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## Criteria for the Selection of Students into a Counseling Program: A Review of Literature

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CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF STUDENTS INTO A  
COUNSELING PROGRAM: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

by

Douglas N. Reeder

A seminar report submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in

Psychology

Plan B

Approved:

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
Logan, Utah

1976

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction . . . . .	1
Background And Need For The Study . . . . .	1
Purpose Of The Present Paper . . . . .	2
Statement Of The Problem . . . . .	2
Procedures . . . . .	3
Review of Related Literature . . . . .	4
What Are The Skills Or Traits Needed By Counselors? . . . . .	4
How Are Skills Or Traits Determined Prior To Training? . . . . .	10
What Are The Major Problems Related To Selection? . . . . .	14
What Selection Criteria Are Employed By Various Institutions? . . . . .	15
What Selection Criteria Seem Most Efficient In Identifying Potentially Effective Counselors? . . . . .	17
What Selection Procedures Are Used Most Commonly In Selecting Candidates For A Graduate Program In Counseling? . . . . .	23
Summary And Conclusions . . . . .	25
Summary . . . . .	25
Conclusions . . . . .	26
Literature Cited . . . . .	28

## Introduction

### Background And Need For The Study

In his paper, "Graduate Education in Psychology - A Passionate Statement" Carl Rogers (1957) has stated, "We are doing an unintelligent, ineffectual and wasteful job of preparing psychologists, to the detriment of our discipline and society." He further stated, "We should be selecting and training individuals for creative effectiveness in seeking out and discovering the significant new knowledge which is needed." He then examines ten implicit assumptions on which programs of graduate education appear to be based, showing them to be totally inadequate in training future psychologists. It is time to reevaluate the purpose, procedure, and content of graduate programs in psychology.

McGreevy (1967) has reported that the selection of the right candidate for counselor preparation is of critical importance in view of the expensive and lengthy preparation period as well as the impact the preparation itself has upon the candidate. More important is the ultimate effect the candidate will have upon his future clients. While there have been many opinions expressed regarding the selection issue there has been a great paucity of research to substantiate or refute these opinions. He also maintains that a review of the suggestions regarding selection criteria made by the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA) and a division of that organization, The Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) "reveals nebulous

guidelines which are so general as to be practically useless" (p. 483). The APGA Committee on Professional Preparation and Standards (APGA, 1963, p. 484) states that "Criteria for selection should include personal qualification for counseling, as well as the ability necessary to master academic requirements and acquire professional skills." The committee further states that, "Prerequisites and other criteria for entry into the counselor preparation program should have a sound, logical basis and be supported by empirical evidence whenever possible" (p. 484). The ACES Committee on School Counselors suggests that counselor education candidates be assessed in terms of academic and research skills and potential for developing effective client relationships (ACES, 1964).

Surveys made of factors influencing counselor candidate selection suggests that aside from the traditional academic aptitude examination, selection is generally based on ill-defined "personal qualifications" criteria (McGreevy, 1967).

#### Purpose Of The Present Paper

The purpose of the present paper is to review the literature relative to criteria and the process of counselor trainee selection, and hopefully determine the most appropriate criteria and means for selecting candidates for graduate programs in counselor education and counseling psychology.

#### Statement Of The Problem

The report is concerned with determining selection criteria and

processes that will most efficiently produce effective counselors. More specifically, answers will be sought for the following questions:

1. What are the skills or traits needed by counselors?
2. How can these skills or traits be determined prior to training?
3. What are the major problems related to selection?
4. What selection criteria are employed by various institutions?
5. What selection criteria seem most efficient in identifying potentially effective counselors?
6. What selection procedures are used most commonly in selecting candidates for a graduate program in counseling?

### Procedures

The procedure for the present paper was to review articles in a group of professional journals from 1960 to 1976 all directly related to counselor education and counseling psychology. The summary and discussion portion of the studies reviewed were heavily relied on in the present review, with the research portions being used primarily to elucidate the study findings or to critique the conclusions of each study under review.

The review procedure was (1) to abstract basic trend data, and (2) to synthesize the conclusions of the authors.

## Review Of Related Literature

### What Are The Skills Or Traits Needed By Counselors?

According to Cottle (1962) a question often raised by students, and experienced counselors alike, is: What characteristics should a person possess in order to be an effective counselor? As might be expected, a definitive answer to the question is almost impossible to give. There is no dearth of general terms used to describe a counselor, but these are commonly the same terms used to describe any number of capable and mature individuals. Harder to find are statements or reports of investigation which provide specific enough information about counselor characteristics by which to identify and differentiate counselors from other professional people.

McGowan (1962) says:

In regard to the selection of counselors, many persons do not expect or even want a specific or exact description of the counselor or his characteristics. They give such reasons as these: (1) the counseling process is far too complex to be related to any one type of counselor personality; (2) because counseling is based on personal and cooperative interaction between the client and the counselor it is not likely that any counselor would be able to interact in the same way with all types of clients; (3) the tremendous variation in client problems suggests the need for a similarly wide variation in the people to work with them; and (4) counseling is primarily creative, not mechanical, and as such may be effectively conducted by widely differing but creative individuals. (p. 19)

Assuming that there may be some truth in all these reasons put forth by McGowan, a solution to the problem might be to discover some common

characteristics of successful counselors while recognizing that important variations can exist in any configuration of traits within the individual counselor.

The Committee on Training in Clinical Psychology of the American Psychological Association (APA), as reported by Cottle (1962), have prepared a list of common traits which have been felt to characterize successful counselors. Recognizing that differences may exist between the functions of school counselors, clinical psychologists, and counseling psychologists, it would be nonetheless helpful to examine the APA Committee's list of traits which purportedly characterize the more effective counselors. The traits identified by the APA Committee were the following:

1. Superior intellectual ability and judgment.
2. Originality, resourcefulness, and versatility
3. Fresh and insatiable curiosity; self-learner.
4. Interests in persons as individuals rather than as material for manipulation; a regard for the integrity of the other persons.
5. Insight into one's own personality characteristics; a sense of humor.
6. Sensitivity to the complexities of motivation.
7. Tolerance; unarrogance
8. Ability to adopt a therapeutic attitude; ability to establish warm and effective relationships with others.
9. Industry, methodical work habits; ability to tolerate pressure.
10. Acceptance of responsibility.
11. Tact and cooperativeness



12. Integrity, self control, stability.
13. Discriminating sense of ethical values.
14. Breadth of cultural background—an educated man.
15. Deep interest in psychology.

Carl Rogers (1957), based on his experience as a psychotherapist, delineated six conditions that he felt must exist for constructive personality change in clients. Rogers indicated the following as "necessary and sufficient conditions": (1) two persons are in psychological contact; (2) the client is in a state of incongruence; (3) the therapist is congruent or integrated in the relationship; (4) the therapist feels an unconditional positive regard for the client; (5) the therapist experiences an empathic understanding of the clients internal frame of reference and endeavors to communicate this experience to the client; (6) the communication to the client of the therapist's empathic understanding and unconditional positive regard is to a minimal degree achieved.

The facilitative conditions postulated by Rogers have been shown by Bratten (1961) to relate significantly to a variety of positive patient personality and behavioral change; and Tomlinson and Hart (1962) have also shown these conditions to relate to the patient process variable of interpersonal exploration. Further, during recent years it has become increasingly clear that effective non-possessive warmth lies at the heart of therapeutic endeavors aimed at changing people for the better (Lawrence, 1974; Truax & Carkhuff, 1967). Vitalo (1970) also found that Rogers' dimensions are significant variables for interpersonal conditioning processes. Vitalo concluded that the counselor's

level of functioning on empathy, positive regard, and genuineness are prerequisites to the effective implementation of systematic conditioning and extinction procedures. His findings add support to Carkhuff's (1966) formulations that at the center of all fruitful interpersonal learning experiences is a primary core of facilitative interpersonal dimensions which presently include empathy, positive regard, and genuineness.

Miller (1965) suggested that helping relationships can and do exist in other than formal counseling situations, and that there are some individuals, naive to the helping process, who possess certain personality characteristics which cause others to perceive them as exemplifying helping behavior. Using the 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire with a sample of 33 upper-class undergraduates who were employed as section advisors in a men's residence hall, Miller tried to determine what personality characteristics were needed in order to be an effective counselor. The residents rated the counseling as helpful or non-helpful based on the Critical Incident Questionnaire (Miller, 1965, p. 688). Individuals perceived as more helpful exhibited a relatively high degree of "surgency," a characteristic expressed by a high degree of enthusiasm, happy-go-lucky, cheerful, and talkative behavior which is frank, expressive, and quick in nature. This finding would indicate that residence hall advisors who were perceived and rated as exhibiting more helping behavior tended toward more outgoing types of behavior.

Another important factor in establishing a helping relationship is character strength (Jackson & Thompson, 1971). Individuals high in this

factor tend to be more conscientious and persevering, more responsible, more interested in people, and exemplify emotional maturity. This characteristic of the perceived helper suggests a more consistent and organized moral behavior based on a strong sense of values. The helper rated high in this factor would tend to be dependable person, with a sense of responsibility for his job and toward those around him.

Research by Jackson and Thomson (1971) indicated that the most effective counselors are more positive in their attitudes toward self, clients, and counseling than are counselors rated least effective. The results of this study suggest the need to research student attitudes toward self, clients, and counseling as a viable criterion for admission to counselor education programs. Further support for this type of research is presented by Rowley (1975), who also attaches importance to studying the personal characteristics of those involved as counselor trainees. Using the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI) Rowley (1975, p. 153) found that counselor educators as a group typically evidenced the following characteristics:

1. An orientation to time that is primarily present-centered.
2. Flexibility in their application of values that depends largely on their perception of what is appropriate for a specific situation.
3. A high level of sensitivity to their own needs and feelings.
4. A high level of self-acceptance in spite of knowledge of their weakness or deficiencies.
5. A constructive view of man.
6. The ability to deal effectively with the dichotomies of life by viewing opposites as being meaningfully related.
7. The ability to accept their feelings of anger and aggression as natural.

Studies by Kemp (1962) and Millken and Paterson (1967) showed that there is an inverse relationship between dogmatism and counselor effectiveness. Milliken and Paterson (1967) reported that the person who is less dogmatic tends to be more aware of his own reactions to stimuli, has less need to distort meanings, and considers ideas mainly on their merits. Further, the less dogmatic person experiences less threat and anxiety, and is more permissive in his relationship with others. On the other hand, the more dogmatic individual is less aware of his reactions to stimuli, tends to distort meanings in relation to early beliefs, and is less permissive in his interpersonal relationships.

Mezzano (1969) found that less dogmatic counselors appeared to their supervisors to be more genuine, accepting, and understanding in the counseling relationship. One implication of Mezzano's study would be to select reasonably open-minded counselor candidates; and as Mezzano concluded, the selection process should involve careful screening through personal interviews and testing to determine whether the individuals applying for training are extremely dogmatic.

Other researchers have found the following to be traits of successful counselors: (1) A greater degree of tolerance of clients' hostility (Grigg, 1961), (2) more frequent use of responses rated as restatement of content and clarification of feelings, with experienced counselors also responding more with reassurance, persuasion, direct questions, and forcing-the-topic responses (Bohn, 1965); and (3) less anxious and possessing a greater degree

of insight into the nature of their anxiety than those judged to be less competent (Bandura, 1965).

#### How Are Skills Or Traits Determined Prior To Training?

There have been several reported means of measuring the desired skills or traits of counselors. Personality tests have been used in attempts to differentiate between "best" and "poorest" practicum students. Ohlsen (1970) states, "Rarely, however, have personality tests produced adequate differentiation to warrant their use in screening candidates for admission to counselor education programs" (p. 12).

The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) has received considerable attention in trying to determine whether counselors are significantly different from the general population and from other professional groups, and also to determine whether the MMPI can distinguish effective from ineffective counselors (Berger, 1955; Brams, 1961; and Cottle & Lewis, 1954). Heikkinen and Wegner (1973) concluded tentatively that on the MMPI, "Counselors appear more extroverted and perhaps more defensive, more calm and efficient, and more honest than other professional groups" (p. 277). However, the authors further state that, "At this point, we simply cannot say that the MMPI is a proven discriminator between effective and ineffective counselors" (p. 277).

Ohlsen (1970) pointed out that the Wisconsin Relationship Orientations Scale and Catell's 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire show promise in screening prospective counselors. Wasson (1965) reported that scores on the Wisconsin Relationship Orientations Scale correlated higher with his

three criterion scores (rated counseling segments .61, staff ratings .54, and peer ratings .61) than did any of his other measures (MMPI, Edwards Personal Preference Scale, Miller Analogies, Strong Vocation Interest Blank, and NDEA Comprehensive Examination). Furthermore, the scores obtained on the Wisconsin Relationships Orientations Scale did not correlate significantly with any of the other test measures.

The Edwards Personal Preference Scale has been shown by a number of researchers to differentiate on some individual scales between "most effective" and "least effective" counselors. For example, Demos and Zuwaylif (1966) found that effective counselors were higher on nurturance and affiliation and lower on autonomy, abasement, and aggression than ineffective counselors. Stefflure, King, and Leafgren (1962) found that effective counselors were higher on deference and order and lower on abasement and aggression; and Truax, Silber, and Warge (1966) found that the most promising prospects for counselor training were higher on change and autonomy and lower on order.

The Strong Vocational Interest Blank has been widely used in selecting candidates for counselor education. A number of researchers (Kriedt, 1949; Patterson, 1963; and Foley & Proff, 1965) indicated that counselors and students enrolled in counselor education exhibited their highest interest in the social-service block of occupations. Other research (Stefflure, King, & Leafgren, 1962) also reported that effective counselors were more apt to exhibit high scores for these occupations than were ineffective counselors.

Because it is generally assumed that a person's behavior with others is a manifestation of his personality structure, investigation of personality traits associated with effective counseling may be an effective means for selecting prospective candidates in counselor education. Several researchers (McClain, 1968; Myrick, Kelley & Whitmer, 1972) have demonstrated that a single standardized personality inventory, The Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF) may be useful in predicting potentially effective and ineffective counselors and thus, in selecting graduate students for training.

Myrick, Kelly, and Whitmer (1972) reported significant differences (at the .10 level of significance or better) between effective and ineffective counselors on 8 of the 16 personality factors. Factors A (Reserved, Detached Vs. Warm, Sociable) and H (Shy, Restrained Vs. Venturesome, Socially bold) were significant at the .01 level. Factors E (Humble, Conforming Vs. Assertive, Aggressive) and I (Tough-minded Vs. Tender-minded) were significant at the .05 level. Finally, Factors C (Affected by feelings, Unstable Vs. Emotionally stable, Calm); F (Sober, Serious Vs. Happy-go-lucky); G (Casual, Expedient Vs. Conscientious, Persistent); and L (Trusting, Adaptable Vs. Suspicious, Self-opinionated) were significant at the .10 level. The researchers concluded that the group of effective counselors were more outgoing, stable, warm, assertive, happy-go-lucky, casual, venturesome, and sensitive than were the group of ineffective counselors.

The results of the Myrick, et. al. study indicate that selected 16 PF scores may be useful in predicting ratings of potentially effective students in

counseling, since 8 of the 16 factors examined in the Myrick study were able to help differentiate effective and ineffective student counselors. Thus, based on the Myrick, Kelly and Whitmer research, the 16 PF seems to have some value in predicting counselor effectiveness and should therefore be given consideration as a standardized instrument that might be helpful in selecting students for admission to counselor education programs.

Ohlsen (1969) suggested that another promising source of data for screening prospective counselors is an intensive intake interview. He reported that such an interview may be used to assess a prospective counselor's ability to experience his own feelings and accept himself as he is, his attitude toward himself and important others, the degree to which he has achieved independence, his professional commitment, and his reasons for wanting to become a counselor.

Dole (1964) found that another promising criterion for predicting effectiveness in school counseling was a self-appraisal in which candidates were requested to identify "five qualities you believe are most essential in an effective counselor" and, "five skills a good counselor should have" (113). Dole asked his subjects to rate themselves on each of the five qualities and skills they listed and describe their plans, if any, for improvement. Responses to the self-appraisal were rated on a five point scale by two judges independently, using a custom built instrument which was significant at the .10 level of significance. Based on his research Dole suggested that "The simplest



and most efficient device may be a comparative rating obtained from a number of observers who have had a variety of experiences with the candidate" (p. 120).

Peer ratings have also been widely used as criterion measures for appraising counselors' effectiveness in validating screening devices (Blocher, 1963; Dole, 1964). Dilley et. al. (1964) found that peer ratings of "best" and "poorest" counselors agreed with counselor educators' and supervisors' independent ratings of the same counselors.

#### What Are The Major Problems Related To Selection?

Hurst and Shatkin (1974) state that the problems of present selection are: (1) that emphasis seems to be on admitting the most highly academically and clinically qualified persons on the assumption that programs will augment these qualities so that these persons will leave graduate school at the highest levels of proficiency as counselors. These researchers maintain this assumption is far from true; and (2) that both the intellectual and non-intellectual factors on which admissions committees place emphasis are either negatively or unstably related to the facilitative interpersonal skills of empathy, respect, and genuineness that exist at the core of counseling and therapy skills.

Research by Jones (1974) points out that there is disagreement as to what selection procedures will be most likely to identify the most effective prospective candidates for graduate school. For example, based on his research he suggests that the current practice by many institutions of using letters of recommendations for selection purposes ought to be reexamined

because research has demonstrated "Negative correlations between the ratings of subjects ability to work with others and the three facilitative conditions of empathic understanding, genuineness, and respect" (p. 20).

Several studies (Munger, 1964; Paterson, 1968; and Rochester, 1967) have revealed that counselors revert to their former attitudes following training. Therefore, if attitude change is indeed a difficult task in counselor training programs, perhaps the applicants with more positive attitudes toward counseling-related concepts should be given admission preference over applicants with higher academic ratings and negative attitudes toward counseling-related concepts. The problem here is that the research reported by Ohlsen (1970) indicates that counselor educators can predict academic success in professional education fields better than they can predict counseling attitudes.

Another problem has arisen from the use of data collected during professional preparation rather than performance data of employed counselors. It is not sufficient to know how counselors perform within a practicum setting developed for them by their counselor educations, since the real test is how well they perform in a setting in which they must subsequently establish their own professional role.

#### What Selection Criteria Are Employed By Various Institutions?

A study by Gimmestad and Goldsmith (1972) found that of 68 counselor education programs, 59 have a minimum requirement for admission GPA ranging from 2.0 to 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. The median GPA was 2.5. Thirty-nine of the master's degree programs require the submission of scores on

the Aptitude Tests of the Graduate Record Examination. Twenty-nine of these programs have minimum scores, ranging from a total (verbal plus quantitative) of 700 to 1041 with a median of 900. Seventeen of the master's programs require the applicant to submit scores on the Graduate Form of the Miller Analogies Test. Eleven of these programs have minimum raw scores ranging from 27 to 50, with a median of 40. A variety of other aptitude, personality, and interest tests were required by some programs. Tests required by more than one program were as follows: Strong Vocational Interest Blank, National Teacher Examination, and the Omnibus Personality Inventory. Almost every graduate program in counselor education included in the survey by Gimestad and Goldsmith required letters of recommendation with most schools requiring three letters. The majority of graduate programs surveyed required applicants to appear for personal interviews. A vast majority of the programs did not require either teacher certification or teaching experience for admission. Only 13 master's programs required teachers certification for admission; only five master's programs unconditionally required teaching experience. When asked an open-ended question regarding preference of undergraduate majors for their applicants, respondents listed psychology more frequently than education. The following undergraduate majors were preferred by the graduate training programs for master's degree applicants: psychology (21), education (14), sociology (12), behavioral sciences (5), and other (5).

Santavica (1959) reported that 94% of the colleges he surveyed which provided supervised practicum in their training program also had some selection criteria. The criteria and percentage of use reported by Santavica were as follows: (1) college undergraduate record (85%), (2) scholastic aptitude (75%), (3) teaching experience (73%), (4) personal adjustment (72%), (5) work experience (59%), (6) social interest (47%).

What Selection Criteria Seem Most Efficient In  
Identifying Potentially Effective Counselors?

Specific criteria for selection into counselor education has received considerable attention in the literature. Truax (1970), for example, has suggested the following three-fold process:

1. First "the candidate must meet the agency's existing qualifications for employment, primarily the employer's judgments of the candidate's general abilities, dependability, sense of responsibility, ethics, appearance, and other such usual considerations for employment" (p. 7). These considerations are designed to ensure that the employee will be able to function wherever he is employed, recognizing that these conditions vary from setting to setting. Somewhat different standards, for example, might be used in the employment of so called "indigenous" persons in a ghetto setting than would be used in a middle-class school.

2. The second aspect of selection proposed by Truax involves the use of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory and the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule. Specifically, Truax looked for candidates who obtained

MMPI scores (using K converted raw scores) as follows: less than 27 on Pt, less than 20 on D, (less than 30 on Mf, less than 21 on Si, less than 30 on the Welch Anxiety Index from the MMPI, less than 0.92 on the Welch Generalization Ratio, higher than 19 on Ma and higher than 142 on the Constructive Personality Change Index of the MMPI.

In using the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule for selection the author suggested looking for candidates who scored less than 10 on Deference, less than 8 on Order, less than 21 on Intraception, less than 7 on Abasement, less than 11 on Consistency, and who also scored higher than 14 on Dominance, higher than 17 on Change, and higher than 14 on Autonomy. In an interpretive sense, Truax's research suggests that candidates are more likely to have more natural therapeutic skill or interpersonal skill if they score low in anxiety, depression, and introversion and are at the same time striving, strong, dominant, active, and autonomous individuals. Truax concluded the second stage of selection by stating, "As one can tell from looking over the selection scores, we are looking for high, stable ego strength 'nice guys' who are strong rather than passive" (p. 8).

3. At the final and most critical stage of Truax's selection process, candidates who passed the first two aspects of selection are asked to conduct one or more group interviews (or counseling, if you prefer) with real clients. They are told that their task is to get to know these particular clients; their feelings, their problems, their strengths, and their weaknesses. With these instructions they are placed in the role of a group leader and asked to conduct

a session that is tape-recorded. Truax states, "So far, we have simply tried to present the candidate with a more or less randomly selected group of the kind of clients we would expect him to work with" (p. 8). These tape recordings themselves, reflecting the candidates adequacy in interpersonal skills constitute the critical selection factor. These tapes are rated on the candidate's accurate empathy, nonpossessive warmth, and genuineness in interacting with real clients, and the degree of self-exploration he is able to elicit from the group.

Candidates who averaged 4.0 or above on the scale of nonpossessive warmth, 4.0 or above on the genuineness scale, and 5.0 or above on the accurate empathy scale were selected. In other words, people were selected who were "unusually highly skilled in interpersonal relations and who had adequate levels of therapeutic conditions" (p. 9).

Truax concludes, "It is probable that in some cases when the potential pool of candidates is quite large even more rigid selection procedures would be possible" (p. 9).

Jansen, Robb, and Bonk (1970) observed that female counselors who were rated in the top quarter of their respective evaluation seminars on the basis of overall competence were significantly younger than those rated in the bottom quarter. This supports the findings of O'Hern and Arbuckle (1964) who found that students in seven summer NDEA Guidance Institutes who were considered to be the most sensitive counselors were significantly younger than counselors seen as less sensitive.

In another study (Jansen, Robb & Bonk, 1972) it was shown that age is negatively related to measures of counseling effectiveness in master's degree programs in counseling and guidance. Males who received a grade of C in counseling practicum were an average of more than six years older than male students who received A's, and four and one half years older than students who received B's. The authors of this study prompt a hypothesis as to why age is a factor that militates against effectiveness as counselor's in training. The researchers' investigations have shown that the subjects with the highest mean age scored significantly lower on the emotional stability factor of the Guilford Zimmerman Temperment Survey than did their younger peers. The authors of this study raise the question: Could it be that more neurotic, less stable individuals are more likely to deviate from one's earlier career at a later time in life than those who are more stable? Possibly another reason could be that older people become more fixed in their attitudes and thus they are less empathic in their relationships with others.

The relationship between intellectual ability and counseling effectiveness has been a puzzle to counselor educators for a number of years. While a good deal of research has been conducted in relation to this issue, Felker (1973) states, "The profession seems no closer to a resolution than it was at the time the question was raised" (p. 146). Studies to date have produced mixed results. Some studies indicate no correlation between counselor effectiveness and intellectual ability while other studies have found the two variables to be consistently related. Several authorities have criticized the

use of intellectual criteria in the selection process, indicating that no direct relationship has been established between intellectual ability and counseling effectiveness (Carkhuff, 1969; Shertzer & Stone, 1968). But obviously there is a period where one must have minimum intelligence to function or succeed in school, or in establishing a relationship. The inconsistency in the above findings may be attributable in part to variations and limitations in the criteria of effectiveness employed. For example, McGreevy (1967) employed composite faculty ratings of trainees as a global criterion of effectiveness; Wittmer and Lister (1971) employed practicum supervisor's ratings on a specially designed scale as their criterion of measure; Steffire, Leafgren, and King (1962), in contrast, used peer global ratings as the criterion of counseling effectiveness and Jansen, Robb, and Bonk (1970) relied upon ratings of the individual practicum instructor for their measure of trainee counseling effectiveness.

Dole (1964) employed a three-part approach in assessing counselor effectiveness. Ratings of trainee counseling ability were obtained from principals, faculty, and state supervisors of guidance. Faculty ratings were assigned to trainees at the conclusion of training, while ratings from principals and state supervisors were obtained after a period of over six months of professional employment. It was the recognition of this "criterion" problem in counselor education which led Carkhuff (1969) to investigate the formulation of more complete and objective methods of assessing counselor effectiveness. His extensive research resulted in the development of the Standard Indexes of Communication and Discrimination (Carkhuff, 1969, p. 139).



The Standard Indexes of Communication and Discrimination are designed to assess two skills which are critical to effective counseling: (1) the subject's ability to formulate an effective helping response, and (2) the subject's ability to recognize the quality of a helping response. Felker (1973) indicates that scores on the Standard Indexes of Communication and Discrimination are significantly correlated with undergraduate academic performance as reflected in Grade Point Average (GPA) and Miller's Analogies Test (MAT) scores. The correlation between the Index of Communication and Discrimination scores and undergraduate GPA was significant at the .01 level. The correlation between the Standard Indexes of Communication and Discrimination scores and MAT scores was significant at the .05 level. The data obtained and analyzed by Felker indicates that counselor effectiveness as defined by the Standard Indexes of Communication and Discrimination was significantly correlated with two measures, i. e., GPA and MAT of intellectual ability. The article concludes "Until such conclusive data is obtained, counselor candidates' intellectual ability should continue to be treated as an important factor in the selection process" (p. 149).

Another enlightening study on selection criteria was done by Rank (1966), wherein he developed a Film Test of Counselor Perception (FTCP), consisting of excerpts from ten counseling interviews, each with with 15 to 20 statements about the client, counselor, and their interaction, to be rated on a Likert-type scale. The purpose of the FTCP was to establish an empirical rating to measure differences in counselor-trainee observations of clients, counselors,

and their communication. Rank concluded that with further revision of the test, and with more appropriate filmed interview content, the FTCP should yield sufficient predictive validity for judicious use in trainee selection.

Social Intelligence as reported by Osipow (1973) shows promise as a selection criterion. This experimenter uses the Tests of Social Intelligence (Osipow, 1973, p. 367) as a method of determining a prospective counselor's personal qualities of social sensitivity, empathy, and person perception. The first problem encountered was to examine the degree to which social intelligence assesses a realm of behavior that is different from the verbal-quantitative dimension ordinarily evaluated by admissions committees. The second part of the study was designed to see whether scores on the Tests of Social Intelligence differentiated among potential counselors in terms of their ability to distinguish facilitative from nonfacilitative counselor responses. The results revealed that the total social intelligence score correlates significantly with student identification of the most facilitative counselor response. It was concluded by the experimenters that there is modest promise for the usefulness of the Tests of Social Intelligence in counselor selection.

#### What Selection Procedures Are Used Most Commonly In Selecting Candidates For A Graduate Program In Counseling

Most graduate programs surveyed by Gimmetad and Goldsmith (1972) were found to use selection procedures involving review of applications at several different administrative levels. Of the institutions surveyed it was reported that faculty committees make the selections for 16 master's

programs, the department chairman makes the decision for five programs, and a dean makes the decision for four programs. Thirty-six programs indicated the use of various combinations of the preceding to arrive at final admissions decisions.

Paterson (1963) found that, in general, the most commonly used methods for selecting graduate students into graduate counseling programs are:

(1) undergraduate scholastic record, (2) personal interview, (3) recommendations, (4) previous course work, and (5) scores from a scholastic aptitude test.

## Summary And Conclusions

### Summary

This review of literature has cited a number of research studies and surveys regarding criteria and processes used in selecting prospective counselors into graduate programs in counselor education.

The following questions were raised to guide the literature review:

(1) What are the skills or traits needed by counselors? (2) How are these skills or traits determined prior to training? (3) What are the major problems related to selection? (4) What selection criteria are employed by various institutions? (5) What selection criteria seem most efficient in identifying potentially effective counselors? and (6) What selection procedures are used most commonly in selecting candidates for a graduate program in counseling?

In brief, the research seems to indicate that:

1. There are certain core facilitative conditions which are considered necessary and sufficient for effective counseling, these being: (1) empathy, (2) warmth, and (3) genuineness.

2. Less dogmatic persons are apparently more effective counselors than those who are more dogmatic.

3. Some personality tests, particularly the Edwards Personal Preference Scale, Cattell's 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire and, the Wisconsin Relationship Orientation Scale have been shown to be promising screening devices.

4. Peer ratings and self appraisals show some promise as tools for selecting applicants who seem most likely to become effective counselors.

5. Present selection criteria, particularly letters of recommendation and grade point average ought to be re-examined because they may not be adequate predictors of future, or potential counseling effectiveness.

6. Attitude change in student trainees is a difficult task for graduate programs to achieve, and, therefore, in selecting prospective graduate students, the applicant's attitude toward counseling related concepts should be known through interviews or self-appraisals.

7. The most common selection criteria used by institutions are:  
(a) Grade point average, (b) Graduate Record Examination scores, and  
(c) the Miller's Analogies Test scores.

8. Older candidates seem to be less potentially effective counselors than their younger peers.

9. Faculty committees, department chairmen, the dean, or any combination of these faculty personnel usually constitute typical selection committees.

### Conclusions

From a critical review of the literature, these conclusions are derived:

1. In order to be an effective counselor a person must have the facilitative personality traits of empathy, warmth, and genuineness.

2. Academic criteria have value as coarse screening devices but are not valid selection tools if used alone.

3. Existing personality test should not be rigidly used in selection but rather as part of a total selection process.
4. Institutions have used various methods for selection but the most commonly used are: (1) undergraduate scholastic record, (2) personal interview, (3) letters of recommendation, (4) previous course work, and (5) scholastic aptitude tests.
5. Training has not yet produced clear and measurable changes in attitude, therefore, selecting students with a positive attitude toward counseling-related concepts is important.
6. Audio-visual devices used to evaluate trainees responses in a simulated context show promise in the selection process.
7. Younger trainees seem to develop into more effective counselors than older trainees.
8. Graduate programs selection favors candidates with psychology backgrounds.
9. Selection should be a process not an event. A candidate should realize that the initial admission to a graduate program will not guarantee that he will be able to remain in the program.

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