

# A Discriminant Analysis of Gender and Counselor Professional Identity Development

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This quantitative study examined professional identity development and orientation for 489 counseling practitioners, educators, and trainees as predicted by participant-identified sex and engagement in professional activities. Differences between male and female participants regarding aspects of professional identity were evaluated. Discriminant analysis results indicate sex differences in professional identity development. Additional regression analysis revealed a significant predictive relationship between professional engagement and professional identity orientation and development.

Professional identity development is a process by which an individual reaches an understanding of her or his profession in conjunction with her or his own self-concept, enabling the articulation of occupational role, philosophy, and professional approach to people within and outside of the individual's chosen field (Brott & Myers, 1999; Smith & Robinson, 1995). One's professional identity includes the values and beliefs ascribed to by a profession as a whole as well as the way in which one chooses to engage in a chosen occupation (Remley & Herlihy, 2007). By strengthening the competency of practitioners through a focus on professional identity development, it is hoped that the counseling profession will be bolstered as practitioners and counselor educators reach a cohesive collective identity (Gale & Austin, 2003). Collective identity refers to having shared goals, resources, and aspirations for a profession (Daniels, 2002).

To build a relationship with one's field of work, an individual must establish a clear foundation and construct a professional philosophy that clarifies and distinguishes the profession from other similar vocations. In this study, we contend that the philosophical beliefs and values ascribed to by individual professional counselors as part of their professional identity may be influenced by factors that may include societally defined gender role expectations, personal values, and engagement in professional activities. To determine how gender group membership (as culturally imposed according to overt biological sex characteristics) affects professional identity development and engagement behaviors, we evaluated differences between self-identified male and female participants regarding measured aspects of professional identity. Knowing if cultural gender role expectations influence identity development could be important for assisting practitioners, new professionals, and counselors-in-training as they become increasingly invested in the counseling field in a self-authorized way (Belenky, 1997). Having a personally congruent way of being as a professional is important in building competence, allowing for individuals to confidently

contribute to the field and their communities (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2008; Watts, 2004).

## Gender Norms and Identity Development

In an analysis of professional identity development, research has indicated that the construct of professional identity, which typically develops in association with a particular field of work, may contribute to gender inequity (Rubineau, 2008). This inequity can manifest in terms of general gender representation in the profession or engagement in professional activities, or it may influence representation in administrative and other leadership positions. This pervasive influence may also be evident with regard to those individuals chosen for promotion within professional businesses or hired for certain instructional positions within educational settings. Professions such as those included in the medical field (e.g., medical doctors, physician assistants) may appear to have gender equality when one looks at student admissions, graduation rates, and grades; however, when one considers the specialist areas, an obvious gender gap exists because of the requirements for success (e.g., time requirements) within those domains of expertise. These externally defined requirements have been found to relate directly to how the profession is defined in terms of performance expectations (Boulis & Jacobs, 2003). Time requirements have been found to play a particularly important role for professional women as life obligations and personal and professional roles correspond to their ability to balance personal and professional responsibilities, leading to role conflict (Hill, Leinbaugh, Bradley, & Hazler, 2005; Mason & Ekman, 2007; Medina, 2008; Simon, 1995).

## Role Conflict and Professional Engagement

Mason and Ekman (2007) noted, in a content analysis of educational outcomes and employment data, that although

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women are becoming more engaged in higher education and are involved in following career aspirations, they are not achieving higher management or upper tier status in organizational and educational institutions. The authors suggested that this disparity may be due to the choice to balance motherhood with career and the undervaluing of that choice by society. In addition, women who choose to go into positions of corporate leadership and enter careers requiring graduate degrees must typically put off parenthood until their late 30s, much later on average than their male counterparts. Mason and Ekman (2007) reported that two factors would predict whether women in these positions would have children: age and number of hours spent at work. Among professional men, the more hours they worked, the more likely it was for them to have children; however, the opposite was true for professional women. Although Mason and Ekman did not focus exclusively on the helping fields or clearly identify inclusion of mental health workers, the research indicates general cultural trends within the United States.

Career choice also involves the presence of confidence in one's own ability to perform the tasks associated with a specific profession (Bodenhorn, Wolfe, & Airen, 2010; Schaefer, Epperson, & Nauta, 1997; Whitson, 2009), confidence that could be affected by societal performance expectations in one's personal and professional life. Counseling is just one profession within the broader helping fields; therefore, women may choose to enter counseling as a career because of its alignment with traditionally feminine values (e.g., care for others, advocacy, wellness). However, for various reasons including the role of motherhood (actual and expected), the support of professional development in educational and personal environments, and societal stereotypes of men as natural leaders, women may not pursue management, supervisory positions, or tenure-ranked positions in higher education at the same level as their male counterparts.

Gattiker and Larwood (1990) found in their study of 215 supervisors in 31 major corporations in California that the perceptions of upper level hierarchical positions in organizations were related to the beliefs that those positions would have a negative impact on investment in family time. This negative perception of institutional leadership positions on personal life ultimately influenced career choices (Hecker, 1998). Therefore, internal alignment with values traditionally associated with female behavior, and expectations associated with their multiple cultural and societal roles, may influence female counselors' self-perceptions regarding confidence in their ability to attend fully to their professional role as may be expected from those without domestic responsibilities. Gattiker and Larwood also found that well-educated men with children perceived themselves to be in higher positions within their organizations than others participating in the study. Although this study was not specific to counseling, it points again to general societal themes from which the counseling field is not immune. The imbalance between what is expected institutionally and what

is valued internally may influence the importance ascribed to certain professional engagement activities by female professionals sustaining multiple personal and professional roles. As with many professionals in Gattiker and Larwood's study, personal socioeconomic variables (such as the role expectations associated with being female in the United States) may also affect appraisals regarding identity development as counselors (Archer, 2008; Healey & Hays, 2011).

## ■ Purpose of the Study

The importance placed on factors associated with the concept of professional identity may be influenced by a variety of cultural roles. However, in this study we focus specifically on the influence of societally defined gender roles on individuals' appraisals of their own professional identity development, professional values, and reported engagement. As Gibson, Dollahide, and Moss (2010) indicated in their qualitative study of professional identity involving 43 student participants, the identity development process is one that is grounded in the "successful integration of personal attributes and professional training in the context of a professional community" (p. 23). Although research is growing in the area of professional identity development in counseling, there is sparse research evaluating aspects related to the influence of one's life outside of the professional realm. Also, many studies tend to focus solely on counselors-in-training; therefore, this study attempted to include professionals in a variety of roles (trainee, practitioner, educator) and focus on gathering data about an issue pertaining specifically to the personal and professional integration of self.

In this study, we assessed the level at which participants' identification with a particular gender group (as determined by their identification as male or female) could be predicted by professional identity development. In addition, we assessed engagement in professional activities (such as publication, conference attendance, and licensure) and agreement with professional beliefs, values, and philosophical constructs associated with counseling to determine if differences existed between male and female participants in the study.

In the assessment of sex differences within the context of normative gender expectations, implications for practitioners, educators, and counselors-in-training can be presented with regard to possible interventions to improve self-perceptions of professional identity development and engagement in professional activities. Our present research was completed to determine whether professional identity development, professional beliefs, and level of engagement in professional activities could predict male or female group membership. Research questions included the following:

1. Does male or female group membership predict level of engagement within the profession as measured by the Professional Identity and Engagement Scale (PIES)?

2. Does male or female group membership predict professional identity development and professional orientation as measured by the Professional Identity and Values Scale (PIVS)?
3. Does level of engagement as measured by the PIES predict professional development and orientation as measured by the PIVS?

## Method

### Participants

Participants in this study included school counselors, community practitioners, counselor educators from programs accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) as well as non-CACREP counseling programs, and graduate students at the doctoral and master's level from CACREP and non-CACREP institutions. We selected student participants from CACREP-accredited doctoral programs through soliciting CACREP liaisons from each university via e-mail. Institutions with programs currently in review for CACREP accreditation were also solicited for participation. In addition, we recruited participants through mailings to the aforementioned institutions, public schools in a southeastern state, and that state's mental health agencies that indicated acceptance of third-party payments. Recruitment letters and e-mails requested that potential participants complete the two inventories (PIES and PIVS) used for this study through the online assessment service called Survey Monkey.

A total of 615 individuals agreed to take the online survey, and 489 cases were usable after incomplete entries were removed. Of those who responded, 473 indicated their sex, with 92 (19%) of respondents indicating that they were male and 380 (80%) indicating that they were female. One respondent identified as transgender and, therefore, was not included in analysis so that associated and possibly identifying information would not be revealed. Information related to participant ethnicity was requested. Of the 470 participants who reported their ethnicity, 393 (84%) stated that they were of Caucasian or European descent, 37 (8%) indicated that they were of African American/Afro-Caribbean/African descent, 15 (3%) identified as being Hispanic/Latina/Latino, 15 (3%) identified as being of Asian/Polynesian or Pacific Islander descent, and 3 (1%) identified as Native American/Indian or First Nation. The remainder of the sample (1%) indicated being from other ethnic backgrounds not listed, such as having a multiethnic or multiracial heritage.

Data were collected from respondents at all levels of the counseling field beginning at the master's level. Of the 473 respondents who reported their primary role within the profession, 282 (60%) indicated that they were master's-level students, 68 (14%) indicated that they were doctoral-level students or candidates, 27 (6%) stated that they were working as counselors in an agency setting, 25 (5%) were tenured full

professors, 19 (4%) were tenured associate professors, 18 (4%) were assistant tenure-track professors, 18 (4%) were school counselors, 11 (2%) were private practitioners, and 5 (1%) were adjunct instructors. Of those who stated that they were students or counselor educators, 102 (25%) indicated that they were studying or working within a CACREP-accredited program. With regard to the entire sample, 109 (22%) stated that they currently held a license as a professional counselor. Because only the primary role was requested, it is possible that several participants may have had overlapping roles; for example, some may have been practitioners and doctoral students.

Information was also collected with regard to organizational involvement. Of the 473 participants who completed demographic information, 231 (49%) stated that they were current members of the American Counseling Association, 137 (29%) stated they were members of Chi Sigma Iota International, 84 (18%) indicated membership in the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, 58 (12%) indicated that they were members of the American School Counseling Association, and 32 (7%) indicated that they were current members of the American Psychological Association. Some participants may be members of more than one organization.

### Measures

**PIES.** The PIES revised version (Puglia, 2008) was used as a measure of professional identity for the purposes of this study. This revised version of the original scale was obtained from the developer and is shorter than the original, consisting of 22 items in the Beliefs subscale (originally 32 items) and 11 items in the Engagement subscale (originally 13 items). Changes were made to the original scale following an exploratory factor analysis (B. Puglia, personal communication, August 2009). PIES was initially developed with the input of expert reviewer feedback; reviewers included six male counselor educators who had published on professional identity in the counseling field.

The Beliefs subscale includes a 5-point Likert-type rating scale, ranging from 1 (*strong disagreement*) to 5 (*strong agreement*). The Engagement subscale includes yes/no items that are weighted on the basis of conceptual evaluations and expert reviewer opinion concerning the importance each activity serves for successful individual professional development (e.g., the number of publications authored is weighted higher than the number of professional presentations given). According to the developer of the revised instrument, the original Professional Beliefs subscale had a reported Cronbach's alpha of .63, with no items exceeding an interitem correlation of .45 indicating that each of the 22 questions within the Beliefs subscale contributed something unique to the overall instrument. Factors associated with this subscale included teaching, empowerment, accreditation, professional distinction, relationship, specialty, and spirituality. The alpha within the weighted Engagement subscale items was .66, with no items exceeding an interitem correlation of .50. These alpha

levels indicate that the PIES scale in its current form is a good indicator of professional identity, although the alphas also indicate that the measure may not be assessing the construct of professional identity as consistently as would be expected (Cronbach, 1951).

**PIVS.** PIVS (see Healey, Hays, & Fish, 2010) was developed using the themes gathered from a qualitative study on women's perspectives related to the counseling field and the self-perceptions of their development as professionals. Items were also developed through consensus team review, evaluation of conceptual research, and external expert review. The scale was developed in part to address possible bias in the assessment of female counseling practitioners inherent to PIES caused by the way in which it was constructed (i.e., weighting based on male expert input and review as well as development of items from only the current conceptual literature). Following initial analysis after data collection, PIVS was again released to expert reviewers within the original consensus coding team to obtain final interrater reliability statistics with regard to the 22 items that remained following initial development and reduction. Items were assessed to determine fit with the operational definition of orientation toward the counseling philosophy, counselor values, and counselor identity development. The instrument was piloted within the qualitative consensus coding team prior to general release to determine accuracy, readability of items, and time considerations.

Composite scores for the Orientation subscale include 11 professional orientation questions and seven professional values questions. The composite score for the Development subscale resulted from the addition of 14 professional development items. Three philosophical orientation and four development questions were reverse scored. PIVS includes a 6-point Likert-type rating for each item, ranging from 1 (*strong disagreement*) to 6 (*strong agreement*). To determine the final interrater reliability, we calculated Cronbach's alpha. Results for the entire scale excluded eight items due to complete interrater agreement that did not allow for any variance in the coding. Therefore, the Cronbach's standardized estimate of .81 is likely lower than the true alpha for this scale. The Cronbach's alpha for the final scale, including all subscales, was standardized as .80 (Healey, 2009).

#### Data Collection

Data were collected using Survey Monkey. A directory of CACREP-accredited programs was obtained from the CACREP website (CACREP, 2009), and participants were solicited through CACREP liaisons ( $n = 236$ ). Additionally, the primary researcher (first author) randomly selected 100 individuals from a sampling frame of college counseling centers at CACREP institutions across the United States as well as agencies and public schools in a southeastern U.S. state and mailed letters of invitation (15 were undeliverable). Seventy-five CACREP and non-CACREP programs

responded from the 236 solicited, indicating a 32% response rate. In addition, 18 practitioners from a variety of settings (21% response rate) participated in the study.

## Results

Analysis was completed to compare professional identity development, orientation and values, and engagement in the profession using participant-identified gender group membership as a predictor. We conducted a descriptive discriminant analysis (DDA) to determine what and how variables contribute to group differences. Typically, DDA is used to determine when group membership, in this case male and female, predicts scores on continuous variables, such as the subscale scores from the two instruments distributed (Sherry, 2006). DDA is particularly useful when comparing groups with low participant numbers or groups with a disproportionate number of respondents. In this first analysis, participant-identified sex was entered as the grouping variable, and the subscale scores from the PIES and PIVS were entered as the four independent variables. Group statistics for each of these subscales are reported in Table 1. Data for this analysis met all assumptions for the model, as indicated by the Box's M test, which was not significant,  $F(10, 121039.5) = 1.051, p = .40$ , indicating equal population covariance, which allowed for continuation of analysis despite the differing number of participants in each group (men and women).

#### Discriminant Analysis

The DDA was found to be statistically significant at  $p < .001$  when canonical discriminant functions were examined. This result indicates that there was a significant difference between groups with regard to the individual predictor variables; male and female group membership accounted for a significant level of differences in scores beyond chance (Meyers, Gamst, & Guarino, 2006). The canonical correlation for this analysis was  $r = .33$ , with an eigenvalue of .12 indicating that the functions used in this analysis (subscales) did not discriminate clearly between the groups; thus, other factors likely contributed to group differences outside of those evaluated by the PIES and PIVS. The effect size for this analysis was  $R^2 = 10.5\%$ , which is indicated by Cohen (1992) to be of medium effect with regard to this type of analysis at  $N =$

**TABLE 1**  
**Subscale Group Statistics**

Variable	Men		Women	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
PIES Engagement subscale total	54.5	32.0	36.2	29.9
PIVS Development subscale total	136.2	18.4	125.5	18.8
PIES Beliefs subscale total	98.9	8.2	101.3	7.9
PIVS Orientation subscale total	89.8	6.2	90.9	6.0

*Note.* PIES = Professional Identity and Engagement Scale; PIVS = Professional Identity and Values Scale.

453; a broad descriptor was used because of the exploratory nature of this inquiry (Glass, McGaw, & Smith, 1981). This relates to the average variance between groups and warrants a moderate level of practical concern to the counseling field.

We reviewed the standardized and structured canonical discriminant function coefficients to determine what and how group differences contributed to the differing variable scores found. Table 2 represents both sets of coefficients for this analysis, with all log determinants closely grouped in the table. It was found that the PIES Engagement subscale had the strongest correlation with the grouping variables and contributed most to the group separation, accounting for  $R^2 = .50$ . Professional development, as measured by the PIVS Development subscale, was also found to have had a positive relationship and also significantly contributed to group differences. The PIES Beliefs subscale ( $\alpha = .68$ ) and the PIVS Orientation subscale ( $\alpha = .82$ ) contributed to the function but were negatively related to engagement and development. The Cronbach's alpha was .80 for the PIVS Development subscale for this sample.

Regarding the group centroids (see Table 2), the male group was substantially higher than the female group. This result indicates that observed group differences pertaining to all subscales can be attributed to the male participants. More specifically, male participants had a higher level of engagement in the profession and were in greater agreement with higher level or weighted development items. This result also indicates that female participants were less likely to endorse developmental items that were more heavily weighted (beginner vs. advanced practitioner), less likely to score high on the Engagement subscale, and more likely to score higher on the Orientation and Beliefs subscales. According to classification results, 68% of the group cases were correctly classified, indicating a valid model (Meyers et al., 2006).

### Regression Analysis of Engagement

To frame the significance of the discriminant analysis, we needed to evaluate if a participant's level of engagement as measured by the PIES indicated a significantly stronger overall professional identity. We conducted a regression analysis to

determine whether engagement predicted greater professional identity as indicated by the PIVS total score. We performed a simple linear regression analysis, and engagement was found to be a significant predictor of overall professional identity as determined by the PIVS total score at  $\beta = .42$ ,  $t(485) = 10.23$ ,  $p < .001$ , and explained a significant proportion of variance,  $R^2 = .18$ ,  $F(1, 485) = 104.5$ ,  $p < .001$ . The unstandardized  $\beta$  was .14, with a standard error of .01. The adjusted  $R^2$  was .18, with an  $R = .42$ . The Durbin-Watson statistic was within tolerance at 1.87, indicating a lack of serial correlation allowing for interpretation of the regression analysis. The standard error of estimates indicates that the regression predictions are accurate ( $\sigma_{est} = 9.76$ ). Regarding effect size, approximately 17.6% of the total variability of professional identity as measured by the PIVS is accounted for by engagement behaviors as measured by the PIES Engagement subscale (Trusty, Thompson, & Petrocelli, 2004). The PIES Engagement subscale had a Cronbach's alpha of .81 for this sample.

## Discussion

Identifying as male or female in the counseling profession did have a significant influence on professional identity development and agreement with the counseling philosophy, which could have implications for training, organizational structures, and traditional tenure policies focused on scholarly activity. Gender differences with regard to professional development and engagement are consistent with previous research across disciplines (Boulis & Jacobs, 2003; Di Dio, Saragovi, Koestner, & Aube, 1996; Glick, 1991; Healey, 2009). Findings of this study indicate that male participants may feel more empowered in the field, gravitate toward leadership positions or positions of status more readily, and receive more mentorship and encouragement in this direction. Therefore, it is possible that self-efficacy could influence how men engage in the counseling profession and thus how they rated themselves more highly with regard to professional development.

In this study, male participants agreed more strongly with items on the Engagement subscale and items related to higher professional development than they did with regard to the Belief and Orientation subscales on both inventories. Items on the Engagement subscale related to organizational leadership and service, presentations and attendance at organizational conferences, publications, as well as advocacy and promotion of the profession. These items were yes/no items weighted for perceived importance to the field. For instance, if participants stated that they attended a conference, their positive response would be weighted less than would a positive response for serving as a presenter at a conference. All weighted items were then summed to create a total score for the scale. In a qualitative study on female counselor perceptions of the counseling field, Healey et al. (2010) reported that participants indicated a preference and placed value on continuing education because it related directly to their belief that this

TABLE 2

### Standardized and Structured Coefficient Functions for Gender

Scale	Coefficient	<i>r</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>
Gender grouping			
PIES Engagement subscale total	.58	.71	.50
PIVS Development subscale total	.58	.66	.44
PIES Beliefs subscale total	-.51	-.34	.12
PIVS Orientation subscale total	-.18	-.21	.04
Grouping centroids			
Function 1			
Men		.68	
Women		-.17	

Note. PIES = Professional Identity and Engagement Scale; PIVS = Professional Identity and Values Scale.

would assist in their professional competency with students and clients. Therefore, it may be that female professionals are attending conferences but perhaps are not presenting as frequently because this did not have direct value to their work with clients and students. A lack of presentations and publications would have affected participants' total score on the Engagement subscale, and this level of engagement would be consistent with previous research findings (Briggs, 2006; Hill et al., 2005). In essence, male and female counselors may be engaging in the profession in different ways, and therefore they may value their engagement activities differently.

### Limitations and Future Directions

There were three main limitations in this study. First, the results of this survey may not be generalizable to all counseling professionals because of the process for obtaining participants. The majority of those responding indicated that they were students at either the master's level or the doctoral level. More involvement from counselor educators, school counselors, and practitioners is necessary to provide solid indications of professional identity development within each of these professional roles. Only 5% of those serving primarily in counselor education positions responded to this survey. This response rate is not enough to indicate clear and strong generalizable trends within the profession; rather, results would only serve as a possible indicator for issues that need further evaluation and may serve to indicate possible future challenges the profession might face given the number of respondents currently in training.

Second, in the evaluation of data from the survey, it is important to note that 80% of those who participated were female, which is consistent with data associated with response rates for web-based and mailed surveys (Lyness & Kropf, 2007; Mackety, 2008). Van Horn, Green, and Martinussen (2009) reported a typical response rate of 49% with regard to psychological studies ranging from 14% to 91%, with faculty accounting for a lower response rate than other professional demographics (such as practitioners and students). Therefore, although these issues indicate possible limitations, response rates pertaining to this study are consistent with previous research. Gore-Felton, Koopman, Bridges, Thorsen, and Spiegel (2002) indicated higher response rates with mail-based recruitment and participation methods; however, although the current study implemented mail-based recruitment methods to elicit practitioner and faculty involvement, the response rate was not as high as web-based and e-mail-based recruitment methods.

Third, the soundness of the PIES psychometric properties may be questionable. Whereas Cronbach's alphas for this sample were .68 (Beliefs subscale) and .81 (Engagement subscale), the respective alphas of .63 (Professional Beliefs subscale) and .66 (Professional Engagement subscale) for the PIES original sample indicate the need for additional development of this inventory or the development of an alternative. Additionally,

the weighting of engagement items was based purely on expert opinion and current perceptions within the profession regarding what engagement behaviors are important or valued (i.e., the academia-based professional culture).

Further implications concerning male and female counselors in differing professional roles, such as those of trainee, practitioner, and educator, need to be assessed. It may be useful to evaluate how item agreement differs with regard to one's position or role within the profession across subscales. This would help to inform not only how professionals within the field develop but also how they view aspects of the professional philosophy. Engagement factors across gender, ethnicity, income levels, and status within the profession would be important in order to develop focused training interventions and discussions and may have systemic implications for evaluation of tenure and promotion. In summary, more research must be done on professional identity development in counseling to fully understand the challenges counselors currently face and the training needs of those entering the field.

### Implications for Counselors

Gender differences found with regard to professional development and engagement fit with the perceptions relayed by female professionals who participated in a qualitative study conducted on professional identity and experiences in the counseling field (Healey et al., 2010; see also Hill et al., 2005). Results of the present study indicate that men may feel more empowered in the field and therefore report higher levels of agreement with values associated with the counseling profession. Men may be receiving better mentorship, peer support, or individual/societal encouragement to engage in activities viewed to be important to professional development (Rubineau, 2008). Self-efficacy could be seen to play a role in how men are relating to their own perceptions and comfort level as professionals within the field, as indicated by their higher subscale scores for professional identity development. As self-efficacy has been found to be an important component for competent professional practice (Bodenhorn et al., 2010; Watson & Spurgeon, 2009), it may be important for new educators, practitioners, and practitioners-in-training to seek peer support and collegial mentorship to improve self-perceptions regarding their belonging to and identity with the counseling field (Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008; Kurtz-Costes, Helmke, & Ulku-Steiner, 2006).

### Implications for Counselor Educators

Given that the results of this study indicate female respondents were less likely to obtain higher scores on the Engagement and Development subscales, it may be important to evaluate how this gender difference might be prevented through or influenced by counselor training programs, especially because the majority of respondents were master's- and doctoral-level students. Female participants in this study tended to obtain lower scores on the Engagement subscale, a subscale that

measures activities that are typically associated with higher status positions, promotion, and tenure requirements within the field. Discussions about women's engagement in the field as it relates to their personal values could be beneficial in helping women navigate the current systemic expectations with regard to their performance and develop a personal identity as counselors (Folkes-Skinner, Elliott, & Wheeler, 2010; Gibson et al., 2010). With this information, female counseling professionals may have a better idea of how to navigate professional expectations in a genuine and congruent way, further assisting their professional identity development (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2008). This belief or desire for congruence may or may not result in their attainment of higher status positions or notoriety in the field, but it would meet the need for mentorship in developing a balance between personal and professional time commitments and integration of underlying beliefs and meaning.

Advocacy for the needs of women as well as institutional recognition of the role that the "double day" plays in women's experiences and involvement in the counseling profession is imperative (Cobble, 2003; Firestone & Shelton, 1994). When discussing the reality of the double burden faced by women in juggling full-time employment with domestic responsibilities, Cobble (2003) stated,

An earlier generation of labor women termed this double burden the "double day," arguing that it weighed most heavily on women, particularly those in lower-income families. That inequity continues today. Lower-income women cannot contract out housework and care-giving responsibilities as easily as the more affluent, nor is cutting back on the time spent on the job a viable option for the growing number of women who are the primary, and at times the sole, breadwinner in the family. (p. 63)

Women in the United States still face wage disparities that are reflected within the counseling field itself, from the level of practitioner to academia (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007). Equality is certainly the goal and is congruent with counseling professional values. Because women are entering the field at increasing rates, it is important for their life responsibilities be supported, affirmed, and valued. In addition, as culture changes and men increasingly take on domestic roles and responsibilities, it is not unreasonable to assume that a conflict could emerge for them as well as it relates to their own gender-normative professional and personal expectations (Dodson & Borders, 2006; Kimmel, 2009). Therefore, it is important to support values related to wellness, family, and personal and professional balance within institutions through public policy, institutional change, and individuals' approach to one another. This may mean that more emphasis is placed on service and teaching rather than scholarly activity, administrative involvements, and supervisory positions.

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