A Qualitative Developmental Analysis of Comprehensive Guidance Programs
in the United States
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Abstract

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A mixed-data inquiry and analysis of the current state-level comprehensive developmental guidance models in the United States is presented. The 24 states with current programs are commended in their initial attempts at model development, especially in the Personal/social developmental domain. The most significant gap across models is in attention to ethnic and cultural developmental issues. Current programs are also lacking in defining how developmental components are integrated with one another. Authors of state programs are encouraged to be more specific in the use of developmental language and constructs so that comprehensive developmental guidance programs will address the needs of all students. A challenge is given to other nations to consider the developmental nature of their programs.

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Introduction

Not unlike what is occurring in the United Kingdom (e.g.,Watkins, 1994), the field of school counseling in the United States is experiencing a fundamental shift in theoretical orientation and praxis. By early 1997, nearly half of the states had, at least in principle, abandoned the conventional service delivery model in favor of a more systemic and programmatic approach to counseling and guidance (Sink & MacDonald, in press). While many counselors look upon this educational movement as a recent phenomenon, developmental guidance is not a particularly new idea; over 35 years ago, Gilbert Wrenn (1962), for example, issued a clarion call for school counselors to adopt a developmental, preventative focus for all students. During the 1970s, nascent comprehensive guidance models began to surface in the educational literature (see Gysbers & Henderson, 1994, for a review). Despite the significant delay from inception to widespread implementation, school counseling is evolving from a medley of crisis-oriented ancillary services to an integrated educational program central to the mission of schools (Borders & Drury, 1992). In response to this nationwide movement, school counselor committees organized at the state- and district-levels are writing comprehensive guidance and counseling plans which attempt to strike a balance between preventative/educative issues and remediation (Baker, 1996; Sink & MacDonald, in press). Although somewhat problematic, efficacy studies conducted over the past 10 years tentatively show that elementary and secondary students in the United States benefit from remediation-based and prevention-oriented interventions which are situated within the framework of comprehensive developmental guidance programs (see Whiston & Sexton, 1998, for a review). Students, for example, who experience personal and social difficulties, as well as those who struggle with educational and vocational concerns tend to report gains in a variety of academic and non-academic areas (e.g., Hughley, Lapan, & Gysbers, 1993; Lapan, Gysbers, Hughey, & Arni, 1993). More recently, a far-reaching study of nearly 30,000 Missouri high schools students involved with the state's comprehensive guidance program yielded promising results (Lapan, Gysbers, & Sun, 1997). Those students who attended schools with more fully implemented comprehensive guidance programs were more likely to report that (a) they had earned higher marks in their coursework, (b) their schooling better prepared them for the future, (c) their schools had more career and college information available to them, and (d) their school environments were largely positive
Core writings and early models of comprehensive guidance stressed the importance of establishing these programs on developmental theory and principles (e.g., Borders & Drury, 1992; Gysbers & Henderson, 1994; Henderson & Gysbers, 1998; Myrick, 1997; Paisley & Hubbard, 1994; Vernon, 1989). Moreover, in reviewing the 1984 national guidelines set by American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) Developmental School Counseling and Guidance Model, Neukrug, Barr, Hoffman, and Kaplan (1993) suggested that in order to be effective, program development must be based on clear theoretical understanding of developmental stages and of counseling skills. Within this developmental framework, school counselors have a firm foundation from which to appraise the efficacy of their innovations and interventions (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994).

In surveying the current literature on the design and implementation of comprehensive programs, we found no in-depth developmental analyses presented. In response to this void, we conducted a study of current state models, attempting to analyze how well these plans are accountable to this developmental mandate.

In order to evaluate the models for developmental grounding, we needed to establish rubrics. It is recognized that there is no one predominant developmental theory, encompassing all aspects of child and adolescent development. Rather, a well designed program should begin with a mindset that the focus of school counseling needs to include a lifespan approach to student development, involving input from many theorists, and many domains. Choosing the core theories was difficult, and perhaps somewhat subjective and arbitrary. In order to standardize our evaluation, we chose two sets of sources, the developmental information in Introductory Psychology type courses (which one would expect all school counselors to have taken), and the national guidelines from the professional guild (see ASCA, 1984). The theorists cited, while worthy of criticism and individual evaluation, are common examples of fairly well respected theories. Obviously, there are many others who could be added or substituted.

This article reports on the following levels of analysis which were conducted for each state's model: (a) a global approach—analyzing the models' attention to assumptions common to general developmental theory; (b) specific attention to the ASCA (1984) domains of developmental theory; and (c) holistic attention to the integration between the domains. The research questions posed by this study included: Have the approved state plans been crafted with a developmental focus? From a lifespan perspective, are they broadly based enough to be considered developmentally comprehensive? According to well-established developmental principles, are these plans for the kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) setting theoretically sound?

Global Developmental Characteristics

Introductory developmental psychology textbooks (e.g., Craig, 1996; Dacey & Travers, 1996) or developmental chapters in general psychology textbooks (e.g., Rathus, 1996; Zimbardo, 1996) usually begin with a set of common assumptions or issues accepted as key by most developmentalists. By synthesizing these, seven global developmental assumptions were constructed and used for our preliminary analysis. The following includes our working definition and an example to illustrate. In order to show the interactive nature of developmental ideas, the examples are derived from the early pubescent experience, approximately ages 11-14. In the United States, these are typically grades 6, 7, and 8 or the middle school years.

Patterns: There are certain recognizable and predictable patterns or stages of development for students. One example of a predictable pattern is that physical puberty usually occurs during these years, with common and predictable accompanying behaviors, such as moodiness, attempts at independence, and peer relationships gaining new importance.

Uniqueness: Students are viewed as unique persons who evolve and change in unique ways. For instance, as predictable as these years may be, each student approaches it uniquely, and in fact, some may enter it earlier or later altogether, others may be "on-time" physically, but have few emotional symptoms.

Culture: Most definitions of "normal" development have strong cultural implications. This is a critical issue for the multicultural world of education today. Some cultures view this period as the entry into adulthood, with accompanying expectations on their children. Others see it as a carefree period, in which "immature" behavior may be overlooked.

Social Tasks: There is a recognizable set of social expectations for development to proceed smoothly. Havighurst (1972) outlined several developmental tasks for this period including among others: (a) desiring accepting and achieving socially responsible behavior, (b) accepting one's physiques and using one's body effectively, and (c) achieving emotional independence form parents and other adults. Most adults in the modern world desire the accomplishment of these types of social tasks for their adolescents.

Holistic: Attention must be paid to the whole person (e.g., cognitive, social-affective, moral/character, meaning making). In understanding early adolescence, one must look at the whole person. Physical development related to hormonal changes reciprocally impact mood, attitudes, and intellectual ability.

Acceleration: Development can be stimulated, but such stimulation should be considered with caution. While these issues for this category are more commonly dealt with in the younger years, questions of how we address the needs of students in the extreme ends of the normal distribution (e.g., the slow learner or the gifted student) must be part of every guidance curriculum.

Transitions: Transitions between key stages temporarily places the student in a more vulnerable position. Students at about the age of 12 are often caught in the transition between childhood and adolescence, not clearly in one place or the other. The sense of not belonging places the child in a more vulnerable place than when the identification is clearer.

Specific Developmental Characteristics

The American School Counselor Association's (1984) guidelines and the recently published National Standards for School Counseling Programs (Campbell & Dahir, 1997) recommended specific developmental domains to be considered in a comprehensive guidance program. Within each of these domains one would expect to see the following specific types of development addressed:

Cognitive: A K-12 developmental plan must take into account differing cognitive levels, including, for example, the Piagetian (1964) stages of concrete and formal operations. It also should

provide a school environment that, similar to Vygotsky's notions of mediation (Wertsch & Kanner, 1992), scaffolds student movement from one stage to another, especially in transitional places.

Personal-social: The key question here is, does the plan consider social-affective development as part of the guidance curriculum and instructional strategies? This should include attention to identity development (e.g., Erikson's (1968) notions of Industry vs. Inferiority and Identity vs. Identity diffusion, or Kegan's (1982) concepts of the development of self). Is there an understanding of ethnic identity development (Atkinson, Morton, & Sue, 1993) which is allowed and valued in this system? Are specific developmental tasks (Havighurst, 1972) taken into account at each grade level? Models should also have an expectation of affective and interpersonal development, with students gradually developing more skill in getting along with others (Selman, 1980).

Citizenship: The citizenship goal addresses how individuals in a democratic society learn to make choices. It is essential that expectations for this goal be age and perhaps gender appropriate, and based on theory and research (e.g., Kohlberg, 1981; Gilligan, 1982). This domain should also guide the curriculum in terms of character development (e.g., honesty, integrity, and justice) from age appropriate developmental levels. There should also be an opportunity for students to discuss how they make meaning in their lives, and these discussions must be grounded in cognitive developmental expectations (Kegan, 1982).

Career: ASCA (1984) has been quite clear that all students should have the right for self-direction in their careers, rather than following a plan dictated by schools. Thus career exploration and guidance must be initiated early on in a student's education. Career-academic planning needs to be guided by developmental levels (e.g., Super, 1976), but also must offer multiple options for exploration. Clear and age appropriate pathways for achieving career goals should be established.

This study compares each state's model against these global and specific developmental criteria, asking basic questions about developmental foundations of comprehensive developmental guidance models. It evaluates the existence of developmental constructs in the models and their integration within each state's published guidelines and curricula.

Method

Participants and Procedures

A telephone call was placed to the state level official responsible for counseling and guidance for each of the 50 states. If such a person could not be identified, a high ranking representative of the state school counseling association was contacted. A copy of each state's comprehensive counseling and guidance plan was solicited. Each of the twenty-four states with completed models sent copies of their written plans. Eleven of the state's school counseling representatives mentioned they had created curriculum guides as well. If available, the guides were purchased. District or school level plans were not evaluated. State models were only considered if completed (i.e., not in draft form such as Washington and Oregon). However, it should be noted that all completed programs were not necessarily fully operational. For example, California's program is nearly a decade old, yet was reported as currently inactive. The complete sample and telephone protocol information are discussed in Sink and MacDonald (in press).

Data Analysis

In order to increase the power of the analysis, a mixed data inquiry (Patton, 1987) was used. The methods took the form of a combination of program evaluation, quantitative, and qualitative investigation. State programs, as currently published, were studied by three levels of analysis. First, the number of states with comprehensive models was tallied. Second, since our goal was to evaluate the developmental nature of these models by comparing them to previously mentioned developmental standards, a content analysis was performed on each of the models. Because we were interested in the content of the models, a modified qualitative inquiry was conducted, ordering the coding by preexisting assumptions from the disciplines. That is, the global assumptions came as a synthesis from developmental psychology and the specific assumptions published by ASCA, the professional guild. Finally, the raters were then asked deductively to look for matches to assumed general patterns and inductively to search for patterns which may not have fit expected existing developmental conceptual frameworks.

Developmental content analysis

In order to provide qualitative investigator triangulation (Denzin, 1978; Patton, 1987; Nelson & Poulin, 1997), the researchers trained three advanced school counseling graduate student raters in analysis of developmental content according to the previously mentioned global and specific characteristics. A modified axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) was used, with each evaluator independently looked for key words and constructs related to developmental theory. These often appeared as "buzz" words (e.g., "developmental tasks"), but the models were further screened for concrete, operational evidence of the underlying concepts. Each model was individually studied and coded by each rater, then these investigators met as a group to compare their findings. All differences were brought to consensus through discussion.

Due to the variety of forms of data received, the evaluation/scoring system needed to be flexible. The two principal investigators reviewed and trained each research assistant in the definitions and general principles of development. Additionally, the research assistants had recently taken a graduate level course in lifespan developmental psychology. A set of forms was given to each, with boxes labeled with the categories. There was room for them to write narrative comments and a numerical evaluation. For example in the box labeled "Citizenship/Choices," one rater (research assistant) wrote comments such as "Theme of community strong" and "Page 40 addresses making informed moral /ethical decisions—'Rating: 2'."

When the investigators met together with the research assistants, they discussed the similarities and differences in their findings, often going back to the model under consideration for further scrutiny. They then made decisions about thoroughness of coverage or evidence of theoretical grounding for ideas. As there were many incidents of concepts being expressed in the models, using different language than commonly used in theoretical engagement, these discussions were critical to the analysis of the models. They looked for the intent and application of developmental principles, as well as the proper vocabulary. For example, one model used the term "social enhancement" as a goal for its students. It was determined that this was nearly identical to our concept of "Interpersonal", and was so rated. It is likely that there was a contamination factor in the consensual analysis. However, despite the diversity of data forms in the models, this in-depth process of analysis, beginning with the individual rater, and subsequently by the group, allowed for the most thorough examination of the data. It is for this reason that the categorical scores were not mean scores of the raters, but consensus-based scores.

Developmental quality analysis

After the group evaluation of the content, each category in the state's model was scored for quality and completeness. On a scale of .00 to 2.00 with increments of .50, a value was assigned to each item: a "2" was assigned to the category if the developmental concept was well addressed throughout the model; a "1" was given if it was briefly, but not substantially addressed, and/or if it there was little follow through; and "0" if it was not addressed at all. For the sake of this analysis, the models and curriculum handbooks were analyzed for foundational issues such as developmental scope and sequence. In addition to the text of the models, all bibliographies and reference lists were evaluated for developmental evidence. Finally, the raters sought out developmental constructs which were evident, other than those the researchers originally assumed to be germane. After these analyses were completed, the full research team met to further explore the findings, investigating themes and patterns.

There was significant variety in depth and breadth of the models as submitted, ranging from approximately 40 pages to several notebooks (see Sink & MacDonald, in press, for a more extensive description of the state programs). The specific content of the documents largely included the program components and dimensions presented in Gysbers and Henderson (1994). For example, they generally included student competencies, and program definitions, rationales, and assumptions. The "programs" from California and Georgia, however, did not fit this overall pattern. Instead, these states submitted school counseling program guidelines rather than a well-articulated comprehensive guidance and counseling model. Eleven of the state programs reviewed also included large group guidance curricula reflecting the personal, social, educational, and vocational skills students were to master by the end of high school.

In our desire to fairly compare them, we restricted our evaluation to what the states sent as foundational materials—the models themselves and attending curricula. For the same reason (i.e., equitable comparison), activity packets, which might have developmental components, were not considered. These were usually defined as ancillary, and in fact had even more variety in scope than the models and curricula.

Results

Table 1 summarizes the results in rank order by developmental category. Summarizing the mean findings using a .00-2.00 scale, several generalizations can be made. Across all states the most global developmental attention was devoted to stage theory-type Patterns (1.31) and Holistic (1.04) focus. In contrast, Acceleration (.58) and Cultural (.46) developmental issues were rarely addressed. In the specific domains the following generalizations are clear. Focus on Cognitive developmental levels (.60) and Scaffolding for learning (.33) was only weakly evident across the models. There was generally more attention to the Personal/social domain with Social Tasks (1.15) and Identity (1.00), and Interpersonal (.98) issues receiving the highest scores. A significant exception was Ethic identity development receiving a mean score of (.37) indicating almost non-existent attention. In fact, 14 of the 24 states had no mention of ethnic identity developmental issues and only 3 states received a rank of 2.0. Summarizing the Career developmental area, attention to different Options received the highest score (.98), yet that was rarely suggested to be implemented through pathways-type developmental programs (.58), or attention to Levels in Career development (.67). The category of Citizenship reflected a relatively strong focus on character development (1.02) less attention to Choice making (.79) and virtually no attention to helping students in Meaning making (.04).

The concluding phase of the content analysis looked for integration of domains or at least recognition of reciprocal influence. In 19 of the models there appeared at least some attempt at integration of two or more domains. The most common was Cognitive with either Career or Personal/social. However, the raters unanimously agreed that systematic, thorough integration was lacking in most models.

Discussion

Attempting to refine the analysis, several patterns emerged. We discuss these observations and implications by commenting on (a) the structure of the models, (b) attention to developmental constructs and (c) possible explanations for the findings.

Common Structures

Structurally, an important initial observation is that most models followed the Gysbers and Henderson (1994) structure for comprehensive guidance plans. The Missouri Model was cited in most reference lists provided. Myrick's (1997) model was also commonly mentioned. These results are similar to other recent observations. Most state models follow the Gysbers and Henderson approach, often citing them and each other in their reference lists (Lapan, Gysbers & Sun, 1997; Sink & MacDonald, in press).

Developmental Constructs and Notable Weaknesses

Salient developmental constructs were more difficult to find than expected. Vague language, without reference to the source of the ideas was common. For example, "social tasks" were discussed in many models, yet rarely was Havighurst cited, nor the tasks well grounded in theory. Some developmental notions were so deeply embedded they were difficult to identify. For example, Acceleration was only found by reviewing the curricula, studying the special education components (when available) and the resulting focus was usually on acceleration for the purposes of remediation. There was little attention to the developmental needs of gifted students.

Often developmental levels had to be inferred. For example, the academic objectives were sometimes formed using the developmental notions similar to Bloom Engelhart, Hill, Furst, and Krathwwohl's (1956) taxonomy (e.g., the models used terms like: be aware, describe, identify compare, analyze, introduce, develop, reinforce, apply), but there was little or no rationale given as to why those outcomes were expected. These notions were never made explicit, and had little consistency within or across models.

The most significant gap across the models is in attention to culture and ethnic developmental issues. Usually the developmental benchmark was written "recognize differences" or "appreciate others' differences". However, these were mentioned without a context of ethnic identity development, and no model suggested a way to assess these cultural developmental objectives.

Despite the increased attention to constructivism in contemporary educational and counseling literature (e.g., Sexton & Griffin, 1997; Steffe & Gale, 1995), the notion of how students of different abilities create meaning for themselves was usually missing from the documents. It would occasionally be found woven into character education sections. For example, suggestions for units built around values such as respect might involve exploring definitions or experiences of respect or disrespect in that student's life.

It was somewhat surprising to find so little attention to career development, especially since school-to-work type programs are so prominent in schools today (Schmidt, 1997) and early comprehensive

developmental guidance and counseling models initially evolved from an emphasis on vocational/career on education (e.g., Gysbers & Henderson, 1994). However, it may be that while school-to-work guidance and job-placement targeted initiatives remain the focus of federal education legislation, they are not an integral component of the guidance curriculum (Hoyt, Hughey, & Hughey, 1995). Career guidance plans must be developmental, stretching across K-12 and into the early college years. For example, pathways-type programs (those which help students match courses taken to career goals) for vocational education in grade 11 should be implemented as a direct outgrowth of career education in grades K-10. It may be that in high schools career centers are often separate from the counseling function, so career-focused counselors have had little input formation of the states' models. This could also explain the lack of integration of lifespan career exploration with other curricula in our findings.

Possible Explanations

The inconsistency in developmental evidence could be the result of multiple influences. Perry (1995) suggested that experienced counselors may have lost their developmental theory base, or perhaps, many were trained using non-developmental approaches to counseling (e.g., Rogers or Holland), or they may largely ignore known theories. It is likely that early state models reflect the orientation of the counselor training programs of present-day school counselors, many of which were educated prior to the advent of the comprehensive developmental guidance movement. More attention to developmental theory and practice may be necessary in initial training and/or inservice. Recently, Stanciak (1995) issued a call for retraining of experienced counselors. This may also be useful for teachers and administrators with whom school counselors hope to work on interdisciplinary teams. The models must be flexible enough to reflect the educational and counseling concerns at the building level. Different social and cultural needs and expectations must play a significant role in the implementation of the models.

Many of the state plans do not use the term developmental in their title, so it may be unreasonable to assume these programs reflect underlying developmental constructs and principles. Whether the concept is there or not, when planning guidance for all of the students, a clearly articulated understanding of development is necessary in order for the model into be most effective (Borders & Drury, 1992). Orange County, Florida, for example, has adopted Myrick's (1997) developmental model, implementing important concepts into their "Total Guidance Program" (Snyder & Daly, 1993). On the other hand, our study did not address implementation, so the question of how developmentally focused practitioners actually are is unknown. Our assumption was that what school counselors value and how they think and behave would emerge in the models they develop.

Finally, Borders and Paisley (1995) stressed that there is often confusion between scope and sequence of a program and a developmental approach to guidance. Many of the plans reviewed were well defined by grade level, but failed to specify their underlying developmental framework. Ignoring Paisley and DeAngelis's (1995) call for balance, several programs focused so strongly on stage theory that "individual uniqueness" was largely neglected.

Summary and Implications for Practice

In response to the research questions, nearly half of the states are moving to some degree towards developmental comprehensive guidance. This is especially evident in creation of benchmarks and tasks within the dimension of personal-social development. We commend this seminal work. However, from a lifespan perspective, the models appear to be to narrow in scope to be considered developmentally comprehensive. Significant areas of development (e.g., cultural identity, meaning-making) are largely absent from the state plans. Others (e.g., career development) seem relegated to specific grade levels. In short, the preponderance of state models lack a solid theoretical foundation.

We suggest that states take another evaluative look at the developmental components of their models, assessing them for theoretical soundness. A useful template for these plans is that desired outcomes will remain constant for all students, regardless of age, but the developmental indicators (commonly in the form of benchmarks and competencies) will vary by grade level according to developmental needs of students (Haack, 1994; Neukrug et al., 1993; Snyder & Daly, 1993). States would do well to revisit the developmental literature mentioned earlier (e.g., Borders & Drury 1992; Gysbers & Henderson, 1994; Myrick, 1997; Paisley & Hubbard, 1994; Vernon, 1989) and rework their plans accordingly.

Comprehensive developmental models must also be part of the educational curriculum of the school. As Gysbers and Henderson (1994) stressed, comprehensive guidance is a program, not a position or set of

activities ancillary to a school's primary educational mission. The goal of this developmental reevaluation should be to improve the models and the interventions provided for all students (e.g., Gysbers, Hughey, Starr, & Lapan, 1992). In reality, a school counselor's work is primarily developmental in nature, requiring personal and programmatic updating, processing, and evaluating (Neukrug et al., 1993).

There must be a balance between focus on the person and focus on the theory, with the weight going to the individual (Napierkowski, & Parsons, 1995). However, we must not lose developmental theory, or we run the risk of our programs becoming activity-oriented, task-driven, and atheoretical. As Baker (1996) has cautioned, school counselors must be careful to not to define developmental guidance too narrowly, by moving to either end of the preventive-educative vs. remediative continuum. Rather, developmental assumptions and principles must be foundational to all comprehensive plans.

Efficacy research on comprehensive guidance programs and its major components (guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support), demonstrates, at least in part, that a more systemic approach to school counseling can positively impact practice at the building-level (Hughley, Lapan, & Gysbers, 1993; Lapan, Gysbers, Hughey, & Arni, 1993; Whiston & Sexton, 1998). For example, after approximately 10 years of implementation of the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program across the state, high school students are reporting a higher frequency of meaningful contacts with their counselors, including increased group and individual counseling and large group guidance presentations (e.g., Hughey, Gysbers, & Starr, 1993). It is our contention that student learning and mastery of important personal/social, educational, and vocational competencies can be increased, if the developmental features of state comprehensive programs are significantly strengthened. As state plans continue to be refined and clear developmental indictors formulated, it is our hope that school counselors will further modify their work with students, emphasizing less non-guidance-related activities (e.g., administrative tasks) and more direct learner-centered interactions.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Even though the mixed data inquiry approach (Patton, 1987) allowed us to compare the programs against the theories and constructs we expected we should find, it limited our ability to use a more pure qualitative design (Bryman & Burgess, 1994), actually discovering from the ground up which developmental concepts were being used. Our choice of a deductive approach, with a preexisting evaluative scheme, may have limited our ability to find other developmental notions. In addition, the mixed design started with an assumed set of appropriate core developmental issues and assumed that ASCA's (1984) categories of developmental attention were pertinent. These two assumptions are worthy of discussion.

Upon conducting the inductive secondary analysis (a final look at the data for any unusual patterns or unexpected observations), it became obvious that a distinction between cognitive development and academic progress or achievement would have been helpful. The state models seem to mix attention to cognition and academics. Developmental theory from a psychological perspective may neglect the academic issues which are a key focus of school counseling. Future inquiry may need to define the similarities and differences between these constructs for more meaningful analysis.

We also recognize that this study is limited by the decision to evaluate only state models, as sent to us by the officials in state educational authority. The potential for incomplete or inaccurate information must be considered. To avoid this confounding element in future studies, we recommend that state school counseling organizations and designated state officials improve their communication regarding the process and the product.

Finally, our qualitative approach did not lend itself to using more conventional (statistical) ways of assessing inter-rater reliability (see Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Instead, our method adopted a more constructivist and collaborative approach currently recommended in the counseling research literature (e.g., Nelson & Poulin, 1997).

Because significant work on comprehensive guidance is occurring at the local level, future research should examine district, county, or site-based plans. As many states and districts are in the final stages of approving and instituting their programs, a replication of this study in two years would be useful. Additionally, subsequent investigations need to examine more carefully the developmental characteristics of the activity packets and supplemental materials created by state and local committees.

Concluding Remarks

While acknowledging that further research must be conducted, serious attempts to reformulate these state plans in more developmentally sensitive ways should produce further changes in school counseling practice. Counselors will have a research-based developmental framework to guide their work with students in areas of classroom guidance, individual planning, responsive services, and system support. Through comprehensive developmental guidance programs school counselors are moving toward a place of influence in curriculum development and implementation in the schools. In light of this, we invite school counselors of all nations to consider the developmental nature of their programs. The need for a developmental theory of learning is more pressing now than ever (Brown, Metz, & Campione, 1996). The most significant contribution school counselors can make to curriculum development is a developmental theory-based focus which will integrate the cognitive, personal/social, career, and citizenship dimensions of learning with content-area instruction.

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Table 1:

Characteristic			Rating
Global Assumptions	Patterns		1.31
	Holistic		1.04
	Transition		0.98
	Social Tasks		0.88
	Uniqueness		0.63
	Acceleration		0.58
	Culture		0.46
Specific Domain	Cognitive	Levels	0.60
		Scaffolding	1.33
	Personal/Social	Tasks	1.15
		Identity	1.00
		Interpersonal	0.98
		Ethnic Identity	0.37
	Career	Options	0.98
		Levels	0.67
		Pathways	0.58
	Citizenship	Character	1.02
		Choices	0.79
		Meaning	0.04

Note: Range .00-2.00