledge, and multicultural awareness. Participants completed a Likert scale for each item, ranging from 1 (not competent or able to perform at this time) to 4 (extremely competent or able to perform at a high level). Thus, the score range for each subscale was from 1 to 4.

The range of scores in this sample of 155 participants for multicultural terminology was 2 to 4 with a mean of 3.46 and a standard deviation of .55. Sample responses for multicultural knowledge ranged from 1.11 to 4 with a mean of 2.60 and a standard deviation of .61. Finally, multicultural awareness subscale scores indicated a range from 1.78 to 4 with a mean of 3.37 and a standard deviation of .47. Thus, participants appeared to score the highest with multicultural terminology, and the lowest in multicultural knowledge. Holcomb-McCoy (2005) surveyed 209 school counselors using the MCCTS-R and found similar results in that the school counselors in that study also scored lowest in multicultural knowledge ($M = 2.46$, $SD = .81$) and the highest in

multicultural terminology ($M = 3.41$, $SD = .62$). Table 4.1 illustrates the results from both studies.

Table 4.1

Comparing the Means and Standard Deviations for Factors of the MCCTS-R Between the Present Study and Holcomb-McCoy (2005)

	Factors					
	Multicultural Knowledge		Multicultural Awareness		Multicultural Terminology	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Studies						
Present*	2.60	.61	3.37	.47	3.46	.55
2005**	2.46	.81	3.37	.62	3.41	.62

Note. * $N = 155$; ** $N = 209$

School Counselor Self-Efficacy (SCSE) Scale

The SCSE scale was constructed by Bodenhorn and Skaggs (2005) and includes 43 items that measures school counselors' self-efficacy to complete expected tasks. The instrument measures the following five factors: Personal and Social Development, Leadership and Assessment, Career and Academic Development, Collaboration, and Cultural Acceptance. Participants were asked to rate each item on a Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not confident) to 5 (highly confident). Total scores were used in calculation with a potential range of scores from 43 to 215.

The range of scores in this sample was from 117 to 215 with a mean of 178.73 and a standard deviation of 20.17. After surveying 226 practicing school counselors, Bodenhorn and Skaggs (2005) found similar mean scores on the SCSE. For example,

school counselors that worked in suburban school settings ($n = 105$) had mean SCSE scores of 179.6 and a standard deviation of 21.1. Further comparisons are illustrated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

Comparing the Means and Standard Deviations of SCSE Scores Between the Present Study and Bodenhorn & Skaggs (2005)

<i>Studies</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Present	155	178.73	20.17
2005*			
Urban	43	184	20.8
Suburban	105	179.6	21.1
Rural	54	181.5	18.1
Combination or other	18	178.6	15.3

Note. * $n = 220$ (6 surveys did not provide this demographic data)

School Counselor Involvement in Partnerships Survey (SCIPS)

The SCIPS was originally constructed by Bryan (2003) to examine school counselors' perceptions of involvement in partnerships, as well as other related factors of this involvement. A recent confirmatory factor analysis of this instrument (Bryan et al., 2015) indicated 16 items that measure involvement in school-family-community partnerships, with participants able to respond to items on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very frequently). Additionally, the instrument consisted of 30 items measuring school counselor and school factors related to involvement; participants were able to respond to items on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4

(strongly agree). Three additional items measured school and school counselor variables, with scores once again ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Overall, the revised instrument (and the version used for the present study) consisted of 49 items and, as previously noted, the phrase “of color” were added to items in this study.

Though the 155 participants in this study completed the *SCIPS-Modified* in its entirety, the researcher only included four subscales in the analyses (Involvement in School-Family-Community Partnerships, Principal Support, Collaborative School Climate, and Self-Efficacy about Partnerships). For the perceived involvement subscale, scores ranged from 1 to 5 with a mean of 2.57 and a standard deviation of .84. Responses on the principal support scale ranged from 1.43 to 4 with a mean of 3.37 and a standard deviation of .57. Participants’ scores on the collaborative school climate subscale ranged from 1.8 to 4 with a mean of 3.19 and a standard deviation of .52. Finally, the sample scores on the self-efficacy about partnerships subscale ranged from 1.6 to 4 with a mean of 3.15 and a standard deviation of .47. The results indicated that of school and school counselor related factors on involvement, participants scored the highest on the principal support subscale.

At the time of this study, no other study had used the revised version of the *SCIPS* (which included 49 items and the addition of the phrase “of color”). However, Aydin, Bryan, and Duys (2012) used the 2010 version of this instrument (which included 15 demographic questions, 17 items measuring involvement, and 52 items measuring school and school counselor factors) to 95 school counselors, and included the phrase “linguistically diverse” to assess school counselors’ involvement in partnerships with linguistically diverse families. The results indicated a mean score of 2.87, compared to

this sample's mean score in the involvement subscale 2.57. Though the results in the present study indicated a modestly lower average, it should be considered that Aydin et al.'s study (2012) consisted of one additional item in this subscale, as well as a different sample (in that Aydin's study only focused on Midwestern school counselors). Scores on the other subscales were not discussed in Aydin's study.

Statistical Analyses of Research Questions and Hypotheses

The purpose of this study was to examine the following questions: (a) What is the relationship between school counselor self-efficacy, multicultural competence, environment, and involvement in school-family partnerships? and (b) How do practicing school counselors differ in self-efficacy, multicultural competence, and involvement in school-family partnerships based upon demographic variables, such as location and racial/ethnic identity? Additionally, the following hypotheses directed the study:

1. Participants' scores on both the SCSE and MCCTS-R will be positively correlated with the *SCIPS-Modified* subscale score of involvement in partnerships with families of color.
2. Scores on the SCSE, MCCTS-R, and the *SCIPS-Modified* subscale scores of self-efficacy about partnerships, principal support, and collaborative school climate will act as predictors for scores of school counselor involvement in partnerships with families of color.
3. There is a statistically significant difference in involvement in partnerships with families of color based upon school location (rural vs. urban vs. suburban).

4. Participants that have taken family-related coursework will have significantly higher scores on the subscale of involvement in partnerships with families of color.
5. Participants identified as racial/ethnic minorities will have significantly higher scores on the MCCTS-R and the subscale of involvement in partnerships with families of color.

Hypothesis One

The first hypothesis for this study conjectured that school counselors' scores on both the SCSE and MCCTS-R would be positively correlated with the involvement in partnerships subscale score from the *SCIPS-Modified*. To examine this hypothesis, a Pearson product moment correlation was computed in SPSS. The results yielded a statistically significant correlation between the involvement subscale and SCSE, $r(153) = .452, p < .01$. Additionally, the results generated statistically significant correlations between the involvement subscale and the following three subscales that structure the MCCTS-R: multicultural terminology ($r = .269, p < .01$), multicultural knowledge ($r = .552, p < .01$), and multicultural awareness ($r = .277, p < .01$). The Bonferroni correction was used to limit the risk of Type I error; therefore, a corrected alpha of .01 was used to determine significance.

Hypothesis Two

The second hypothesis for this study speculated that school counselors' scores on the SCSE, MCCTS-R, and the *SCIPS-Modified* subscale scores of self-efficacy about partnerships, principal support, and collaborative school climate would predict involvement in partnerships with families of color scores. A regression analysis using the

enter method was used to determine which, if any, of the predictors were statistically significant. The predictors that were not significant were removed from the model, and a regression analysis using the enter method was used again to determine a model for predicting involvement scores. The results of both methods partially supported the hypothesis in that multicultural knowledge and self-efficacy about partnerships served as significant predictors, whereas SCSE, principal support, multicultural terminology and awareness, and collaborative school climate did not.

The regression model using the enter method yielded a significant model, $F(7,147) = 21.685, p < .000$ with a multiple $R = .713$, indicating that the model accounted for 50.8% of the variance in self-efficacy (as indicated by SCSE and the self-efficacy about partnership scores), multicultural competence (as indicated by the MCCTS-R subscale scores), and environment (as indicated by the principal support and collaborative school climate subscale scores) for involvement in partnerships. However, an analysis of the coefficients of the predictors indicated that the only significant predictors were self-efficacy about partnerships, $t(147) = 5.345, p < .001$, and the multicultural knowledge subscale score, $t(147) = 5.332, p < .001$. Tests were completed to check for collinearity and outliers, and no problems were detected. Thus, the SCSE, subscale scores of multicultural terminology and awareness, and the SCIPS subscale scores of principal support and collaborative school climate were removed from the model. Model results are displayed in Table 4.3. The final equation for the model including only the two significant predictor variables was $\hat{Y} = .800$ (self-efficacy about partnerships) + $.495$ (multicultural knowledge) + -1.235 . The multiple R for this model is $.681$, which means that it accounts for 46.4% of the shared variance in self-efficacy about

multicultural knowledge scores for involvement in partnerships. None of the diagnostics indicated problems with this analysis.

Table 4.3

Regression Analysis: Predictors for Involvement in Partnerships with Families of Color

Model	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> Square	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
1	.713 ^a	.508	21.685	<.001
2	.681 ^b	.464	65.728	<.001

Note. Enter method regression analysis, ^aPredictors: Self-Efficacy About Partnerships, Principal Support, Multicultural Awareness, Multicultural Terminology, Multicultural Knowledge, School Counselor Self-Efficacy, and Collaborative School Climate;

^bPredictors: Self-Efficacy About Partnerships and Multicultural Knowledge Scores

Hypothesis Three

The third hypothesis was that there would be a statistically significant difference in the level of involvement in partnerships with families of color based upon the location of the schools in which the counselors worked. Location in this study was designated into three categories: urban, rural, and suburban. The mean involvement scores were 2.88 for those working in urban schools, 2.56 for those working in rural schools, and 2.42 for those working in suburban schools. In order to test whether there was statistical significance in these differences, a one-factor between-subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) was computed, resulting in a significant effect for school location: $F(2, 152) = 5.912, p = .033$. Due to unequal sample sizes and variances, a Games-Howell post hoc test was completed and indicated that participants in urban schools received statistically higher involvement scores than participants working in suburban schools. The effect size (or Cohen's *d*) was computed to illustrate the strength of the significant mean difference (Cohen, 1988). As effect sizes of .2, .5, and .8 are used as indicators of small, medium, or

large differences, respectively, the results indicate a medium effect size for the difference of partnership scores between urban and suburban school counselors ($d = .59$); therefore, these results hold practical and statistical significance and the hypothesis was supported. Table 4.4 illustrates the differences in involvement scores as related to school location.

Table 4.4

Analysis of Variance for School Location and Involvement Scores

Variables (df = 2, 152)	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>d</i>
Urban	35	2.88	.87		
Rural	54	2.56	.97		
Suburban	66	2.42	.68		
Total	155	2.57	.84	5.91*	.59

Note. * $p < .05$

Hypothesis Four

The fourth hypothesis for this study speculated that participants who had taken a three-credit hour graduate course in family-related content would have significantly higher scores on the involvement in partnerships subscale. To test this hypothesis, an independent samples *t*-test using involvement as the dependent variable and family coursework as the independent variable was computed. This test indicated that the difference in involvement scores between participants who had taken family coursework ($n = 111$, $M = 2.63$, $SD = .87$) and participants who have not taken family coursework ($n = 44$, $M = 2.42$, $SD = .78$) were not statistically significant, $t(153) = 1.45$, $p = .149$. Thus, the hypothesis was not supported by the data.

Hypothesis Five

The fifth and final hypothesis conjectured that school counselors of color would have significantly higher scores on the MCCTS-R than European/White school counselors, and would have scores significantly higher on the SCIPS subscale on involvement in partnerships with families of color. In order to test the first component of this hypothesis, a one-way ANOVA was computed to examine three sets of mean scores (multicultural terminology, multicultural knowledge, and multicultural awareness) between two samples (White school counselors and school counselors of color). This portion of the hypothesis was not supported by the results, which yielded no significant differences for the subscales of MCCTS-R. Table 4.5 below illustrates these results.

Table 4.5

One-Way ANOVA of MCCTS-R Subscale Scores by Race/Ethnicity

MCCTS-R Subscales	<i>N</i>	White	Of Color	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Multicultural Terminology	155	121	34	.125	.724
Multicultural Knowledge	155	121	34	2.781	.097
Multicultural Awareness	155	121	34	.168	.683

Note. $p = .05$

The second portion of this hypothesis speculated that involvement in partnerships with families of color scores will be significantly higher for school counselors of color compared to White school counselors. An independent samples *t*-test showed that the difference in involvement scores between school counselors of color ($n = 34$, $M = 2.94$, $SD = .95$) and White school counselors ($n = 121$, $M = 2.47$, $SD = .79$) were statistically significant, $t(153) = 2.98$, $p = .003$, $d = .54$. The Cohen's *d* value of .54 illustrates a

medium effect size for the difference of partnership scores between White school counselors and school counselors of color. Thus, the latter portion of the hypothesis was supported by the data.

Additional Findings

Additional testing was completed to further explore the aforementioned findings. Hypothesis two indicated that involvement in partnerships with families of color had two significant predictors: self-efficacy about partnerships and multicultural knowledge. Yet, school counselor self-efficacy in general (as measured by SCSE) was not found to be a significant predictor. Thus, a Pearson product moment correlation was computed to measure the statistical relationship between self-efficacy about partnerships and SCSE. For the 155 school counselors in the study, the scores on the self-efficacy about partnerships subscale ($M = 3.15$, $SD = .47$) and the SCSE scale ($M = 178.73$, $SD = 20.17$) were significantly and positively correlated, $r(153) = .419$, $p < .01$. Moreover, descriptive statistics were completed for the self-efficacy about partnerships and multicultural knowledge subscales to observe potential trends in scores for White school counselors and school of counselors of color, as well as for school counselors working in urban, rural, and suburban settings. The results of these descriptive statistics are illustrated in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

Comparing the Means and Standard Deviations of Self-Efficacy about Partnerships and Multicultural Knowledge Subscales

	Self-Efficacy About Partnerships			Multicultural Knowledge		
	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>						
White	121	3.11	.44	121	2.56	.59
Of Color	34	3.30	.53	34	2.75	.65
<i>School Location</i>						
Urban	35	3.15	.49	35	2.69	.61
Rural	54	3.14	.55	54	2.60	.62
Suburban	66	3.15	.39	66	2.56	.61

As the means of the self-efficacy about partnerships subscale scores were too similar across groups, an independent samples *t*-test was computed to test any significant differences in scores between White school counselors and school counselors of color. The results indicated a significant difference in self-efficacy about partnerships scores between these two groups, $t(153) = 2.16, p = .032, d = .39$. A one-factor between-subjects ANOVA was computed to test potential significant differences in self-efficacy about partnerships subscale scores based upon school location and no significance was found, $F(2, 152) = 0, p = 1$. A previous calculation indicated no significant difference in multicultural knowledge scores between White school counselors and school counselors of color, $F(1, 153) = 2.78, p = .097$; further, results of an ANOVA indicated that there was also no significant difference in multicultural knowledge scores based upon school location, $F(2, 152) = .53, p = .59$.

In hypothesis three, a statistically significant difference between involvement in partnerships with families of color was found between school counselors that worked in urban schools compared to school counselors that worked in suburban schools. Descriptive statistics were completed to examine race or ethnicity, as well as years of

experience of school counselors, at all three school locations (urban, rural, and suburban). Results indicated that school counselors of color made up 40% of the respondents in urban schools ($n = 14$) compared to 18.2% school counselors of color in suburban schools ($n = 12$). A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between race and school location, resulting in a significant relationship, $\chi^2 (2, N = 155) = 8.71, p < .05$. Additionally, 42.9% ($n = 15$) of school counselors in urban schools have 0-5 years of experience, compared to 30.3% ($n = 20$) with the same years of experience in suburban schools. Again, a chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between years of experience and school location, and no significant relationship was found, $\chi^2 (8, N = 155) = 9.35, NS$. Table 4.7 further illustrates these demographics as it relates to hypothesis three.

Table 4.7

Descriptive Statistics of School Counselors Based on School Location

<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
<u>Urban</u>		
White	21	60
Of Color	14	40
<u>Rural</u>		
White	46	85.2
Of Color	8	14.8
<u>Suburban</u>		
White	54	81.8
Of Color	12	18.2

<i>Years of Experience</i>		
<u>Urban</u>		
0-5	15	42.9
6-10	12	34.3
11-15	5	14.3
16-20	0	0
Over 20	3	8.6
<u>Rural</u>		
0-5	17	31.5
6-10	19	35.2
11-15	10	18.5
16-20	5	9.3
Over 20	3	5.6
<u>Suburban</u>		
0-5	20	30.3
6-10	21	31.8
11-15	10	15.2
16-20	12	18.2
Over 20	3	4.5

Finally, hypotheses four yielded no statistical significance for school counselors who had received previous training in family-related graduate coursework as it relates to involvement in partnerships with families of color. Previous training as it relates to taking

graduate-level coursework in multicultural counseling was also obtained through the demographic questionnaire. An independent samples *t*-test using involvement as the dependent variable and multicultural counseling coursework as the independent variable was computed. This test indicated that the difference in involvement scores between participants who had taken multicultural counseling coursework ($n = 142$, $M = 2.57$, $SD = .84$) and participants who have not taken multicultural counseling coursework ($n = 13$, $M = 2.60$, $SD = .91$) were also not statistically significant, $t(153) = -.108$, $p = .914$.

Summary

This study examined the relationships between school counselor self-efficacy, multicultural competence, environment, and involvement in partnerships with families of color in a national sample of practicing school counselors. Using the concept of triadic reciprocal determinism as a cornerstone, this study explored how personal and environmental factors are associated with the behavior of forming partnerships with families of color. The sample for this study was similar to the current population of school counseling members in ASCA, in that proportions of gender and race or ethnicity were similar. The mean scores on the MCCTS-R subscales for participants of this study were: 3.46 (multicultural terminology), 2.60 (multicultural knowledge), and 3.37 (multicultural awareness). The mean score on the SCSE scale was 178.73, and the mean scores for the SCIPS-R subscales were as follows: involvement ($M = 2.57$), principal support ($M = 3.37$), collaborative school climate ($M = 3.19$), and self-efficacy about partnerships ($M = 3.15$).

The data from this study supported hypothesis one, partially supported hypotheses two, three, and five, and did not support hypotheses four. Hypothesis one indicated

significantly statistical positive correlations between involvement in partnerships with families of color, and both SCSE and the subscales on the MCCTS-R. Thus, the more involved school counselors are in these particular partnerships, the higher levels of self-efficacy and multicultural competence they may have. Hypothesis two conjectured seven potential predictors for involvement; yet, a multiple regression analysis indicated only two significant predictors: self-efficacy about partnerships and multicultural knowledge. Hypothesis three inferred that there would be statistically significant differences in involvement score between urban, rural, and suburban school counselors; this hypothesis was supported in that a one-way ANOVA indicated significant differences of involvement between school counselors working in urban and suburban schools. Hypothesis four speculated that school counselors who have received graduate coursework in family content would have significantly higher scores on involvement compared to school counselors who have not taken any courses; yet, no statistically significant differences was found based on this factor. Finally, hypothesis five proposed that school counselors of color would score higher on the MCCTS-R and involvement with families of color subscale compared to White school counselors. Whereas school counselors of color scored significantly higher on the involvement subscale, no statistically significant differences were found on the MCCTS-R.

This study sought to examine the relationships between personal, environmental, and behavioral factors of practicing school counselors as it relates to involvement in partnerships with families of color. The results of this study illustrate that personal factors such as self-efficacy about partnerships and multicultural knowledge serve as significant predictors of involvement in partnerships with these specialized families. Additionally,

environment (as indicated by school location) seems to have a significant difference on levels of involvement. Finally, graduate coursework such as multicultural or family counseling may not influence school counselor behavior related to forming partnerships with families of color, yet self-efficacy about partnerships may serve as a more sufficient indicator. This study has addressed a gap in the literature with results that may help to further examine current school counseling practices, as well as counselor education curricula, as it relates to working with families of color.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Conclusion

Chapter five discusses the results of the study and connects it to relevant literature. Additionally, this chapter provides a summary of the study, which includes the definition of the problem, literature review, and a discussion of the research questions, hypotheses, and statistical analyses. Finally, implications for the school counseling and counselor education fields are provided, as well as future research directions and an informed critique of the study.

Overview of the Study

School-family partnerships have been lauded for its academic and personal outcomes for students. Students whose families are involved in the school process are more likely to have postsecondary goals (Legutko, 2008), less likely to receive disciplinary referrals (McElderry & Cheng, 2014), and commonly perform well on standardized tests (Sheldon, 2003; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005). Students of color, in particular, feel more academically motivated when families are involved (Saifer, Edwards, Ellis, Ko, & Stuczynski, 2011; Rodriguez, 2013). With the demographics of student populations constantly changing, school counselors are in the unique position to not only form these partnerships, but to also remain culturally responsive. However, literature has addressed the lack of preparation school counselors have in building culturally responsive relationships with families of color. Additionally, most research completed on school-family partnerships have been grounded in an ecological systems perspective, which is effective in conceptualizing partnerships but deficient in exploring school counselors' abilities to create them. Using the social cognitive concept of triadic

reciprocal determinism as a foundation, this study sought to examine school counselors' characteristics that may relate to and potentially predict involvement in partnership with families of color.

In chapter one, information was provided regarding the shifting racial/ethnic demographics within schools, as well as the educational inequities students of color face. These disproportions include opportunity gaps (Henfield, Washington, & Byrd, 2014), overrepresentation in special education courses (Guiberson, 2009), and even excessive pressure to achieve (Panelo, 2010). Further, this chapter explored the obstacles families of color may face when attempting to collaborate with schools. These families may have conflicting values with the content being taught at schools, such as the need for autonomy (Dotson-Blake, 2010; Moore-Thomas & Day-Vines, 2010). Additionally, schools that have students of color as the majority population commonly do not have comprehensive school counseling programs that may culturally respond to the needs of these families (Dimmitt, Wilkerson, & Lapan, 2012). Finally, chapter one outlined the lack of preparation school counselors have in forming partnerships with families, and the importance of self-efficacy and a social cognitive theoretical framework in assisting school counselors in serving as a bridge between schools and families.

In chapter two, relevant literature regarding school-family partnerships was reviewed, as well as additional challenges school counselors may face in attempting to form these relationships. Moreover, the significance of school counselor self-efficacy, multicultural competence, and environment was discussed. The chapter also included a thorough review of the role of self-efficacy in counselor education, and the advancement

of multicultural competence in the school counseling field. Finally, justification for operationalizing environment as both school climate and location was discussed.

Chapter three explained the methodology of the study, the research questions and hypotheses that would be examined, and the process and analyses that would be completed. Chapter four illustrated the statistical results of the study. First, this chapter reviewed the methodology, research questions, and hypotheses. The study's findings followed, which included a description of the sample and the results from several statistical tests after issuing the measurements. The next section further discusses the research findings as it pertains to each hypothesis.

Discussion of Major Research Findings

The purpose of this study was to use triadic reciprocal determinism as a foundation to explore school counselors' perceived involvement in partnerships with families of color. That is, this study examined school counselor self-efficacy, multicultural competence, environment, and the relationship that may exist between these characteristics as it relates to involvement in partnerships. A sample of 155 current school counselors completed an online survey which included a demographics questionnaire and the following three formal assessments: (a) the School Counselor Self-Efficacy (SCSE) scale, (b) the Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey—Revised (MCCTS-R), and (c) a modified version of the School Counselor Involvement in Partnerships Survey (SCIPS). The SCSE measured school counselor self-efficacy in general, the MCCTS-R assessed multicultural terminology, awareness, and knowledge, and the *SCIPS-Modified* measured not only involvement in partnerships with families of color, but also environment (as indicated by principal support and collaborative school

climate) and self-efficacy specifically about partnerships. Statistical analyses were completed through bivariate and multivariate correlations, group comparisons (through *t*-tests and ANOVAs), and linear regression. The following further investigates the sample, instrument measures, as well as the results based upon the research questions and hypotheses.

Sample

The school counselors in this sample provided the following demographic information: gender, race/ethnicity, years of school counseling experience, school information (including setting, location, type, and student caseload numbers), and previous training. Comparable demographic data on practicing school counselors are commonly not collected (Scarborough & Culbreth, 2008). Yet, when possible, comparisons have been made to ASCA members, as well as to middle and high school counselors surveyed by the College Board (2011). Figures 4.1 through 4.8 in chapter four illustrate the demographic data in which comparisons could be made.

Overall, the sample reflected the characteristics of current members of ASCA. For example, both the current sample and ASCA members are predominantly female, with proportions surpassing three-quarters in both groups. Additionally, school settings had moderate similarities in that both the current sample and ASCA members had lower proportions of middle school counselors compared to other settings. However, whereas this study had equal numbers of participants in both elementary and high schools, ASCA (Whitaker, 2015) reported a slightly greater percentage of high school counselors, which they identified as “secondary” schools.

Comparisons among the other demographic categories are overall difficult to report, as the sample was randomly selected from the ASCA membership roster; despite several attempts to contact the ASCA executive board, ASCA did not provide additional demographic information for its members. However, the College Board (2011) completed the largest survey of school counselors to date with 5,308 participants. Even though only middle and high school counselors participated in the College Board study, reasonable comparisons could be made to the present study due to the quantity of responses and the wide range of representation across the United States. In terms of race and ethnicity, both the sample in this study and the College Board sample are similar in that the majority of respondents identified as White/European (78.1% in this study, and 75% in the College Board study). However, the ratios for school counselors of color are difficult to directly report in that the language used in both studies differed at times; for example, the present study used the term “Asian American/Pacific Islander,” whereas the College Board study separates Asian American and Pacific Islander into two separate categories. Yet, both studies indicate that Black/African American (12.3% in the present study and 8% in the College Board study) and Hispanic/Latino (4.5% in the present study and 10% in the College Board study) have the highest proportions within the school counselors of color category. Types of schools in which participants worked in this sample was also reflective of the College Board study, in that the majority of participants in both groups worked in public school settings (approximately 86% for both studies). Finally, though both studies used different ranges to indicate student caseload numbers, the data illustrates that the majority of participants have student caseloads in the 200-500 range.

Direct comparisons in additional categories of demographic data solicited in this study were difficult to obtain. However, Aydin (2011) conducted a similar study on school counselor involvement in partnerships, though the focus of this study was on linguistically diverse families, and 916 school counselors from the ASCA membership database responded. Thus, since the sample size was larger, comparisons between the present study and Aydin's study was used when possible. For instance, regarding years of experience, both studies had the largest proportion of participants within the 0-5 years of experience (33.5% for the present study, and 32% for Aydin's study) and the 6-10 years of experience ranges (33.5% for the present study, and 17.2% for Aydin's study). However, the largest discrepancy was indicated in the number of school counselors who had over 20 years of experience. The present study indicated only 9 (5.8%) participants had 20 years of experience, which was the lowest percentage in the study; Aydin's study indicated 13.6% of participants with over 20 years of experience, which was not the lowest percentage of responses.

Comparisons were made to Aydin's study (2011) in two other categories: school location and attendance to a CACREP-accredited program. Regarding school location, both the current study and Aydin's study indicated that the majority of school counselors (42.6% and 40.2%, respectively) worked in suburban settings, and the minority of participants worked in urban schools (22.6% in the present study, and 27.1% in Aydin's study). Although this study indicated that 76.1% of school counselors attended a CACREP-accredited graduate institution, Aydin (2011) found only 58.1% of participants did, which was still the majority of that sample. Other categories of previous training in this study could not be directly compared to other studies. However, Bryan and Griffin

(2010) found that 39.6% of school counselors did not receive any partnership-related training, whereas the present study indicated that 16.8% of the sample did not receive any training in family-related content. Overall, whereas the present study is reflective of national demographic data in several categories, generalizations to practicing school counselors should be made with caution. Sample size and source, considering the participants in the present study were randomly selected from a national organization, may make statistically significant comparisons and differences to the school counseling population difficult to determine.

Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey-Revised (MCCTS-R)

As addressed in chapter two, multicultural competence encompasses counselors' beliefs, knowledge, and skills when working with ethnically and culturally diverse clients (Sue et al., 1998). Several instruments exist that assess counselors' multicultural competence, including the Cross-Cultural Counseling Inventory-Revised (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Hernandez, 1991) and the Multicultural Counseling Inventory (Sodowsky, Taffe, Gutkin, & Wise, 1994), both of which are based on Sue et al.'s (1998) competencies. The Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey (MCCTS; Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999) was created as a response to the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development's Multicultural Competencies, and revised in 2004 to assess the perceived multicultural competence of school counselors specifically. The present study used the MCCTS-R (Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004) to assess school counselors' perceived multicultural competence through three factors: multicultural terminology, multicultural knowledge, and multicultural awareness.

Participants in this study received the highest score in the multicultural terminology domain ($M = 3.46$). On the MCCTS-R, responding to an item with a 3 indicates “competent, or able to perform competently,” whereas responding to an item with a 4 suggests perceptions of being extremely competent or able to perform at a high level. Thus, participants reported being competent regarding multicultural terminology, which is consistent to the findings of Holcomb-McCoy (2005). Not only did the school counselors in Holcomb-McCoy’s study report being competent in multicultural terminology, but they also reported being the least competent in multicultural knowledge ($M = 2.46$). The participants in the present study also scored the lowest in the multicultural knowledge domain ($M = 2.60$), which suggests that school counselors may stay current on culturally sensitive language, but may not have a clear understanding of when and how to use this terminology. This reflection may indicate limited experiential learning regarding multicultural counseling, which has been found to contribute to counseling students’ multicultural awareness and knowledge (KAGNICI, 2014).

School Counselor Self-Efficacy (SCSE) Scale

According to Bandura (1997), “Perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required to produce given attainments” (p. 3). Research on counselor self-efficacy has been extensive, resulting in counseling self-efficacy measurements that focus on individual counseling, such as the Counseling Self-Estimate Inventory (Larson et al., 1992), or counselor-in-training activities, such as the Counselor Activity Self-Efficacy Scales (Lent, Hill, & Hoffman, 2003). Bodenhorn and Skaggs (2005) created the SCSE to specifically measure the perceived self-efficacy of school counselors. This 43-item scale addresses the numerous

tasks that school counselors are expected to complete, and measures perceived self-efficacy through five factors: Personal and Social Development, Leadership and Assessment, Career and Academic Development, Collaboration, and Cultural Acceptance.

The present study used the total score as opposed to subscale scores from this measurement for two primary reasons: (a) to remain consistent with previous interpretations of the scale (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005; Cinotti, 2013; Ernst, 2012), and (b) correlations between the subscales indicated strong, positive, and statistically significant relationships which authenticated the use of one total score as opposed to five separate scores. Additionally, as this study sought to explore the relationships between self-efficacy and partnership involvement, it was appropriate to use the School Counselor Involvement in Partnerships Survey (SCIPS) subscale on self-efficacy about partnerships. The potential range of scores on the SCSE was between 43 and 215, and the participants mean score of 178.73 was consistent with the findings from Bodenhorn and Skaggs (2005). Bodenhorn and Skaggs (2005) and Cinotti (2013) reported similar ranges, with mean scores of 180.97 ($SD = 19.86$) and 180.46 ($SD = 20.25$), respectively. Thus, these findings are reflective of previous literature on school counselor self-efficacy, in that school counselors in all three studies report being moderately confident in completing school counseling-related tasks that fall under the five aforementioned factors.

School Counselor Involvement in Partnerships Survey-Modified (SCIPS)

As school counselor involvement in partnerships with families of color served as a target variable in the present study, the School Counselor Involvement in Partnerships Survey (SCIPS; Bryan, Young, & Kim, 2015) was incorporated to measure this behavior.

Further, as this study specifically wanted to measure involvement with families of color, the survey was modified to include the phrase “of color.” The SCIPS consists of 49 items that assess not only involvement, but also school and school counselor variables that may relate to involvement. The present study analyzed data from four subscales of the SCIPS: involvement in partnerships, self-efficacy about partnerships, principal support, and collaborative school climate.

Participants in the present study received a score of 2.57 on the involvement subscale, which indicate that they have modest to moderate perceived involvement in partnerships; a standard deviation of .84 further suggests that participants did not report strong involvement in partnerships, as five would be the highest score they could have received. These findings are reflective of Aydin, Bryan, and Duys’ (2012) study on school counselor involvement with linguistically diverse families, in that participants received a score of 2.87 on the involvement subscale. Thus, as indicated by Moore-Thomas and Day-Vines (2010), school counselors may need to think more complexly regarding how to implement culturally relevant partnership programs.

Principal support and collaborative school climate served as measures for environment in this study, with participants agreeing that they both receive support from administration and work in a cooperative environment. Further, participants overall agree that they have self-efficacy about partnerships. The moderately strong scores on these three subscales reflect previous findings that collaborative climates and self-efficacy are positively correlated (ATICI, 2014).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study examined the following two research questions: (a) What is the relationship between school counselor self-efficacy, multicultural competence, environment, and involvement in school-family partnerships? and (b) How do practicing school counselors differ in self-efficacy, multicultural competence, and involvement in school-family partnerships based upon demographic variables, such as location and racial/ethnic identity? Further, the following hypotheses guided the study:

1. Participants' scores on both the SCSE and MCCTS-R will be positively correlated with the *SCIPS-Modified* subscale score of involvement in partnerships with families of color.
2. Scores on the SCSE, MCCTS-R, and the *SCIPS-Modified* subscale scores of self-efficacy about partnerships, principal support, and collaborative school climate will act as predictors for scores of school counselor involvement in partnerships with families of color.
3. There is a statistically significant difference in involvement in partnerships with families of color based upon school location (rural vs. urban vs. suburban).
4. Participants that have taken family-related coursework will have significantly higher scores on the subscale of involvement in partnerships with families of color.
5. Participants identified as racial/ethnic minorities will have significantly higher scores on the MCCTS-R and the subscale of involvement in partnerships with families of color.

Discussion regarding the findings of these hypotheses is presented below.

Hypothesis One

The first hypothesis examined whether school counselor self-efficacy and multicultural competence would be positively correlated with involvement in partnerships with families of color. In order to test this hypothesis, a Pearson product moment correlation was computed which yielded statistically positive correlations between self-efficacy (as measured by the SCSE) and involvement (as measured by the SCIPS involvement subscale), as well as between multicultural competence (as measured by the MCCTS-R) and involvement. Correlations between SCSE and involvement ($r = .452, p < .01$) and multicultural knowledge and involvement ($r = .552, p < .01$) were moderate, whereas correlations between multicultural terminology and involvement ($r = .269, p < .01$) and multicultural awareness and involvement ($r = .277, p < .01$) were modest. That is, as self-efficacy and multicultural competence improves, so do perceived involvement in partnerships with families of color.

These findings reflect previous literature that explored correlated relationships with partnerships. For example, Bryan and Griffin (2010) found that self-efficacy about partnerships is related to involvement in school-home partnerships, as well as overall involvement. Further, Mullen and Lambie (2016) found that higher levels of self-efficacy relate to higher occurrences of programmatic service delivery. As a component of meeting the needs of students is to collaborate with parents (Howard & Reynolds, 2008; Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005), educators should engage in higher occurrences of school-home collaboration. Previous research has not examined correlation between multicultural competence and involvement in partnerships. However, Holcomb-McCoy

(2004a) included both multicultural family counseling and school-family-community partnerships as essential multicultural competencies for school counselors, as integrating families into counseling interventions and providing additional resources for families are integral in meeting the needs of diverse students. Additionally, in constructing a school-wide cultural competence observation checklist for school counselors, Nelson, Bustamante, Wilson, and Onwuegbuzie (2008) included a domain on parent and community outreach, as well as an item to assess whether parent involvement programs exist for all cultural groups within the school.

Hypothesis Two

The second hypothesis proposed that self-efficacy (as indicated by the SCSE scale and self-efficacy about partnerships subscale on the *SCIPS-Modified*), multicultural competence (as indicated by the three subscales in the *MCCTS-R*), and environment (as indicated by the principal support and collaborative school climate subscales on the *SCIPS-Modified*) would serve as predictors in school counselor involvement in partnerships with families of color. This hypothesis was partially supported, in that after completing a multiple regression, only self-efficacy about partnerships and multicultural knowledge were significant predictors ($F = 65.728, p < .001$). These findings shed new insight on school counselor involvement in these particular partnerships. First, Bryan and Griffin (2010) found that principal support, collaborative school climate, and self-efficacy about partnerships were all significant predictors of school counselor involvement in partnerships in general. Yet, in a study that examined school counselor involvement specifically with linguistically diverse families, Aydin, Bryan, and Duys (2012) found that self-efficacy about partnerships was not a significant predictor. These

inconsistencies may be due to the lack of instruments that assess partnerships with specific types of family. Though a similar instrument measured involvement in all three studies, both the present and Aydin et al.'s study had to modify the SCIPS for specific populations. However, self-efficacy about partnerships serving as a statistically significant predictor of involvement in the present study is comparable to previous findings on self-efficacy. That is, the more school counselors believe they can complete certain tasks, whether it is using data (Holcomb-McCoy, Gonzalez, & Johnston, 2009), programmatic service delivery (Mullen & Lambie, 2016), or completing best practices (Scarborough & Culbreth, 2008), the more likely they will, in turn, achieve these tasks. As the SCIPS subscale measured self-efficacy specifically related to partnerships, versus the SCSE which measured overall school counselor self-efficacy, it is expected that a statistically significant relationship would be found between self-efficacy about partnerships and perceived involvement in partnerships.

No previous studies have examined whether multicultural competence served as a predictor for school counselor involvement in partnerships, much less involvement in partnerships with families of color. Yet, the findings that only multicultural knowledge was a significant predictor (and not multicultural terminology nor awareness) may be due to the way multicultural knowledge was measured in the MCCTS-R. Holcomb-McCoy and Day-Vines (2004) defined multicultural knowledge as being "aware of cultural information" or "having knowledge of various culture groups" (p. 158). Examples of items used to measure this factor in the MCCTS-R include, "I can identify the cultural biases of my communication style" and "I can discuss family counseling from a cultural/ethnic perspective." Thus, knowledge of cultural considerations may influence

the level of involvement in partnerships with families of color. This is reflective of best practices in working with diverse families that are suggested in previous literature (Bryan, 2005; Bryan & Henry, 2008; Dotson-Blake, 2010; Gonzalez, Borders, Hines, Villalba, & Henderson, 2013; Grothaus & Cole, 2010; Moore-Thomas & Day-Vines, 2010; Orozco, 2007).

Hypothesis Three

The third hypothesis suggested that there would be a statistically significant difference in involvement in partnership with families of color based upon school counselors' location (as defined by working in an urban, rural, or suburban school setting). An ANOVA test revealed a statistical difference of involvement between school counselors working in urban and suburban location, $F(2, 152) = 5.912, p < .05$. That is, school counselors working in urban locations reported higher involvement scores in these partnerships compared to school counselors working in suburban locations. This statistical finding may be due to a higher population of students of color in urban schools (Steinburg & Kincheloe, 2004). That is, since students of color are the majority population in these locations, school counselors may have more opportunities to be involved in partnerships with families of color. Additionally, Holcomb-McCoy and Mitchell (2005) found that urban school counselors perceived low family functioning, along with academic achievement, to be a major concern in these schools. The authors did not provide a definition of "low family functioning" within the study; yet, Cole and Grothaus (2014) also found that urban school counselors had negative perceptions regarding low-income families in these schools (such as that these families had a lack of knowledge to support their children in succeeding) and, thus, struggled to empathize with

them. Hence, school counselors in urban settings may be prioritizing forming partnerships with families of color as a way to provide resources for students, as they may assume that families do not know how to access these resources.

Notably, no statistically significant difference was found in involvement for school counselors working in rural locations. The number of students and families of color continue to grow in rural areas (Lockett, 2010; Malhoit, 2005); further, educational disparities exist for students of color in these areas, such as overrepresentation of African American students in special education courses (Shippen, Curtis, & Miller, 2009). Yet, the potential lack of significant involvement in partnerships with families is reflective of previous findings that suggest parents in rural areas perceive a lack of communication from schools (Griffin & Galassi, 2010). Hence, if the communication is not present, the likelihood of partnerships between rural school counselors and families is possibly absent. Moreover, the lack of diversity among teachers and staff in rural areas (Burton & Johnson, 2010) may also contribute to limited communication between schools and families of color.

Hypothesis Four

The fourth hypothesis proposed that taking a graduate course with family-related content would have significantly higher scores on the involvement subscale. Yet, even though involvement scores for participants who had previously taken a graduate family coursework ($n = 111$, $M = 2.63$, $SD = .87$) were slightly higher than those who had not taken this coursework ($n = 44$, $M = 2.42$, $SD = .78$), an independent samples t-test did not find statistical significance. This is inconsistent with previous findings that suggest integrating family coursework into school counseling curriculum may influence

collaboration with families (Paylo, 2011). Another surprising finding is the number of participants who had actually taken family-related coursework, as previous studies indicate that the majority of school counselors have not been required to complete this coursework (Joe & Harris, 2014; Perusse, Goodnough, and Noel, 2001; Perusse, Poynton, Parzych, & Goodnough, 2015) Yet, the lack of significance in receiving coursework supports Bandura's (1997) assertion that knowledge alone does not build self-efficacy to complete certain tasks, but rather mastery experiences (or previous success in achieving tasks), vicarious experiences (or observing other successfully achieve tasks), verbal persuasion (or reinforcing feedback), and physiological and affective states (or physical accomplishments and coping mechanisms). Thus, counselor educators may want to consider more experiential learning components that promotes success and encouraging feedback to build self-efficacy about partnerships.

Hypothesis Five

The final hypothesis conjectured that not only would school counselors of color score higher on the MCCTS-R than White school counselors, but that they also would receive significantly higher scores on the involvement in partnerships with families of color subscale. A one-way ANOVA indicated that there was no statistical significance on the MCCTS-R between school counselors of color and White school counselors. Despite research that suggests otherwise (Constantine, 2001), this result was consistent with previous findings that school counselors of color do not perceive having higher multicultural competence than their White counterparts (Smith, Constantine, Dunn, Dinehart, & Montoya, 2006). Thus, racial/ethnic identification may not impact multicultural proficiency.

To compute the second portion of this hypothesis, an independent samples *t*-test illustrated a statistically significant difference between school counselors of color and White school counselors regarding involvement in partnerships with families of color, $t(153) = 2.98, p = .003, d = .54$. Though previous studies did not specifically measure involvement in partnerships with these particular families, this finding is reflective of literature which suggests that White counselors may lack training that facilitate cultural competence (Utsey, Gernat, & Hammar, 2005). Recommendations for counselor education programs to include partnership-related training specifically through diverse contexts have been examined in the literature (Moore-Thomas & Day-Vines, 2010). In order for White school counselors to increase involvement in partnerships with families of color, Moss and Singh (2015) suggest integrating critical race and relational components into their theoretical frameworks to increase awareness of both their own racial/ethnic identities, but also the identities of their students of color.

Additional Findings

Additional tests were conducted to further explore the research questions. For example, only self-efficacy about partnerships served as one of the two significant predictors for involvement in partnerships with families of color (the other significant predictor was multicultural knowledge). Yet, school counselor self-efficacy overall (as measured by SCSE) was not found to be a significant predictor. Thus, a Pearson product correlation moment was computed and yielded a statistically significant relationship between overall school counselor self-efficacy and self-efficacy about partnerships, $r = .419, p < .01$. The *r* value indicated a moderate correlation, which suggests that though a positive relationship exists, the relationship is not strong (Warner, 2013). That is, the

SCSE explores components that are not strongly related to partnerships, specifically. This finding is consistent with previous studies that consider task-oriented self-efficacy to correlate with that specific behavior (Bryan & Griffin, 2010). Hence, believing in the ability to form partnerships with families of color may be positively associated with perceived involvement in these partnerships.

Descriptive statistics related to race/ethnicity of participants, as well as their school locations, were also completed to observe any trends within the self-efficacy about partnerships and multicultural knowledge subscale scores. School counselors of color had higher mean scores than White school counselors on both subscales; yet, an independent samples *t*-test illustrated that only self-efficacy about partnerships for working with families of color scores were significantly higher for school counselors of color. Further, whereas multicultural knowledge mean scores for school counselors in urban school locations were higher, statistical tests indicated that this higher score was not significant.

Testing of the third hypothesis found that there was a statistically significant difference in involvement in partnerships with families of color between school counselors who worked in urban schools and suburban schools. Descriptive statistics were completed to examine the race/ethnicity of the school counselors in these settings, as well as years of school counseling statistics. The ratios revealed that school counselors of color made up 40% of participants in urban settings; however, there were only 18.2% school counselors of color in suburban areas. A chi-square test of independence examined that the relationship between race and school location was significant, or that the choice of school location is associated with the race of the school counselor. The higher number of school counselors of color forming partnerships in urban schools are

reflective of studies emphasizing the potential lack of cultural competence of White school counselors (Utsey et al., 2005), as well as the higher potential of commonality between school counselors of color and students of color (Chao, 2013). This is also reflected in that not only did urban school counselors have higher multicultural knowledge scores than rural and suburban settings (as illustrated in Table 4.6), but school counselors of color also had significantly higher self-efficacy in forming partnerships with families of color. Thus, the results indicate that involvement in partnerships in urban areas may be higher due to the cultural responsiveness of school counselors of color, and the shared experiences between these counselors and students and families of color.

Additionally, a greater percentage of school counselors in urban areas (42.9%) had 0-5 years of experience compared to 30.3% with the same years of experience in suburban areas. Previous studies have examined counselor burnout and its effect on performance (Gunduz, 2012). Moreover, research has indicated that school counselors newer to the profession are more likely to complete tasks in alignment with the ASCA standards (Walsh, Barrett, & DePaul, 2007). As collaborating and partnering with families is integrated into the school counselor professional competencies (ASCA, 2012), the percentages found in this study is not surprising. That is, school counselors in urban areas may form more partnerships with families of color because they are newer to the field and, thus, more likely to complete duties supported by school counseling national standards. Yet, a chi-square test of independence illustrated that the relationship between years of experience and school location were not significant; thus, while years of experience may be related to involvement in partnerships, there is not a statistically

significant association between years of experience and working in an urban versus a suburban school environment.

Finally, testing the fourth hypothesis revealed that receiving family-related graduate coursework made no statistically significant difference in involvement with partnerships of color. An independent samples *t*-test was completed to determine whether receiving multicultural counseling graduate coursework made any impact on involvement scores and yielded no statistical significance. Similar to the findings of family-related coursework, these results are consistent with previous literature that addresses the need for individuals to have both knowledge and practice in order to successfully complete a task (Gay, 2010; KAGNICI, 2014). That is, receiving information about multicultural counseling may not influence involvement in partnerships with families of color if individuals did not also have opportunities to apply multicultural counseling skills with students and families. Overall, the findings support using a social cognitive framework for facilitating more partnerships between school counselors and families of color.

Implications

This study examined the gap in the literature regarding characteristics that may influence school counselor involvement in partnerships with families of color. The idea of school-family-community partnerships has received a special issue in the leading school counseling journal (Bryan & Holcomb-McCoy, 2010), and multicultural competence has long been a major issue in the school counseling field (Dodson, 2013; Holcomb-McCoy, 2005; Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004). Yet, despite the growing number of students of color, empirical studies on school counselors' ability to form partnerships with families of color have been limited. In fact, most studies that address

collaborations with families of color have been conceptual in nature (Dotson-Blake, Foster, & Gressard, 2009; Gonzalez, Borders, Hines, Villalba, & Henderson, 2013; Moore-Thomas & Day-Vines, 2010; Orozco, 2007; Serres & Simpson, 2013; Sheely & Bratton, 2010). Multicultural considerations aside, school counselors also have limited training in working with families (Akos & Scarborough, 2004; Perusse et al., 2015). The theoretical frameworks that exist to address partnerships are mostly through the lens of parents (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997), or ecological in nature (Reschly & Christenson, 2012). Whereas an ecological systems viewpoint is helpful in conceptualizing student needs (Paylo, 2011), the findings and use of a social cognitive framework in this study provides implications for both the school counseling field and counselor education. Ideas for future research are also presented.

School Counseling Field

Today's school counselors must be more prepared than ever to work with diverse student populations (Hughey, 2011). An important aspect of meeting the needs of these students is to integrate family into interventions (Cartledge & Lo, 2006). Yet, as previously addressed in chapters one and two, school counselors are commonly not prepared to work with families. The findings from this study, however, illustrate that whereas school counselors may have received coursework in both multicultural counseling and family-related content, this knowledge had no significant impact on perceived involvement in partnerships with families of color. The social cognitive theoretical concept of triadic reciprocal determinism asserts that human performance is influenced by the interaction between three factors: personal, behavioral, and environmental (Bandura, 1978). Thus, multicultural competence or knowledge of family

alone will not influence the behavior of forming partnerships; rather, this study's findings also illustrated the significance of self-efficacy and school location regarding building partnerships. As addressed by Bandura (1989a, 1997), self-efficacy beliefs can be created through vicarious experiences. That is, if certain behaviors are modeled, individuals may believe they can complete the same behaviors. Hence, school counselors modeling the act of forming partnerships with families may facilitate the self-efficacy of practicum or internships students that may be under their supervision. This act may particularly be helpful for school counselors working in suburban areas, where the prospects of forming partnerships with families of color are not as plausible.

The present study also found that school counselors of color may be more likely to perceive being involved in partnerships with families of color, and have higher self-efficacy about forming these partnerships, than their White peers. As addressed by Moss and Singh (2015), practicing school counselors may want to consider adopting more culturally responsive perspectives into their theoretical frameworks. This is especially important as students that differ from the mainstream, such as students of color, are commonly misinterpreted and criticized by White educators (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008), which result in this population being consistently disciplined more severely than White students (Milner, 2013). Further, students and parents of color may be resistant to assistance from White educators due to conflicting philosophies, intentions, and perspectives (Warren, 2015). That is, the trust between White school counselors and students and families of color may be a gradual process due to different cultural experiences. However, while multicultural knowledge serves as a significant predictor for involvement, school counselors may also need more opportunities to successfully apply

this knowledge, as mastery experience is an influential source of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1989a, 1997).

Counselor Education

Joe and Harris (2014) found that only 40% of CACREP-accredited school counseling programs required students to take three-credit-hour coursework in family-related content. Whereas knowledge is an important component in preparing graduate students to form content, the results in this study did not find receiving coursework in this area to make a significant impact on perceived involvement. Rather, self-efficacy specifically about partnerships played a significant role in whether partnerships with families of color would be formed. In order to create self-efficacy about partnerships, programs may want to consider integrating three sources of self-efficacy: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, and social persuasion (Bandura, 1989a, 1997).

Mastery experiences can be achieved by incorporating opportunities for school counseling students to engage in partnership behaviors. This may particularly be beneficial as Akos and Scarborough (2004) found that only 17% of school counseling internship syllabi included requirements for systemic interventions, or collaborating and consulting with families and other individuals crucial to student academic and personal success. Bryan and Henry (2015) discussed integrating their partnership process model (2012) into internship curricula. That is, students are required to complete school-family-community partnership projects during one semester of internship while using the partnership process model as a template. Steps may include but are not limited to: preparing to partner (by requiring interns to become familiar with the community in which their schools are located), assessing needs and strengths (by mandating interns to

conduct needs assessments), and coming together (by requiring interns to select school personnel and community members to join their partnership teams). The more successful students are in completing this project, the more likely they may be to continue to form partnerships once they enter the profession.

Vicarious experiences can occur through modeling, both from faculty as well as site supervisors. Namely, enabling graduate students to observe mentors successfully forming and maintaining partnerships may build their self-efficacy in doing the same. In fact, Bryan and Griffin (2010) suggest placing school counseling practicum students and interns with site supervisors who are actively involved in partnerships. School counselor self-efficacy, in general, is enriched by social or verbal persuasion (Betz, 2004). Social persuasion can occur by providing consistent, positive feedback regarding partnership-behaviors. Darch, Shippen, Darch, Patterson, and Massey (2014) included providing both positive and specific feedback as critical components in their model for enabling school counselors to train paraprofessionals, as feedback is “crucial to the process of shaping behavior” (p. 37). Moreover, Williams, McMahan, McLeod, and Rice (2013) found that secondary school counselors were more motivated and had higher confidence in facilitating groups due to encouraging feedback. Whereas these feedback studies did not specifically emphasize forming partnerships, the implications are that providing consistent and encouraging feedback can enhance confidence in achieving tasks such as building partnerships.

Multicultural knowledge was found to be a significant predictor of involvement with families of color. Even though the majority of participants in this study received graduate coursework in multicultural counseling, this content did not have a significant

impact on perceived involvement. Thus, since self-efficacy about partnerships was the other significant predictor, this may suggest that knowledge alone does not influence involvement. In other words, students may need more opportunities to apply the knowledge learned in multicultural counseling classes. Hipolito-Delgado, Cook, Avrus, and Bonham (2011) found that integrating a cultural immersion project, which includes a direct action component, into multicultural counseling courses increased multicultural knowledge, awareness, and skills of graduate counseling students. Thus, counselor educators may want to consider providing opportunities for students to practice counseling skills with diverse clientele. As the findings from this study also indicated that school counselors in urban areas are more likely to form partnerships with families of color, securing internships at these sites may not only provide opportunities for modeling, but to also facilitate cultural responsiveness.

Finally, school counselors of color are not only more likely to perceive being more involved in partnerships with families of color, but also report higher self-efficacy in forming partnerships with these families than their White colleagues. Moreover, though the differences were not significant, school counselors of color also had slightly higher scores on the multicultural knowledge subscale. Unfortunately, school counselors of color made up only 21.9% of the participants in this study, which is similar to ratios in other studies in which school counselors were the participants. In fact, Cannon (2010) indicated that students enrolling in school counseling graduate programs continue to be from the dominant culture. Whereas it is important to prepare all school counseling trainees to form culturally responsive partnerships, research has also indicated that hiring school personnel of color positively impacts the academic and extracurricular

performances of students of color (Kearney-Gissendaner, 2013). Thus, graduate programs may need to improve recruitment of school counselors-in-training of color in order to change the demographics of personnel within schools and, ultimately, encourage the achievement of students of color.

Future Research

The present study explored characteristics that may relate to and potentially predict school counselor involvement in partnerships with families of color. Though the findings from this study integrated a framework not previously addressed in school-family partnerships, further research may assist in validating the social cognitive theoretical perspective. Specifically, future studies may continue to examine partnership behaviors through the concept of triadic reciprocal determinism. Triadic reciprocal determinism describes how personal factors, behavior, and the environment influence each other (Bandura, 1978). Whereas this study explored the influence of personal and environmental factors in forming partnerships, future studies may explore how partnership behavior may potentially predict personal factors, or even the environment in which a school counselor chooses to work. Moreover, this study specifically focused on multicultural competence and self-efficacy as personal factors. As personal factors may include cognitive, affective, and biological components (Bandura, 1989a), additional characteristics may also be examined. For example, Bryan, Young, and Kim (2015) found that other school counselor characteristics may be associated with partnership involvement, such as attitudes about families and partnerships in general. Additionally, qualitative studies may also be completed to discover personal factors not yet examined in the literature.

The results of the multiple regression in this study revealed two significant predictor variables: self-efficacy about partnerships and multicultural knowledge. However, a more sophisticated examination of involvement behavior may reveal new information. First, analysis illustrated a significant bivariate relationship between school counselor self-efficacy and self-efficacy about partnerships; yet, only self-efficacy about partnership served as a significant predictor. This may indicate that the predictor variables were all competing with each other; thus, computing a blocked or hierarchical multiple regression for a future study to better test the effects of predictors independently and without the influence of other variables is recommended (Warner, 2013). Further, structural equation modeling may indicate moderator and/or mediator variables that may influence the relationship between potential predictor variables and involvement in partnerships. Exploring a potential moderator variable may describe the strength between a personal or environmental factor and partnership behavior, whereas a mediator variable would explain the relationship between these factors (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Thus, future research may include a larger sample size in order to complete a sufficient structural equation model (Wolf, Harrington, Clark, & Miller, 2013).

Finally, outcome studies may also further explore the significance of personal and environmental factors on partnership behaviors. For example, suggestions for counselor education included integrating more practical experiences for both multicultural counseling and forming partnerships. However, studies directly exploring the potential impact of practical experiences in graduate school on partnership behavior as a professional has not yet been explored. Hence, an outcome study that examines the

partnership behavior of school counselors who have completed culturally responsive partnership projects could add new knowledge to this subject.

Informed Critique and Limitations

As this study included human subjects, limitations were expected. Though precautions were considered and taken, reliability and validity could not be guaranteed. Thus, the limitations and informed critique of this study follows.

Research Design

Of the five hypotheses presented in this study, four were at least partially supported. For example, the first hypothesis yielded statistically significant correlations between multicultural competence, self-efficacy, and involvement in partnerships with families of color. However, correlation only indicates a direction of a relationship and not causation. As other results illustrated, school counselor self-efficacy overall does not predict partnership behavior. Yet, the significant findings from this study may encourage future experimental research that directly explores the potential causation between personal factors and partnership behaviors.

Sampling

The first phase of this study used convenience sampling, in that local and state school counselors were contacted to provide feedback on the modification of the SCIPS-*Modified*. The small sample size may not reflect the response of school counselors across the United States. The second phase used random sampling from the ASCA membership database, as well as by posting a link to the study on the ASCA Scene forum. After filtering the settings to limit the database to only school counselors, the roster included over 20,000 individuals; yet, not every school counselor in the United States is an ASCA

member. Thus, the sample may not clearly be representative of the school counseling population. As previously addressed, demographics on practicing school counselors are difficult to obtain (Scarborough & Culbreth, 2008). Hence, demographic proportions in this study's sample may also not be representative of the entire school counseling field. Yet, the national samples that were obtained for comparisons in this study illustrated similarities (such as ratios of gender, race/ethnicity, and school locations) that make the findings generalizable.

Instrumentation

Though several studies have used the MCCTS-R as a measurement of school counselor multicultural competence (Holcomb-McCoy, 2005; Bodenhorn, Wolfe, & Airen, 2010), this instrument does not include multicultural skills as a factor. Thus, whether participants apply culturally appropriate interventions cannot be concluded. However, as this study wanted to assess multicultural competence as a personal factor as opposed to a behavior, the MCCTS-R served as an appropriate measurement.

The SCSE was included in this study to measure school counselor self-efficacy as assessed through five factors: Personal and Social Development, Leadership and Assessment, Career and Academic Development, Collaboration, and Cultural Acceptance. Whereas this instrument has demonstrated strong reliability and construct validity (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005), the initial item analysis for the SCSE included only school counselors who were attendees of the 2000 ASCA national conference. That is, generalizability of the results may have been limited. Yet, this measurement has been used to measure school counselor self-efficacy in additional studies (Bodenhorn et al., 2010; Owens, Bodenhorn, & Bryant, 2010); moreover, participants in this study were

also ASCA members (as they were in the initial development of the instrument). Thus, using the SCSE in this study was appropriate.

Finally, there were two limitations in using the *SCIPS-Modified* for this study: (a) the items had to be adapted to include the phrase “of color,” and (b) at present, the latest revision of the SCIPS (Bryan et al., 2015) has yet to be included in another study. In order to address the first limitation, the Cronbach’s alpha was computed with a small sample of school counselors to assess for reliability; the results indicated similar reliability ranges as with the SCIPS after a principal factor analysis (Bryan & Griffin, 2010). Bryan et al. (2015) recently completed a confirmatory factor analysis of the SCIPS which resulted in 49 items overall. At the time this study was completed, no other research had included the latest version of the SCIPS; however, inconsistencies among the previous SCIPS studies were addressed by splitting the sample in half to conduct both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses to determine any similar or distinct factor structures (Bryan et al., 2015). Overall, both limitations actually yielded new lines of inquiry, in that potential measurements could be constructed that specifically measures involvement in partnerships with families of color, and future studies could include the newly revised SCIPS to make comparisons to the present study’s findings.

Conclusion

School-family partnerships have benefits that have been extensively explored in the literature (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Henry, 2014; Holcomb-McCoy, 2010; Sheldon, 2007; Sheldon, Epstein, & Galindo, 2010). With the evolution of student racial demographics (Hussar & Bailey, 2014), the need for more culturally responsive partnership skills are a necessity for school counselors. That is, school counselors not

only need to be culturally competent, but also understand how to effectively form and maintain partnerships with families of all students. The results of this study illustrate that multicultural competence and self-efficacy alone may not influence school counselor involvement in these partnerships; specifically, school counselors must have knowledge about diverse groups and self-efficacy related to forming partnerships. Thus, the school counseling and counselor education fields may want to consider opportunities to facilitate this knowledge and self-efficacy. The American School Counselor Association National Model emphasizes not only the importance of collaborative relationships and partnerships, but also the need for culturally responsive counseling services (2012). The present study is aligned with the vision and mission of national school counseling standards, and introduces a new framework that has the potential to train school counselors in addressing these intentions.

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Appendix A

Informed Consent

I am willing to participate in a study that examines the relationships between practicing school counselors' self-efficacy, multicultural competence, and involvement in partnerships with families of color. I understand that this study is being conducted by Pamela N. Harris, a doctoral candidate in the Counselor Education and Supervision program at The College of William and Mary.

As a participant, I acknowledge that I will be asked to complete a demographic questionnaire, as well as three formal assessments that will measure self-efficacy, multicultural competence, and perceptions of involvement in partnerships with families of color. I will access these instruments through Qualtrics, an online survey tool, and these surveys will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

I am aware that participation in this study is voluntary, and I may refuse or withdraw participation from this study at any time without penalty. I also understand that there are no known or anticipated risks to my physical or mental health related to participation in this study.

Confidentiality Statement

As a participant in this study, I am aware that my responses to the demographic questionnaire and assessments will be confidential. I am also aware that if I choose to enter to win **one of the ten \$25 Visa gift cards**, my name and contact information will be placed in a separate, secure database that will not be linked to the study's results.

I fully understand the aforementioned statements, and consent to participate in this study. If I have any questions about this study, I will contact Pamela N. Harris at pnharris@email.wm.edu. Additionally, this study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB); thus, if any issues arise during this study, I will notify Dr. Tom Ward, chair of the EDIRC, at 757-221-2358 (EDIRC-L@wm.edu).

Appendix B

Demographics Questionnaire

1. Years of School Counseling Experience:

- (1) 1-5 (2) 6-10 (3) 11-15 (4) 16-20 (5) Over 20 years

2. Gender:

- (1) Male (2) Female

3. Your Ethnic Background:

- 1 African American/Black
2 Hispanic/Latino
3 Asian American/Pacific Islander
4 White/European
5 Native American
6 Multiracial, Multiethnic
7 Other (Please Specify)

4. School setting in which you work:

- 1 Elementary (PreK-5)
2 Middle (6-8)
3 High (9-12)
4 Other (Please Specify)

5. Type of school:

- (1) Public (2) Private (3) Charter (4) Other

6. School Location:

- (1) Urban (2) Rural (3) Suburban

7. Student Caseload:

- (1) 0-250 (2) 251-500 (3) 501+

8. Percentage of your students on free and reduced lunch:

- (1) Free: ___ (2) Reduced: ___

9. Did you attend a CACREP-accredited counseling graduate program:

- (1) Yes (2) No (3) I am not sure.

10. Please indicate any family-related training that you may have received:

- (1) 3-credit hour graduate course
(2) Workshop/professional development training on family-related content
(3) Workshop/professional development training on school-family partnerships
(4) None of the above

11. Please indicate any multicultural counseling training that you may have received:

- (1) 3-credit hour graduate course
- (2) Workshop/professional development training
- (3) None of the above

Appendix C

School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (SCSE; Bodernhorn & Skaggs)

Below is a list of activities representing many school counselor responsibilities. Indicate your confidence in your current ability to perform each activity by circling the appropriate answer next to each item according to the scale defined below. Please answer each item based on one current school, and based on how you feel now, not on your anticipated (or previous) ability or school(s). Remember, this is not a test and there are no right answers.

Use the following scale:

- 1 = not confident,
- 2 = slightly confident,
- 3 = moderately confident,
- 4 = generally confident,
- 5 = highly confident.

Please circle the number that best represents your response for each item.

1. Advocate for integration of student academic, career, and personal development into the mission of my school.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Recognize situations that impact (both negatively and positively) student learning and achievement.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Analyze data to identify patterns of achievement and behavior that contribute to school success	1	2	3	4	5
4. Advocate for myself as a professional school counselor and articulate the purposes and goals of school counseling.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Develop measurable outcomes for a school counseling program which would demonstrate accountability.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Consult and collaborate with teachers, staff, administrators and parents to promote student success.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Establish rapport with a student for individual counseling.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Function successfully as a small group leader.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Effectively deliver suitable parts of the school counseling program through large group meetings such as in classrooms.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Conduct interventions with parents, guardians and families in order to resolve problems that impact students' effectiveness and success.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Teach students how to apply time and task management skills.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Foster understanding of the relationship between learning and work.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Offer appropriate explanations to students, parents and teachers of how learning styles affect school performance.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Deliver age-appropriate programs through which students acquire the skills needed to investigate the world of work.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Implement a program which enables all students to make informed career decisions.	1	2	3	4	5

16. Teach students to apply problem-solving skills toward their academic, personal and career success.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Evaluate commercially prepared material designed for school counseling to establish their relevance to my school population.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Model and teach conflict resolution skills.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Ensure a safe environment for all students in my school.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Change situations in which an individual or group treats others in a disrespectful or harassing manner.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Teach students to use effective communication skills with peers, faculty, employers, family, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Follow ethical and legal obligations designed for school counselors.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Guide students in techniques to cope with peer pressure.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Adjust my communication style appropriately to the age and developmental levels of various students.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Incorporate students' developmental stages in establishing and conducting the school counseling program.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I can find some way of connecting and communicating with any student in my school.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Teach, develop and/or support students' coping mechanisms for dealing with crises in their lives – e.g., peer suicide, parent's death, abuse, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Counsel effectively with students and families from different social/economic statuses.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Understand the viewpoints and experiences of students and parents who are from a different cultural background than myself.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Help teachers improve their effectiveness with students.	1	2	3	4	5
31. Discuss issues of sexuality and sexual orientation in an age appropriate manner with students.	1	2	3	4	5
32. Speak in front of large groups such as faculty or parent meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
33. Use technology designed to support student successes and progress through the educational process.	1	2	3	4	5
34. Communicate in writing with staff, parents, and the external community.	1	2	3	4	5
35. Help students identify and attain attitudes, behaviors, and skills which lead to successful learning.	1	2	3	4	5
36. Select and implement applicable strategies to assess school-wide issues.	1	2	3	4	5
37. Promote the use of counseling and guidance activities by the total school community to enhance a positive school climate.	1	2	3	4	5
38. Develop school improvement plans based on interpreting school-wide assessment results.	1	2	3	4	5
39. Identify aptitude, achievement, interest, values, and personality appraisal resources appropriate for specified situations and populations.	1	2	3	4	5
40. Implement a preventive approach to student problems.	1	2	3	4	5
41. Lead school-wide initiatives which focus on ensuring a positive learning environment.	1	2	3	4	5
42. Consult with external community agencies which provide support services for our students.	1	2	3	4	5
43. Provide resources and guidance to school population in times of crisis.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix D

Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey—Revised (MCCTS-R;
Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004)

Directions: Listed below are competency statements based on AMCD's Multicultural Counseling Competencies and Explanatory Statements. Please read each competency statement and evaluate your multicultural competence using the following 4-point scale.

- 1** - **Not competent (Not able to perform at this time)**
2 - **Somewhat competent (More training needed)**
3 - **Competent (Able to perform competently)**
4 - **Extremely competent (Able to perform at a high level)**

1.	I can discuss my own ethnic/cultural heritage.	1	2	3	4
2.	I am aware of how my cultural background and experiences have influenced my attitudes about psychological processes.	1	2	3	4
3.	I am able to discuss how my culture has influenced the way I think.	1	2	3	4
4.	I can recognize when my attitudes, beliefs, and values are interfering with providing the best services to my students.	1	2	3	4
5.	I verbally communicate my acceptance of culturally different students.	1	2	3	4
6.	I nonverbally communicate my acceptance of culturally different students.	1	2	3	4
7.	I can discuss my family's perspective regarding acceptable and non-acceptable codes-of-conduct.	1	2	3	4
8.	I can discuss models of White Racial Identity Development.	1	2	3	4
9.	I can define racism.	1	2	3	4
10.	I can define prejudice.	1	2	3	4
11.	I can define discrimination.	1	2	3	4
12.	I can define stereotype.	1	2	3	4
13.	I can identify the cultural bases of my communication style.	1	2	3	4
14.	I can identify my negative and positive emotional reactions toward persons of other racial and ethnic groups.	1	2	3	4

- 1 - Not competent (Not able to perform at this time)**
2 - Somewhat competent (More training needed)
3 - Competent (Able to perform competently)
4 - Extremely competent (Able to perform at a high level)
-

15.	I can identify my reactions that are based on stereotypical beliefs about different ethnic groups.	1	2	3	4
16.	I can give examples of how stereotypical beliefs about culturally different persons impact the counseling relationship.	1	2	3	4
17.	I can articulate the possible differences between the nonverbal behavior of the five major ethnic groups (i.e., African/Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Native American, European/White).	1	2	3	4
18.	I can articulate the possible differences between the verbal behavior of the five major ethnic groups.	1	2	3	4
19.	I can discuss the counseling implications for at least two models of racial/ethnic identity development.	1	2	3	4
20.	I can discuss within-group differences among ethnic groups (e.g., low SES Puerto Rican student vs. high SES Puerto Rican student).	1	2	3	4
21.	I can discuss how culture affects a student's vocational choices.	1	2	3	4
22.	I can discuss how culture affects the help-seeking behaviors of students.	1	2	3	4
23.	I can discuss how culture affects the manifestations of psychological disorders.	1	2	3	4
24.	I can describe the degree to which a counseling approach is appropriate for a specific group of people.	1	2	3	4
25.	I can explain how factors such as poverty, and powerlessness have influenced the current conditions of at least two ethnic groups.	1	2	3	4
26.	I can discuss research regarding mental health issues among culturally/ethnically different populations.	1	2	3	4
27.	I can discuss how the counseling process may conflict with the cultural values of at least two ethnic groups.	1	2	3	4

- 1** - **Not competent (Not able to perform at this time)**
2 - **Somewhat competent (More training needed)**
3 - **Competent (Able to perform competently)**
4 - **Extremely competent (Able to perform at a high level)**
-

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 28. | I can list at least three barriers that prevent ethnic minority students from using counseling services. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 29. | I can discuss the potential bias of two assessment instruments frequently used in the schools. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 30. | I can discuss family counseling from a cultural/ethnic perspective. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 31. | I can anticipate when my helping style is inappropriate for a culturally different student. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 32. | I can help students determine whether a problem stems from | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Appendix E

School Counselor Involvement in Partnerships Scale-*Modified* (SCIPS; (Bryan, Young, & Kim, 2015)

Items on the SCIPS*Items Measuring Involvement in School-Family-Community Partnerships on the SCIPS*

1.	Coordinating school-community outreach efforts to involve the community in the school (e.g., reaching out to local church and business leaders, police/fire officers).
2.	Collaborating with community agency professionals to increase students' of color access to services (e.g., invite family/community counselors to lead groups or counsel students).
3.	Training parents of color and students of color to access services in the school and community.
4.	Coordinating programs to help school staff understand the families and cultures in the community (e.g., in-service training on diverse or immigrant families).
5.	Collaborating with family and community members of color to deliver services to students (e.g., parent volunteers and business professionals to provide career guidance).
6.	Training staff to build effective school-family-community partnerships.
7.	Training staff to work collaboratively with families from minority backgrounds.
8.	Teaming with staff, family and community members to increase parents' of color involvement in their children's learning (e.g., partnership planning team, action team).
9.	Coordinating the integration of community services into the school (e.g., mental health and social services housed in school).
10.	Teaming with school staff, family and/or community professionals to provide services for students of color (e.g., school mental health team)
11.	Collaborating with school, family and community members of color to organize student support programs (e.g., tutoring, mentoring, enrichment programs)
12.	Collaborating with community members of color on working committees (e.g., community task force, advisory committee).
13.	Collaborating with local businesses and industries to provide enrichment experiences for students of color (e.g., mentoring, tutoring, job shadowing).
14.	Coordinating parent education workshops to enhance parent skills and knowledge.
15.	Locating community services and resources for students of color in need (e.g., family counseling, social services, food, clothing).
16.	Teaming with teacher, social worker or a parent liaison to conduct home visits.

All involvement items are measured on a five-point scale (1 = Not at all, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Moderately, 4 = Frequently, 5 = Very Frequently).

30 Items Measuring the School Counselor and School Factors on the SCIPS

Principal Support (7 items)	
1.	The principal supports involvement from families of color in the school
2.	The principal supports those who lead partnership activities and programs

3.	The principal supports involvement from community members of color in the school
4.	The principal is skillful in building relationships with community members of color
5.	The principal supports me in building partnerships with community members of color and organizations
6.	The principal supports me in building partnerships with families of color
7.	The principal encourages teacher participation in planning partnerships
Attitudes About Partnerships (6 items)	
1.	School-family-community partnerships are important for an effective school
2.	School-family-community partnerships enhance the school's climate
3.	School-family-community partnerships help school counselors to be more effective in meeting the needs of children of color
4.	School-family-community partnerships are very important for helping children of color succeed
5.	School-family-community partnerships are beneficial for the school counseling program
6.	School-family-community partnerships provide support for the school counseling program
Collaborative School Climate (5 items)	
1.	This school/district has a climate that is conducive to fostering partnerships with families of color
2.	This school/district has a climate that is conducive to fostering partnerships with the community
3.	This school/district has a friendly atmosphere
4.	This school/district values school-family-community partnerships
5.	This school/district actively reaches out to hard-to-reach families of color
Self-Efficacy about Partnerships (5 items)	
1.	I am confident in my ability to initiate school-family-community partnerships
2.	I am capable of developing school-family-community partnerships
3.	I have the skills to build partnership programs with the community
4.	I enjoy building school-family-community partnerships
5.	I have the skills to build partnerships with families of color
Attitudes About Parents/Families (3 items)	
1.	Parents of color and other family members become involved in their children's education when teachers invite them to
2.	Parents of color and other family members become involved in their children's education when school counselors invite them to
3.	In this school/district, it is difficult to get families of color involved in partnerships
Commitment to Advocacy (4 items)	
1.	I would actively advocate for children of color even if I did not consider it part of my role
2.	I feel a need to advocate for disadvantaged students
3.	I am a voice for children of color to ensure the school meets their needs
4.	I want children and families of color to believe I am their advocate

All items were measured on a four-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree).

Other Items on Survey Measuring School and School Counselor Variables:

I do not have the time to get involved in partnerships (*item measures time constraints*)

I believe that the principal expects me to be involved in partnerships (*item measures principal expectations*)

I believe that building school-family-community partnerships is part of my role (*item measures role perceptions*)

All items were measured on a four-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree).

Item measuring Partnership Related Training (One of demographic items):

How many hours of training have you received specific to developing and implementing partnerships?

_____ hours

VITA

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