

Updating the School Counseling Research Agenda: A Delphi Study

Villares & Dimmitt (2017)
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For which topic were research priorities identified?

school counseling

In which location was the research priority setting conducted?

North America - USA

Why was it conducted at all?

The school counseling profession has embraced the power and importance of research to inform practice and to support both internal accountability and external legitimacy. In the current study, we aimed to update these findings and to reposition research priorities to reflect contemporary educational contexts. Additionally, we sought to support counselor educators, graduate students, practitioners, and researchers in their efforts to form collaborative partnerships related to specific areas of focus.

What was the objective?

to identify the research priorities for school counseling

What was the outcome?

a ranking list of 20 research questions

How long did the research prioritization take?

No information provided.

Which methods were used to identify research priorities?

Delphi

How were the priorities for research identified exactly?

Step 1: literature review and codebook development: review of school counseling literature resulting in 85 publications that addressed the 2005 Delphi research questions (study by Dimmitt et al., 2005), codebook developed. Step 2: Delphi round 1: survey providing participants with original set of the 42 prioritized school counseling research questions from prior study (Dimmitt et al., 2005) and link to database with related research articles published since that time, participants were asked to select the top 20 research questions from this list based on their judgment of current importance to the field of school counseling, additionally participants were asked: What is the purpose of SC research? What criteria did you use to evaluate each of the 2005 research questions on their level of importance? What additional research or evaluation questions do you believe are critical to address?. Step 3: data processing: content analysis of open-ended questions. Step 4: Delphi round 2: list consisting of newly ranked top 20 questions from prior study and all new questions generated in round 1, questions organized in 7 areas, participants were asked to provide any additional research questions they thought were worth exploring within any of the identified domains and to identify additional domains or topics that did not fit the domains used. Step 5: data processing: content analysis. Step 6: Delphi round 3: list of 174 research questions, participants were asked to review the domains, topic areas and related research questions and to select a total of 30 questions that they thought should be considered a priority in the future research

Which stakeholders took part?

School counselor and school counselor educators. Delphi round 1: 24 participants. Delphi round 2: 28 participants. Delphi round 3: 26 participants.

How were stakeholders recruited?

The project team developed a list of possible experts from several sources, drawing first from the original expert panel; then from the Evidence-Based School Counseling Conference (EBSCC) advisory council; and finally, from an author-generated list of individuals whose participation could ensure panel diversity regarding gender, race, ethnicity, geographic location, and work roles. Members of the EBSCC advisory council were approached because of their active involvement in researching and implementing evidence-based programs and interventions.

Were stakeholders actively involved or did they just participate?

Stakeholders were mere participants of the research prioritization process; they were not actively involved in the process.