



Collecting School Counseling Group Work Data: Initiating Consensual Qualitative Research through Practitioner–Researcher Partnerships

Sarah I. Springer, Christy W. Land, Lauren J. Moss & Daniel Cinotti

To cite this article: Sarah I. Springer, Christy W. Land, Lauren J. Moss & Daniel Cinotti (2018) Collecting School Counseling Group Work Data: Initiating Consensual Qualitative Research through Practitioner–Researcher Partnerships, *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 43:2, 128-143, DOI: [10.1080/01933922.2018.1431346](https://doi.org/10.1080/01933922.2018.1431346)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01933922.2018.1431346>



Published online: 16 Feb 2018.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 147



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

Collecting School Counseling Group Work Data: Initiating Consensual Qualitative Research through Practitioner–Researcher Partnerships

Sarah I. Springer
Monmouth University

Christy W. Land
The University of West Georgia

Lauren J. Moss
Kutztown University

Daniel Cinotti
New York Institute of Technology

Group counseling interventions can be complex to assess and research. Over the years, The Journal for Specialists in Group Work (JSGW) has highlighted many of these challenges and offered valued approaches to designing projects that promote the efficacy and meaningfulness of group work in various settings. Similarly, school counseling literature has increasingly called for more research specific to the work of school counselors and highlighted the value of establishing practitioner–researcher partnerships to design and implement studies with fidelity. The following article considers these recommendations and offers a rationale for using Consensual Qualitative Research, a modern approach to qualitative inquiry, to help practitioners and researchers collaborate in the design and implementation of group work research in the schools.

Keywords: *consensual qualitative research, group counseling, school counseling*

Group counseling in schools is an integral component of a comprehensive school counseling program (American School Counseling Association [ASCA], 2012). Through group work interventions, school counselors have opportunities to target the academic, social/emotional,

Manuscript submitted May 30, 2016; final revision accepted September 23, 2017.
Sarah I. Springer, Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the Department of Professional Counseling at Monmouth University. Christy W. Land, Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the Clinical and Professional Studies Department at The University of West Georgia. Lauren J. Moss, Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the Counselor Education Department at Kutztown University. Daniel Cinotti, Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the School Counseling Department at New York Institute of Technology. Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Sarah I. Springer, Department of Professional Counseling, Monmouth University, 400 Cedar Avenue, West Long Branch, NJ 07764. E-mail: sspringe@monmouth.edu

and career needs of large numbers of students throughout the school year. With student-to-counselor ratios continuing to rise well above recommended best practice, group interventions represent critical opportunities for school counselors to effectively service all students (Akos, Hamm, Mack, & Dunaway, 2007; ASCA, 2012).

Given the multidimensional challenges associated with group work practice in the schools (e.g., scheduling, administrative buy-in, stakeholder collaboration), school counselors may struggle to deliver group interventions, leading to underutilization or the potential avoidance of group work altogether (Erford, 2010). Research aimed at supporting and improving the delivery and effectiveness of group counseling in schools is critical and serves as an important advocacy tool for school counselors. The following article suggests a collaborative qualitative research design that complements data collection strategies used by school counselors to promote and disseminate the meaningfulness of group work interventions in the school setting.

ACCOUNTABILITY IN SCHOOL COUNSELING

School counselors are currently expected to demonstrate the effectiveness of their school counseling program in measurable terms. The ASCA (2012) National Model of school counseling calls for school counselors to collect and analyze various forms of data to evaluate program effectiveness. This includes gathering accountability information specific to the impact of small group interventions on student progress. Hatch (2014) outlines three types of data collected in school counseling: process, perception, and outcome, most of which focuses on quantitative results and anecdotal qualitative descriptions. While the importance and utility of this accountability data is discussed in school counseling programs (ASCA, 2014; Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs [CACREP], 2016) it is not typically connected to formal research designs. School counseling literature is beginning to identify this trend and recommend ways for practitioners to plan and initiate formal research efforts to advocate for students' needs (Mason, Land et al., 2017; Mason, Springer, & Pugliese, 2017). Common recommendations suggest the value of practitioner-researcher partnerships. With a continued focus on the challenges associated with conducting group work research (Luke & Goodrich, 2017) it would be a natural fit for school counseling practitioners and school counselor educators to look for opportunities to collaborate in the design and implementation of research projects that target group work interventions in the schools.

Research Partnerships

Partnerships between practicing school counselors and university researchers have the potential to provide unique advantages for both practitioners and scholars (Mason, Land et al., 2017). For school counselors, these partnerships may enhance overall accountability practices by demystifying the process of data collection, analysis, and dissemination. For researchers, partnerships with currently practicing school counselors provide access to participants and a valued “in the trenches” perspective. This positionality affords researchers opportunities to understand the intricacies of the school environment, which may allow for a more accurate understanding of the experiences of participants. Collaboratively sharing this data with respective school districts may likewise enhance the understanding and value of school counseling interventions.

Qualitative inquiry offers research protocol that can best explore in-depth lived experiences specific to individuals and the overall environment; despite the value of obtaining rich descriptive data that may offer school districts unique insights into the utility of school counselors’ roles in students’ lives, formal qualitative research specific to the meaningfulness of school counseling interventions appears to be underrepresented in school counseling literature. Its usefulness in the broader educational context, however, is noted (Hays & Singh, 2012) and may be particularly valuable in understanding how we examine group counseling interventions in this setting.

QUALITATIVE INQUIRY

Creswell (2009) defines qualitative research as “a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (p. 4). Qualitative methodology is a process that involves emerging questions and procedures, the researcher as an instrument, and research which occurs in a natural setting (Hays & Singh, 2012). These priorities make it ideal for exploratory studies, particularly for researchers who intend to immerse themselves in a natural context such as an educational setting (Creswell, 2009; Hays & Singh, 2012; Lincoln, 2010; Yeh & Inman, 2007). Furthermore, qualitative approaches hold significant implications for social change advocacy, an inherent priority for school counselors (American School Counselor Association, 2012; Hays & Singh, 2012; Lincoln, 2010; Ponteretto, 2005).

Hays and Singh (2012) posit that the researcher is an essential component within the qualitative inquiry process; therefore, the

researcher must have an array of interpersonal, technical, and organizational skills. Key skills of a qualitative researcher include: (a) focusing on a research tradition throughout the study, (b) using a multitude of strategies to explore a phenomenon, (c) communicating in a neutral way with understanding and care, (d) reflexivity within the research process, and (e) an understanding of the importance of collaboration in the research relationship. Many of these qualities (i.e., communication, collaboration, and reflection) are necessary attributes of counselors advocating, designing, and initiating successful counseling interventions in the school setting. Choosing a qualitative research design that parallels the group work process may provide additional advantages in which to highlight school counselors' natural abilities to understand group dynamics. Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR), a methodology that both values the dynamics inherent within the research team's group process and adds a positivistic aspect of inquiry, appears to complement the expertise and data collection efforts of school counselors while prioritizing the value of group work in the team's decision making. A look at CQR and its utility for researchers partnering with school counseling practitioners in the study of group work is highlighted with a case example.

An Overview of Consensual Qualitative Research

CQR was introduced to the social sciences in 1997 and infuses grounded theory, phenomenology, and other approaches to qualitative research, making it an ideal methodology for investigating group work in the school setting (Hill, Thompson, & Williams, 1997). The method was developed through the integration of various qualitative approaches with the aim to feature participants' experiences and perspectives and include methods that increase applicability (Hays & Wood, 2011). Major tenets of CQR include: (a) the use of open-ended questions in semi-structured data collection methods, (b) using a research team to analyze the data and arrive at a consensus, (c) the use of at least one auditor to cross-check the data, and (d) cross analyzing the data for domains and core themes (Hill et al., 2005, 1997). CQR research emphasizes the participant sample as a whole and uses quotes to highlight examples of the phenomenon being explored (Williams & Morrow, 2009).

Role of the researcher. The role of the researcher in qualitative inquiry is intrinsic to the success of the study and includes the following considerations: reflexivity, "voice" of participants,

subjectivity, the use of a research team, and peer debriefing (Hays & Singh, 2012; Williams & Morrow, 2009). When using the CQR methodology with fidelity, researchers inherently operate from a social justice paradigm given the way they connect with participants and robustly capture participants' voices (Chapman & Schwartz, 2012; Hill, 2012). Furthermore, the researchers must actively self-reflect on their biases, values, personal background, and history that may shape their interpretations during a study (Creswell, 2009; Hays & Singh, 2012).

Subjectivity is a qualitative researcher's internal understanding of the phenomenon and is a defining feature of qualitative research (Williams & Morrow, 2009). Accordingly, a major role of the researcher is to accurately understand and represent the "voice" of the participants when using a consensual qualitative approach to research (Hays & Singh, 2012; Hill, 2012; Hill et al., 2005). Incorporating a group of researchers with diverse backgrounds enhances this process.

Research team. A defining feature of CQR is the emphasis on shared power among the researchers, research team, and participants (Hays & Singh, 2012). Sharing power permits research team members to openly discuss how their biases and assumptions about the topic influence data collection and analysis and exemplifies another way in which CQR methodology epitomizes a socially just approach to research. Hill et al. (2005) believe that research team members must have strong interpersonal skills and respect each other, as disagreements and discussions may occur throughout the process. These researchers recommend that teams include no less than three members to provide a variety of perspectives. Developing a team with both practitioners and academics offers a diversity of opinions, which may ultimately strengthen the results formed by way of the consensus process.

Consensus. Hill et al. (2005) and Hill (2012) maintained that an important part of CQR is consensus, which relies on mutual respect, equal involvement, and shared power, tenets underpinning the social justice priorities within CQR methodology (Chapman & Schwartz, 2012). The consensus process in CQR has been shown to improve decision quality and involves multiple viewpoints and interpretations while unraveling the complexities of the data. CQR involves the researcher selecting participants who are knowledgeable in regard to the topic being explored. When utilizing CQR, the researcher and the participants have mutual influence over one another; the participants

bring to light the phenomenon, while the researcher influences the participants through selected probes initiated to help explore their experiences in greater depth (Hays & Wood, 2011). Given that researchers typically share a vested interest in the phenomenon of interest, the rigor of the consensus process also helps team members to address preconceived ideas and personal bias that may impact individuals' perspectives.

Researcher bias. A fundamental component of CQR is acknowledging and accounting for researcher biases (Hill et al., 2005). In fact, the rationale for sharing power is that researcher bias is inevitable in qualitative inquiry. Therefore, by sharing power, various research team members can discuss and appreciate the various perspectives of participants for better practice (Chapman & Schwartz, 2012). Hill et al. (2005) and Hill (2012) note that biases may arise from several different sources such as demographic characteristics of the research team or in values and beliefs about the topic. William and Morrow (2009) recommend that researchers report potential bias and include in their discussion section an honest assessment of how expectations and biases influence data analysis. This process begins prior to collecting data, whereby researchers discuss any biases that come up and how these may impact the data analysis process. For example, researchers may discuss any poignant negative or positive experiences with leading or supervising group counseling interventions in the school setting. Conversations may include researchers feeling strongly about specific types of small groups or noting concerns around their feasibility and impact at different grade levels (i.e., elementary vs. high school).

Data sources. Consensual Qualitative Researchers typically develop detailed, semi structured protocols, which involve a number of scripted questions, accompanied by a list of suggested probes to help participants fully explore their experience (Hill, 2012). Hill et al. (2005) recommend that the researcher ask a few scripted questions, no more than ten, and brainstorm accompanying probes ahead of time. Additionally, they suggest allowing some spontaneity with follow up probes to ensure a thorough exploration of the topic being examined. CQR researchers use current scholarship and their own personal experience with the phenomenon to develop the interview protocol (Hill et al., 2005).

Data analysis. The researchers remain close to the data without major interpretation or any assumptions about generalization to the larger population (Hays & Singh, 2012; Hays & Wood, 2011). Specifically, Hill et al. (2005) and Hill (2012) note that data analysis involves three central steps: domains which are used to cluster data, core ideas which are used to capture the essence of what is said, and cross-analysis which is used to construct common themes across participants. Additional steps in the data analysis phase include conducting both a frequency check and external audit.

Dissemination of findings. After data are analyzed in the CQR process, researchers should consider the best course of actions to share their findings. Questions such as, “Who can benefit from learning of these findings, and what populations might be impacted by what was uncovered through this inquiry” may help to guide research teams as they structure and implement a dissemination plan. Teams who include school counseling practitioners and researchers in the CQR process might consider dissemination through both academic scholarship and practical application in the school setting. Coupled with traditional school counseling data collection efforts, school counseling practitioners and researchers may use the results to further enhance the accountability practices for school counselors and support the practice of underappreciated interventions like group work with school administration.

CQR and Practitioner-Researcher Partnerships

The consensual nature of the CQR process mirrors the collaboration and team approach school counselors engage in while delivering a comprehensive program (Stone & Dahir, 2016). Thus, utilizing a team approach to data collection appears to be a natural fit for school counselors. Given that most school counselors possess complementary counseling and conceptualization skills needed in the CQR process, (e.g., use of open-ended questions, active listening skills, an understanding of the interviewee’s experience in context), supporting practitioners in initiating and disseminating qualitative research in schools appears to be particularly valuable, especially for interventions (i.e., group counseling), which can be less meaningful to study on a local level quantitatively.

School counselors and counselor educators. CQR is a structured research paradigm which requires training and guidance in the key

components and steps of the process (Hill, 2012). While school counselors offer a unique perspective in terms of the context of the school environment and the particular students involved, they often do not possess an in-depth understanding of the research process. Counselor educators are experienced researchers and represent a logical collaborator in conducting research using this methodology (Rowell, 2005). Finding ways to empower practitioners through counselor education partnerships can be the key to continued professional development around school counselor accountability and equally strengthen the confidence with which school counselors leverage support for school counseling interventions. After all, for school counselors and school counselor educators alike, empowerment and advocacy for the school counseling profession are shared values. Practitioners and researchers, guided by these common professional interests, have the potential to establish rapport more easily and to develop growth-fostering partnerships that encourage openness in the consensus process. Healthy partnerships therefore include counselor educators and practitioners valuing each other's expertise and tending to their relationship and its influence on the data collection and analysis processes.

CQR and Group Work Research

Previous research supports the use of CQR to study experiences related to the field of counseling (Stahl, Taylor, & Hill, 2012). Several parallel skills between interviewer and counselor have been identified (e.g., rapport building, active listening, reflection of meaning, and communicating empathy). Perhaps underreported in the CQR literature, yet similarly embedded in most counselors' skillsets, are the abilities to attend to the intricacies of group dynamics and an understanding of the interdependency between the collective momentum of the group and the individual goals of each member. Furthermore, the intimate connections developed by way of group process uniquely mirror the relational focus inherent in a CQR research design.

Group leadership skills. Just as group counselors must learn to name, address, and monitor group member interactions, CQR team members must similarly use these skills throughout the research journey. For instance, counselors trained in group work who utilize CQR methodology likely have a parallel experience of investigating and understanding group dynamics that impact the data while

likewise managing research team dynamics that affect coding and analysis performed on the data. This thorough and rigorous process serves to further underscore the intention of the CQR process to draw out the voices and experiences of all individuals (participants and research team members alike) and conceptualize the dynamics between group members and participants during the analysis process. For school counseling group work practitioners who join a CQR team, they may be uniquely involved in the design and implementation of the group intervention under investigation, take part in the analysis of group members' growth as part of understanding the meaning of the data, and balance this analysis with addressing group dynamics that arise amongst the researchers themselves.

Group stages. A similar parallel exists between the formation of a CQR research team and the initial stages of a counseling group. In the CQR process, research team members are thoughtfully "screened" and chosen for their collective interest and knowledge of the particular constructs and or population; this can result in more investment in the process, particularly in the area of data analysis. According to Stahl et al. (2012), it is also advisable to choose members with shared interests from different backgrounds to allow for diversity of opinions and mitigate the potential for groupthink. School counselor educators and school counselors facilitating groups share an interest and expertise in the understanding of group process and the meaning and value of group work in the schools.

During the forming stage of a CQR group, researchers discuss the importance of attending to their own group dynamics by setting expectations for researcher transparency and self-awareness (i.e., acknowledging personal bias), as well as feedback exchanges (Williams & Morrow, 2009). The CQR team continues to openly discuss the progress and dynamics of their own group throughout the duration of the research process. Over time, it is expected that the research team experiences conflict (storming) and resolution (norming), which ultimately moves groups toward fleshing out their own biases and internal struggles that may inhibit the analysis process. Once norms are established, research teams begin to establish thematic consensus (performing) and reflect on their progress as they record and disseminate results (adjourning). The acknowledgement and investigation of the parallel process between their own group dynamics and those experienced or discussed by their research participants can potentially result in greater researcher self-awareness. Furthermore, collecting data through

researcher consensus also has the potential to increase the study's rigor through more accurate analysis and interpretation of participants' experiences (Hays & Singh, 2012; Hays & Wood, 2011; Hill, 2012). The following case example brings this conceptual approach to life by highlighting the value of qualitative inquiry in the examination of school counseling group work practice.

CASE EXAMPLE

A school counselor educator (SCE) working as an internship coordinator in a CACREP-accredited suburban university communicates monthly with site supervisors in various neighboring communities. Each year, she provides relevant supervision training to site supervisors and coordinates students' experiences with their internship faculty supervisors. Over the past several semesters, the SCE hears supervisors and students alike speak about logistical struggles to run group counseling interventions throughout the year. Common themes include administrators not wanting students to miss valuable academic time and suggesting that counselors (and their interns) work on students' socialization and emotional expression skills at lunch time as cafeteria and playground monitors. While counselors generally believe that observation and as-needed intervention in these settings is valuable, it appears that more globally, school administrators do not value the therapeutic benefits of small group counseling. Given that participation with small groups is an important aspect of an intern's graduate requirements, the SCE outlines a proposal for one of her coordinating schools that she believes will marry administration's priorities with the school counselor's (and intern's) role in utilizing small group interventions. The following presents a research proposal designed to assess the meaningfulness of an academic test-taking skills group in an elementary school setting. A brief discussion around stakeholder coordination and delivery is offered followed by an outline of the research project and dissemination of results.

Proposal

The SCE will work with a selected site supervisor to craft a small group proposal and research project that offers a small co-facilitated (school counselor and intern) group intervention to ten identified struggling fourth grade students flagged by the multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) team. Each of these students will be screened and chosen

based on the team's feedback specific to perceived levels of anxiety, motivation, social connectedness, and academic performance on previous standardized tests. Selected students will meet for ten sessions during a weekly enrichment period in a test-taking skills group called *Eyes on the Prize*. The group will be designed to conclude 1 week before students take a yearly standardized assessment.

Throughout the group, the school counselor and intern will gather and report process perception, and outcome data. Open-ended questionnaires will be provided to fourth grade teachers and their parents/guardians before and after the group regarding students' anxiety levels, motivation, social connectedness, and academic performance in class; a survey including standardized measures examining anxiety and social connectedness will accompany this questionnaire. Changes in standardized test scores from students' third to fourth grade years will also be noted.

Complementary to this data collection effort, the school counselor, intern, and school counselor educator will partner together to initiate a research team that investigates the meaning students make of their experiences as part of this group. Thirty-minute individual qualitative interviews will be scheduled with students and analyzed using CQR methodology. Upon receiving students' results on the standardized tests, school administrators will be provided with multiple quantitative and qualitative data points. Follow-up parent/guardian and teacher written feedback will be used to triangulate this data.

Project Implementation

Coordination. Following approval from school administration and the SCE's university Institutional Review Board (IRB), the school counselor and intern will identify and screen potential fourth grade students for the small group. Feedback from teachers, administrators, and staff regarding the structure of the test and needs of specific students will be incorporated into the design and specific goals for the group. Permission forms and feedback questionnaires will be provided to parents/guardians of selected students and returned to the counselor's office. Questionnaires will include goals families have for their child's participation and concerns they see with regard to anxiety, motivation, social connectedness, and previous test related performance. This feedback will also be incorporated into the design and delivery of the small group.

Once ten students have been screened and selected, the school counselor and intern will design the group according to stakeholder feedback and their own observations. A pre/post-test will be given to

students on the first and last session respectively to assess students' knowledge and feelings about being a part of a small group. Standardized anxiety and school connectedness measures will also be included to examine any changes in students' experiences before, during, and after the group. At the conclusion of the 10-session group, parents/guardians and teachers will be provided with an exit questionnaire that asks them to reflect on their child/student's current social connections in school as well as their motivation and perceived anxiety related to the upcoming test.

Traditional school counseling data. According to ASCA, school counselors should be collecting data as part of their role in the school setting. Hatch (2014) speaks of three types of data (Process, Perception, and Outcome) collected by school counselors. With respect to *Eyes on the Prize*, consistent with these standards, the school counselor and intern will document the number of students served (process), collect results from students' pre/post-tests, assessing knowledge gained in the group and feelings about their participation (perception), and examine the results of students' standardized testing (outcome).

Qualitative data in school counseling practice. Little appears to be published around the use of qualitative data collection methods for school counselors. The majority of qualitative information reported by school counselors tends to come by way of informal questionnaires and anecdotal feedback. While this information may be meaningful, it may lack the rigor and intentionality of formal qualitative research designs. Lack of graduate training in qualitative methodology or time and potential boundary concerns around taping formal interviews with educational colleagues (Mason, Land et al., 2017; Mason, Springer, & Pugliese, 2017) may represent some of the challenges that inhibit practitioners. The school counseling and school counselor education fields recognize these challenges and continue to send calls to the field for more practitioner/researcher partnerships (Mason, Land et al., 2017). With this literature in mind, the school counselor, intern, and SCE will partner together to conduct a qualitative research study that offers team members an intriguing way to parallel the group work process while dually supporting the research efficacy of team members. The guiding question for this research study will be "What meaning do elementary students make of a test-taking skills small group intervention?" Team members will consider this question as they construct a semi-structured eight question interview protocol. CQR will be the chosen methodology as a way to both

understand the data and value the inherent discourse embedded in the research team's group process.

Team composition and researcher bias. Using her qualitative research training and expertise, the SCE will methodologically lead the CQR team with the school counseling practitioner and intern to further assess the meaning students made of their experiences as part of the *Eyes on the Prize* group. This research team composition affords reciprocal mentorship opportunities between the SCE, practitioner, and intern. The SCE will provide knowledge and insight into the research process and the school counselor will offer valuable access to students, their unique needs, and the nature of the school environment. This process will equally benefit the intern, who will have opportunities to engage in the intervention and participate in a qualitative data collection and analysis process. The intern's experiences and feedback will also provide important insight to both the SCE and practitioner in terms of future supervisory needs.

Prior to data collection, all team members will be asked to document biases around the group work and research processes. Consistent with the forming stage of group counseling, team members will discuss expectations for their work together and agree on a tentative meeting schedule. The team will be sure to address how constructed and perceived power differentials (e.g., intern/SCE [professor]; intern/practitioner [site supervisor]; practitioner [school counselor]/SCE [researcher] will be addressed throughout the group's process. Ongoing discussion will be encouraged to ensure that the consensus process includes the voices of each team member.

Data collection. After parent permission is received and the group has commenced, interview data will be collected by the SCE. The school counselor and intern will help students to feel comfortable about the research process and allow them opportunities to assent to an interview with the SCE. While the SCE is an outside entity to students, she affords the research process some objectivity and potentially allows students to feel more comfortable sharing the details of their experiences. In the informed consent/assessment process, participants will be aware that the transcribed interview will be de-identified so that the school counselor and intern will not be able to specifically link interview data to each participant. Each 30-minute interview will be conducted at a mutually agreed upon time with the student, taped, and transcribed. Open-ended questionnaire feedback from students, teachers, and parents/guardians will be transcribed, analyzed, and used to provide additional description of students'

experiences throughout the process. These additional artifacts will be used to triangulate the data.

Data analysis. Prior to the initiation of the group, all three team members (SCE, school counseling practitioner, and intern) documented their concerns, values, and biases around group work with children, the inherent power differential between research team members, the research process, working with children in groups, and feelings around initiating an academic test-taking skills group. As the group begins the analysis phase, they will reflect on this information and together discuss additional concerns, values, biases, and preconceived notions about the data. It is essential that each team member feel that he/she has an equal voice, and it will be important for a team made up of a university researcher, practicing school counselor, and intern to reflect on their process throughout the research project. This information will be used by the team as a way to encourage consensus, avoid group think, and challenge each other's thematic interpretations.

Once the research team's process has been defined, the team will meet at an agreed-upon time to come to consensus around core ideas, domains, and categories found in the data. Group members will start by analyzing one transcription together and use the group's process to talk through discrepancies in interpretation. The group will then use tentative domains and categories created together to analyze a second transcript individually. Group members will come back together to discuss their process and reflect on the application of the domains and categories to the second transcript. After the research team has come to consensus, the team will repeat this process with the rest of the transcriptions, redefining, consolidating, or adding any domains or categories that they, together, feel more accurately reflects the data. An outside auditor with a background in CQR and school counseling will be asked to review and provide feedback during the initial discussion and finalization of core ideas, domains, and categories. The auditor will also ask about the team's group process and challenge any additional values or biases that may be unclear to the three member team.

Dissemination. Together, the research team will choose salient quotes that represent selected domains and categories. These quotes will be used to summarize the meaning students made of their experiences in this group. Using the process, perception, and outcome data gathered by the school counselor and intern as well as the qualitative data collected as part of CQR methodology, the

team members will create a presentation for school administrators. This presentation will include any quantitative movement in test scores and/or anxiety reduction related to the standardized test, stakeholder feedback throughout the process, and specific themes related to students' experiences as a member of *Eyes on the Prize*.

CONCLUSION

The case example provided outlines a way to foster partnerships between SCE and school counselors through data collection and analysis. Collecting and disseminating meaningful group counseling data through the CQR process not only provides a rich layer of support for groups, which can help to substantiate the impact of group work in schools but it also affords professional development opportunities and connections for practitioners (and interns) and helps to marry theory with research and practice.

REFERENCES

- Akos, P., Hamm, J. V., Mack, S. G., & Dunaway, M. (2007). Utilizing the developmental influence of peers in middle school groups. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 32, 51–60. doi:10.1080/01933920600977648
- American School Counselor Association. (2012). *The ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs* (3rd). Alexandria, VA: Author.
- American School Counselor Association (2014). *The school counselor and school counseling preparation programs* [Position statement]. Retrieved from https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/PositionStatements/PS_Preparation.pdf
- Chapman, S., & Schwartz, J. P. (2012). Rejecting the null: Research and social justice means asking different questions. *Counseling and Values*, 57, 24–30. doi:10.1002/cvj.2012.57.issue-1
- Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (2016). *2016 Standards*. Retrieved from <http://www.cacrep.org/for-programs/2016-cacrep-standards/>
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed. ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Erford, B. T. (Ed.). (2010). *Group work in the schools*. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Hatch, T. (2014). *The use of data in school counseling: Hatching results for students, programs and the profession*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Hays, D. G., & Singh, A. A. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry in clinical and educational settings*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00091.x
- Hays, D. G., & Wood, C. (2011). Infusing qualitative traditions in counseling research designs. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 89(3), 288–295.
- Hill, C. E. (2012). *Consensual qualitative research: A practice resource for investigating social science phenomena*. Washington, D. C: American Psychological Association Hill.

- Hill, C. E., Thompson, B. J., Hess, S. A., Knox, S., Williams, E. N., & Ladany, N. (2005). Consensual qualitative research: An update. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 52*(2), 196–205. doi:10.1037/0022-0167.52.2.196
- Hill, C. E., Thompson, B. J., & Williams, E. N. (1997). A guide to conducting consensual qualitative research. *The Counseling Psychologist, 25*, 517–572. doi:10.1177/0011000097254001
- Lincoln, Y. S. (2010). “What a long strange trip it’s been...”: Twenty five years of qualitative and new paradigm research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 16*(1), 3–9. doi:10.1177/1077800409349754
- Luke, M., & Goodrich, K. M. (2017). Introduction to research in group work: A renewed focus on exemplary methods. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 42*(1), 131–134. doi:10.1080/01933922.2017.1306415
- Mason, E. C., Land, C., Brodie, I., Collins, K., Pennington, C., Sands, K., & Sierra, M. (2017). Data and research that matter: Mentoring school counselors to publish action research. *Professional School Counseling, 20*(1), 184–193. doi:10.5330/1096-2409-20.1.184
- Mason, E. C., Springer, S. I., & Pugliese, A. (2017). Staff development as a school climate intervention to support transgender and gender nonconforming students: An integrated research partnership model for school counselors and counselor educators. *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling, 11*(4), 301–318. doi: 10.1080/15538605.2017.1380552
- Ponteretto, J. G. (2005). Qualitative research in counseling psychology: A primer on research paradigms and philosophy of science. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 52* (2), 126–136. doi:10.1037/0022-0167.52.2.126
- Rowell, L. L. (2005). Collaborative action research and school counselors. *Professional School Counseling, 9*(1), 28–36. doi:10.5330/prsc.9.1.x6302t28qp670x65
- Stahl, J. V., Taylor, N. E., & Hill, C. E. (2012). *Consensual qualitative research: A practical resource for investigating social science phenomena* (pp. 21–32). (C. E. Hill, Ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Stone, C., & Dahir, C. (2016). *The transformed school counselor* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Williams, E. N., & Morrow, S. L. (2009). Achieving trustworthiness in qualitative research: A pan-paradigmatic perspective. *Psychotherapy Research, 19*(4–5), 576–582. doi:10.1080/10503300802702113
- Yeh, C. J., & Inman, A. G. (2007). Qualitative data analysis and interpretation in counseling psychology: Strategies for best practices. *The Counseling Psychologist, 35* (3), 369–403. doi:10.1177/0011000006292596