

University of Alberta

Developing professional identity through supportive networks: A proposed
conceptual framework for School Psychology

by

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Abstract

School Psychologists spend a disproportionate amount of time assessing students despite a stated desire to be recognized as performing a broader role. One approach to ameliorating this discrepancy is by facilitating the professional identity development of individual School Psychologists, since those with a strong professional identity are likely to advocate and elicit change. To this end, it is necessary to look beyond the narrow confines of the profession for models of professional identity development. An existing network development model that has identity-building potential is explored, and two existing professional networking mechanisms, one from the field of Veterinary Medicine and the other from School Psychology, are examined. The resulting School Psychology Professional Identity Development (SPPID) Framework provides a basis for a future professional collaboration mechanism that specifically assists school psychologists in professional identity building and eliciting change. Limitations and future directions for research are also discussed.

Preface

A Personal Journey

A hopeful and enthusiastic education student, one month away from graduation, wraps an envelope around one of four hundred resumes and cover letters addressed to school divisions across Canada. Unfettered by experience, his vision of what it is to teach, and to wear the *identity* of “teacher” is solid and undisputed.

A number of years later, this student-turned-teacher mulls over his university summer class syllabus on a third floor apartment balcony in the hot Saskatchewan sun. Having taught for a handful of years now, he has survived feelings of incompetence, the seemingly endless hours of planning, and the trials of changing schools to become a confident professional. Along with these experiences, however, has come the realization that the *system* he works within cannot provide the autonomy and job security he seeks. As a result, the next two years he will attend university classes alongside his teaching career to become a certified special education teacher.

It is a sleepless Sunday night only days away from the first snowfall. This newly minted education specialist finds himself in a new province, a new school, and in a new role as special education coordinator. He has experienced *transitions* from one school to another on several occasions, but this move is different. Not only are there seemingly infinite opinions about what his role entails, he feels as though he has been left to his own devices to navigate this new position. Attempts to seek help from other special education coordinators within the district are met with well-intentioned assistance, however, differences between school cultures, personnel, and interpretations of the job description often lead to more questions than answers. For the first time in his career, he finds himself feeling alone in a school full of people.

A bright, cold Alberta winter day greets this special education coordinator with new possibilities. Reference letters have been written, transcripts sent and his application to the department of graduate studies in school psychology submitted. This

will mean a minimum of two years leave from his job, but he is looking forward to the atmosphere of challenge and collaboration in the university classroom. He has enjoyed the opportunity to work closely with parents, teachers, and administration to **collaboratively** come up with ways to make school function for kids. In addition, working as part of a team of professionals from a diverse range of disciplines has been a highlight over the past three years.

Snow melting, coursework finished, and a blank screen before him, this soon-to-be graduate of the school psychology program formats the title page of his thesis. While the past two years have lived up to their promise of challenge and collegial collaboration, he has learned that the title “School Psychologist” is a deceptively uncomplicated designation, and is more complex and conflicted than the simple practice of psychology in a school setting. With the promise of a new career looming, this student is more determined than ever to utilize his desire for **collaboration**, experience with career **transition**, and familiarity with educational **systems** to pursue a new professional **identity**.

While the completion of this work has undoubtedly raised more questions than answers in the mind of this graduate program candidate, it has afforded him an opportunity to silently reflect and organize his thoughts surrounding these “big picture” questions, an activity far too rare in the everyday detail-oriented life of a practicing professional.

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Most importantly, the completion of this program and this thesis would be impossible without the support of my family, friends, and wife, Lisa Collis. Lisa not only understands and appreciates this academic endeavor, but also has unconditionally supported me in so many ways as I have worked through the ups and downs of this journey. Thank you!

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Chapter I

Introduction

Rationale and Purpose

A discrepancy exists between School Psychology's ideal role and the reality of practice (Gutkin & Conoley, 1990). Essential to narrowing this discrepancy and encouraging the advancement and growth of the profession, individuals with a unified vision (Curtis, Chesno Grier, & Hunley, 2004) and willingness to advocate for change (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000) are required. It is, therefore, important to the profession as a whole for individual School Psychologists to work toward a stronger sense of professional identity. Briefly defined, professional identity is "The relatively stable and enduring constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role" (Ibarra, 1999, pp.764-765).

Narrowing the definition-practice discrepancy has been slow, and several explanations have been offered for the slow rate of change. The current service delivery model, influence of external factors such as school district policy and legislation, and a personnel shortage have been implicated. This, combined with a lack of understanding outside the profession of the School Psychologist's current role and desire for role expansion (Gilman & Handwerk, 2001; Gilman & Medway, 2007), make the matter of professional identity particularly important and necessary. Considering School Psychology's slow progress toward role reconceptualization (Curtis et al., 2004), it is necessary to look beyond the narrow confines of the profession, or even its two most closely related fields of education and psychology for models of professional identity development.

Overview of the Study

The current literature regarding the development of professional identity and career success comes from the field of Sociology and focuses on the building of mentorship

constellations or developmental networks (Dobrow & Higgins, 2005). Exploring professional identity development from this sociological perspective, a field with a longstanding interest in the area, is intended to provide the theoretical basis and starting point for addressing issues specific to School Psychology such as role reconceptualization.

To accompany this theoretic base, two networking mechanisms will be examined, one from the field of School Psychology, and the other from the unrelated field of Veterinary Medicine. Veterinary Medicine's use of technology for communication, network building and support is an example of a functioning developmental network that can inform the field of School Psychology's use of such tools to advocate for change and move toward the unified vision proposed by leaders in this area (e.g. Curtis et al., 2004; Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000). By examining this support network, it is not suggested that the professions of Veterinary Medicine and School Psychology are linked, related, or should be directly compared. The intention is, rather, to explore another profession's working model of professional networking objectively, and examine possible application to the profession of School Psychology's quest for professional identity.

The primary goal of this work is to propose a School Psychology Professional Identity Development (SPPID) Framework. The proposed framework is based on developmental network theory (Higgins & Kram, 2001), current working models of network building from the fields of Veterinary Medicine and School Psychology, and contextual considerations, which include the profession's past and current challenges. While application of the SPPID Framework is beyond the scope of this work, it is intended to provide the basis for future practical and research applications.

The Historical Evolution of School Psychology

Prior to looking toward the future, it is important to examine how School Psychologist's roles have evolved through history. While the profession has existed in the United States and Canada in various forms since the early 1900s (Fagan, 2002;

Janzen & Massey, 1990), official recognition as a separate division of the American Psychological Association (APA) did not occur until 1944. A second important note is that unlike the United States, provincial instead of federal policy drove the development of education, educational practices, and psychological services in Canada making it more difficult to describe the development of the field on a national level (Saklofske et al., 2007). For the purpose of this discussion, therefore, the development of School Psychologist's role and identity will be on a general North American level with a specific mention of Canadian developments, rather than a detailed account of regional or provincial development. For a comprehensive, province-by-province description of School Psychology in Canada, see the fall 1990 (volume 6, issue 1) *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*.

Thomas Fagan (1996) provides a comprehensive historical account of School Psychology's development as an independent profession. The creation of division 16 (School Psychology) by APA in 1944 was viewed by the profession as a positive move toward a unique identity. A unique identity, however, did not translate into a unified vision. Three major camps emerged, "...those who viewed themselves as primary clinical psychologists in school settings, educational psychologists, and consulting psychologists" (p. 102). The psychological identity arose because many School Psychologists were trained as clinical psychologists, providing both psychometric and mental health services in school. The educational identity came from the fact that as programs in School Psychology were developed, they drew content from the fields of both education and psychology. Additionally, these programs were, and still are, typically connected to colleges or faculties of education. Fagan argues that the profession can be described as a continuum between psychology and education even today. Furthermore, lines began to emerge on several more discrete levels; clinical versus educational application of services, mental health versus academic problem solving orientations, educational versus psychological preparation, and public, private, or residential work settings (Fagan, 1996).

It took until 1949 for the first definition of the School Psychologist's role to become officially defined under division 16 of APA. The delay, Fagan suggests, was largely due to organizational instability, and a struggle to maintain the division of School Psychology in a time when the number and nature of APA divisions was under debate.

The 1949 definition of a School Psychologist is:

a psychologist a major portion of whose work is the application of clinical psychological techniques to children and adolescents presenting problems in school, or the psychological supervision of psychologists doing such work. (By-Laws of the Division of School Psychologists, 1949, p.1 in Fagon, 1996, p. 107)

This definition remained in place for the next 17 years, with only one amendment that added college students to the list of clientele served. Within this time frame, however, a conference took place that was important to the identity of the profession. Named after the New York Hotel in which it was held, the Thayer conference, among other things, sought to apply the science-practitioner model to School Psychology. Out of this conference also came the later to be published *Psychologist on the School Staff*, a 1958 brochure containing the first descriptive account of a School Psychologist's duties.

A definitional change in 1966 reflected the greatly expanded role of School Psychologists in a movement toward consultation, collaboration, and attention to learning and socio-emotional development. In addition, the new definition was broadened to include academics in the field, giving School Psychology greater respect in the broader psychological community. The 1966 definition of School Psychology is:

A: A psychologist, a substantial proportion of whose professional knowledge, competencies and time are spent (1) in collaboration, consultation, or conference with school personnel on: (a) enhancing the learning potential of school aged pupils; (b) advancing their socio-emotional development; or (2) in clinical work, including psycho-diagnostics, with children who present problems in school; or (3) training and instruction of School Psychologists as defined in (1) and (2) above; and or

B: A psychologist, who through teaching, professional, or research activity, has made significant contributions to the training of School Psychologists or the field of School Psychology. (Results of the Balloting on By-Laws Amendment and Definition, 1966, p.21 in Fagon, 1996, p. 116)

In the 1970s and 1980s, two major factors influenced the role of School Psychologists. First, School Psychology and educational psychology graduate programs began graduating students specifically in School Psychology. In Canada, these schools included the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary, University of British Columbia, and McGill University (Saklofske et al., 2007). The second factor, related to legislative changes, had an indirect but far-reaching effect on the role of School Psychologists in Canada. Passage of PL-94-142 in the United States, along with the Canadian Human Rights Act (1977) and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) provided the platform for inclusive classrooms. With the discouragement of a distinction between regular and special education, the role of School Psychologists grew (Canadian Psychological Association, 2007). In addition to expanding School Psychologist's clientele beyond those with cognitive deficits, the range of services demanded of School Psychologists expanded as well. For example, many School Psychologists report that they are asked to provide direct clinical services such as therapeutic intervention and counseling (Saklofske et al., 2007).

School psychology was also experiencing changes on an organizational level. In 1969, a rival organization to the APA, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) grew out of several state and local professional organizations in the United States. In addition to Canada's affiliation with NASP, the formation of the Canadian psychological Association (CPA) and the Canadian Association of School Psychologists (CASP) also entered the scene in the 1970s and 1980s each adopting their own definition of School Psychology based on their American counterparts.

Today's Definition of School Psychology

As a result, multiple definitions of School Psychology exist today. By the mid 1990s, School Psychologists were promoting their profession in terms of functioning within a problem solving model linking assessment to intervention. This point of view, still very alive today, is reflected in the definitions and descriptions of School Psychology by the major American and Canadian regulatory bodies. This is evidenced in the preface to the CPA's Professional Practice Guidelines for School Psychologists in Canada that begins with the following quote:

...School psychologists are the most highly trained mental health experts in schools. In addition to knowledge about prevention, intervention, and evaluation for a number of childhood problems, School Psychologists have unique expertise regarding issues of learning and schools. It is our ethical responsibility to become involved in programs aimed at problems that are broader than assessing and diagnosing what is wrong with a child. As the most experienced school professionals in this area, School Psychologists must become invested in addressing social and human ills such as those described. Although we will not 'solve' these ills, we must have a role in ameliorating their impact on the lives of children. (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000, p. 488)

This aspirational description of the profession is followed by a detailed description of what School Psychologists offer the school system, their client population, as well as types of intervention and assessment services offered. Similarly, the NASP website describes what School Psychologists do:

School psychologists work to find the best solution for each student and situation; they use different strategies to address student needs and to improve school and district-wide support systems. School psychologists work with students individually and in groups. They also develop programs to train teachers and parents about effective teaching and learning strategies, techniques to manage behavior at home and in the classroom, working with students with disabilities or with special talents, addressing abuse of drugs and other substances, and preventing and managing crises.
(National Association of School Psychologists, n.d.)^c.

It continues by describing the services provided as consultation, evaluation, intervention, prevention, and research and planning. Finally, division 16 of the APA describes the specialty of School Psychology as follows:

School Psychology is a general practice and health service provider specialty of professional psychology that is concerned with the science

and practice of psychology with children, youth, families; learners of all ages; and the schooling process. The basic education and training of School Psychologists prepares them to provide a range of psychological assessment, intervention, prevention, health promotion, and program development and evaluation services with a special focus on the developmental processes of children and youth within the context of schools, families, and other systems.

School psychologists are prepared to intervene at the individual and system level, and develop, implement, and evaluate preventive programs. In these efforts, they conduct ecologically valid assessments and intervene to promote positive learning environments within which children and youth from diverse backgrounds have equal access to effective educational and psychological services to promote healthy development. (American Psychological Association, 2009).

As with the previous definitions, this description is followed by the parameters that define the profession in terms of settings, services provided, and populations served. While definitions of School Psychology have focused on intervention, consultation, prevention, and assessment, it is important to keep in mind that “What School Psychologists do or are expected to do invariably describes and defines them, and their individual and collective identities as School Psychologists” (Saklofske et al., p. 303). By examining how School Psychologists spend their time, and what local school authorities expect of them, a different professional definition emerges.

Definition vs. Practice: A Considerable Discrepancy

Numerous surveys have been conducted regarding School Psychologists' time allocation. The majority were surveys mailed to individual School Psychologists drawn from the NASP membership directory. While not all psychologists belong to NASP, a phone survey comparing NASP and non-NASP members found that generalization to the entire School Psychology population was likely appropriate, lending credibility to past and current survey results (Lewis, Truscott, & Volker, 2008). In a 1984 survey, 877 practicing School Psychologists indicated that 54% of their time was spent on assessment, and 84% of their time was devoted to working with exceptional students. Time spent on intervention (23%), consultation (19%) and research (1%) together represented less than half of their time spent on the job (Smith, 1984). Reschly and Wilson (1995) compared

results of a 1991-92 survey of 1,089 practitioners with a similar 1986 NASP funded survey. They found that at both time points, about one-half of practicing School Psychologists spend 75% of their time conducting evaluations, staffing, making follow-up placements, and performing re-evaluations. Additionally, about 75% reported that one-half or more of their time was dedicated to these special education tasks. Similar findings resulted from Curtis, Hunley, Walker and Baker's (1999) survey of 1,922 School Psychologists. Drawing once again from the NASP membership list, 59.1% reported spending more than 70% of their time on evaluative activities, the majority of which were related to special education. Two recent, yet smaller surveys confirmed that little change in time allocation has occurred since the early 1980s. Using a sample of 370 NASP registered School Psychologists, Bramlett, Murphy, Johnson, Wallingsford & Hall (2002) surveyed respondents regarding the approximate time spent on various aspects of their job. They reported spending 46% of their time on assessment with the rest of their time spent on consultation (16%), intervention (13%), counseling (8%), conferencing (7%), supervision (3%), in-servicing (2%) research (1%), parent training (1%), and other (3%). A yet smaller telephone survey of 124 School Psychologists by Lewis et al. (2008) revealed that 79% spent more than half of their time on special education-related activities with 43% of the total School Psychologists surveyed spending over 75% on such tasks. As seen in these surveys, the amount of time spent on special education and assessment tasks is clearly at odds with the definition of School Psychology presented by the CPA, NASP and APA.

Chapter II

Proposed Reasons for the Definition-Practice Discrepancy

The Service Delivery Model

“All is not well in School Psychology... Visions of what School Psychology should be and could be are not congruent with the reality of what School Psychology has come to be” (Gutkin & Conoley, 1990, p. 203). The reasons for this incongruence and slow rate of change, however, are continuing points of discussion. Sheridan and Gutkin (2000) provide a synthesis of prior theories, professional history, and the current status of School Psychology to promote the professional self-examination they feel is necessary for change to take place. They propose that the current way School Psychology services are delivered is to blame for slow progress, promoting an ecological model of service delivery instead. Although the authors acknowledge that individual psychologists will bear the burden of responsibility for change, they ultimately propose change on a systems level rather than on the level of the practitioner.

Sheridan and Gutkin (2000) suggest that the largest issue preventing change in the field of School Psychology is an over-reliance on the medical model of service delivery. Not only does this adherence perpetuate a focus on assessment, diagnosis, and placement, but emphasizes remediation rather than prevention. Instead, the authors insist, we should recognize that students function within a large context, requiring a holistic approach to service delivery. The medical model approach, according to Sheridan and Gutkin, also drives School Psychologists' reliance on written reports and brief meetings to pass complex information on to primary care givers such as parents and teachers. Another reason suggested by the authors, is the aforementioned close link between special education and School Psychology. This link is perpetuated by two factors. First, the school authority typically mandates the role of School Psychologists, which is often viewed as an extension of special education. Second, the North American model of special education service delivery ties individual diagnoses to funding, making

individual standardized psychological testing a necessity. It is important to point out that Sheridan and Gutkin refer to the medical model in very global terms. Not only have patient-centered and ecological approaches to service delivery been widely accepted in the medical community (e.g. Alberta Health Services, 2009), but humanistic, relationship-centered approaches have been proposed (Suchman, 2006). These developments in the medical community possibly warrant a closer look at the position taken by Sheridan and Gutkin (2000).

The Influence of External Factors

As mentioned in Sheridan and Gutkin (2000), constraint put on School Psychology by school district policy is relevant to the slow rate of change. “While role expansion has been a common concern by leaders in School Psychology, the realities of external forces often dictate practice” (Bramlett et al., 2002, p. 333). When determinants of School Psychologist’s roles and functions are thought of in terms of what the individual psychologist brings to the job and external influences such as school administration and legislation, the latter tends to have the greatest influence on day to day functioning (Fagan & Wise, 2007). While this supports Sheridan and Gutkin’s call for a focus on systematic change, it also becomes evident that if School Psychologists want to expand their role, the impetus for change will need to take place from within the profession, and at the level of the individual School Psychologist. Therefore, the strength of the membership, each individual’s commitment to the profession, and a common vision of School Psychology as a “unified field” are all important components in role reconceptualization (Curtis et al., 2004). In other words, if individual School Psychologists have a strong professional identity, the profession as a whole will benefit.

The Personnel Shortage

Another recognized complication to expanding the role of School Psychologists is the personnel shortage leading to high School Psychologist-to-student ratios. This topic

was a major focus of the Future of School Psychology 2002 Invitational conference with predicted shortages of almost 9,000 School Psychologists between 2000 and 2010, and a total shortage of almost 15,000 in the United States by the year 2021 (Curtis et al., 2004). These projections were made with the assumption that there will be no growth in the field, and using the ideal psychologist-to-student ratio of 1000:1 recommended in NASP policy documents. Higher psychologist-to-student ratios associated with the predicted personnel shortage are generally connected with the traditional assessment role, with lower ratios conducive to expanding the role of the School Psychologists beyond assessment (Smith, 1984; Curtis, Hunley, & Grier, 2002). While initially, these increased ratios appear to stand in the way of role reconceptualization, Curtis et al. suggest it is an opportunity for School Psychologists to move beyond their role as assessors, and take an ecological approach, diverging from the medical model as proposed by Sheridan and Gutkin (2000). Whether increased ratios are considered a barrier or a stimulus for change, a strong professional identity on a group and individual level will be necessary. In addressing the shortage, Curtis et al. suggest that the immediate reaction of simply recruiting more students into School Psychology should be tempered by issues of low training program capacity and vacancy rates of faculty positions. Alternatively, the authors propose a closer look at retention rates. Although little research has been done on retention rates of School Psychologists, Curtis et al. project that annually, more people will be lost to attrition than to retirement through to the year 2020.

Some suggest, however, that the issue of a personnel shortage has been oversimplified. Fagan (2004) provides an in-depth examination of historical and current personnel issues in the field of School Psychology. First, the definition of School Psychologist varies with regards to credentialing and titles. While those with master's and bachelor's degrees were considered in the shortage equation in the past, today numbers fluctuate depending on whether NASP's more inclusive definition, or the APA's definition of doctoral psychologists only is used. Second is the question of roles School

Psychologists are being asked to fill. The degree of shortage depends on whether the more traditional role of assessment, or the less common but aspirational broadening of services is considered. Third, distinguishing between rural, suburban and urban settings with regards to training programs, private practice, state education agencies, school district, or academic positions is a factor. Further, perceived need can be subdivided and represented in terms of minority or gender under-representation. Fagan goes on to argue that School Psychology's leadership has not, and probably never will, admit to having enough practitioners. Even if accurate and consistent data were available, whether the supply / demand discrepancy is a significant discrepancy would be necessary to consider its positive or negative implications. Fagan concludes his analysis with the prediction that the profession will struggle to maintain current School Psychologist-to-student ratios, and "The three "Rs" for the future are more likely to be Resist, Recruit, and Retain rather than Relax, Retrain, Retire" (p.427).

The Perceptions of School Psychology from Outside the Profession

In contrast to the inward looking explanations for the slow rate of role reconceptualization discussed, seeking perspectives from groups outside the profession has been suggested as a way to effect change on a macro system level (Adelman & Taylor, 2003; Nastasi, 2000). In a 2004 pilot study, Gilman and Gabriel compared the level of knowledge, satisfaction, and perceived helpfulness of school psychological services between teachers and administrators. More than 1600 teachers and administrators from school districts in four states completed the School Psychology Perception Survey (SPPS). While the authors cautioned against generalization of results due to the uneven representation of the two comparison groups, and the unstratified sample size, their results were consistent with similar previously completed studies. Of interest, they found that teachers and administrators do not have a comprehensive and accurate understanding of School Psychology, and the expectations of School Psychologists differ significantly between teachers and administrators.

A recent study using comprehensive and carefully documented sampling, compared regular education teachers' and special education teachers' results of the SPPS (Gilman & Medway, 2007). In total, 1,533 educators employed in eight school districts across four states returned surveys. Rural, suburban, and urban schools were represented and consideration for gender, grade distribution, minority group membership, and years of teaching experience were considered in the sample group. The authors hypothesized that because special education teachers potentially have more contact with School Psychologists, they would have a better understanding and more favorable attitude toward the profession. A second point of comparison in the study involved assessing whether the two teaching specialties differentiated between School Psychologists and school councilors with regards to their role in schools. The authors' contact hypothesis was supported by results showing regular education teachers made fewer requests for school psychological services and rated School Psychologists as significantly less knowledgeable, helpful, and were generally less satisfied with services provided than were special education teachers. Regardless of contact, frequency of request, perceived knowledge, helpfulness or satisfaction, neither specialty thought of the School Psychologist's role in terms beyond the traditional assessment role. Further, in comparing the regular and special education teachers' perceptions of School Psychologists versus school councilors, School Psychologists were generally viewed as assessors while councilors were seen as performing services such as individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, in-service training, and curriculum development. The authors concluded that teachers' restricted view of School Psychology may partially explain why service requests are limited to traditional assessment tasks. "These limited perceptions may also play a factor in the oft-cited discrepancy between the roles that School Psychologists are expected to provide in schools, and roles that they wish to provide if given the opportunity" (p. 158).

A similar misunderstanding of School Psychologists' identity and role within the school setting was found in a study of 622 undergraduate students. While the broader

purpose of Gilman and Handwerk's 2001 study was to better understand the undergraduate population for purposes of recruitment into School Psychology programs, data were collected on the students' perceived knowledge, and the accuracy of their knowledge regarding the professions of School Psychology and clinical psychology. Psychology majors, education majors, and those in programs other than education or psychology were surveyed using the Undergraduate Psychology Information Inventory (UPII). The sample was drawn from five separate universities across the USA that had both clinical and School Psychology programs. The authors found a discrepancy between self-reported knowledge and actual knowledge of both psychological specialties. For example, more than half of the students who were considering clinical psychology as an option for graduate school, cited working with children and families as their primary reason for the choice. "(...) Although many undergraduates report being knowledgeable about the roles of School Psychologists, their actual understanding about School Psychology is deficient at best and perhaps grossly erroneous" (pp. 129-130).

If School Psychology is to move toward the seemingly aspirational professional descriptions presented by the CAP, NASP, and APA, efforts on a group and individual level need to be made. The focus of this current work is on effecting change through the development and support of individual School Psychologist's professional identity. Based on the findings in the literature and upon practical experience, the researcher's view is that the professional communication and support needs required by individuals to develop their professional identity are too often overshadowed by the challenges of day to day practice, and seemingly insurmountable external influences. The current literature regarding the development of professional identity focuses on the building of developmental support networks, thus forming the basis of this work.

Chapter III

Professional Identity, Mentorship, and Developmental Networks

Professional Identity

While the challenges faced by the profession of School Psychology are complex and multi-faceted, professional identity among School Psychologists is a component common both to historical and contemporary explanations for this challenge, thus making the concept of professional identity vitally important to the progression of the field. This, however, naturally leads to questions about what professional identity is.

In its most basic form, professional identity is defined as “the perception of oneself as a professional and as a particular type of professional” (Bucher & Stelling, 1977, p. 213). A further description of the concept, however, found in E.H. Schein’s 1978 book entitled *Career Dynamics: Matching Individual and Organizational Needs* forms the basis for much of the research done in this area (Sweitzer, 2008; Ibarra, 1999): “The relatively stable and enduring constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role” (Schein, 1978). It is clear from the definitions of professional identity presented here that the concept is an intra-personal one, but because an individual’s professional identity is formed in the context of their professional group, it is simultaneously inter-personal as well. It is logical, therefore, to focus on an individual’s relationships within their professional group when examining how professional identity is developed and fostered.

Mentorship

Mentoring, in the traditional sense, consists of a relationship between a protégé and a senior member (mentor) from his or her organization and is prototypically intended to benefit the less experienced individual (Mullen, 1994). This dyadic relationship has been well studied and Kram’s 1985 book *Mentoring at work: Developmental relationships in organizational life*, is widely regarded as a seminal work, and has sparked much of the

empirical research on the topic of mentoring that has followed (Allen, Eby, Poterat, Lentz, & Lima, 2004). Kram (1985) identified two broad functions of mentoring relationships; career-related and psychosocial support. While Career related support refers to aspects of the relationship that support “learning the ropes and preparing for advancement” (p. 22) in an organization, the psychosocial function is theoretically related to an individual's professional identity referring to “those aspects of a relationship that enhance an individual's sense of competence, identity, and effectiveness in a professional role” (p.32). Mentoring activities classified as career related by Kram include sponsorship, exposure and visibility, coaching, protection and challenging assignments. Psychosocial activities, on the other hand, are identified as role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, counseling and friendship. This two-factor model of the mentoring process has not gone unchallenged, but remains the most widely accepted framework for research in the area (Wanberg, Welsh, & Hazlett, 2003).

Allen, et al. (2004) conducted a meta-analysis of the existing empirical research to review and synthesize the data regarding protégé benefits from mentoring in a career context. Career outcomes were measured objectively; promotion and compensation, and subjectively; career satisfaction, career commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions (p.128). Comparisons between mentored and unmentored groups were made along with the relationship between career-related or psychosocial types of mentoring and career outcomes. Allen et al. approached the initial literature search for their study using manual and computerized journal searches and reviewing the reference lists of the articles revealed by these searches. In-press or unpublished articles were also reviewed by email solicitation of frequent contributors to the field and by reviewing the Society for *Industrial and Organizational Psychology* and *Academy of Management* programs. For a study to be considered for inclusion in the analysis, the studies' sample size had to be reported, statistical data (such as a Pearson correlation coefficient) had to be used, and the study had to be conducted in an organized setting. The resulting pool of 43 individual studies was then coded independently by at least two of the study authors for sample

size, correlations, variable means and standard deviations, and *t* tests or *F* tests. Variables included in the statistical analysis of the study were: mentoring (mentored versus unmentored individuals and psychosocial versus career-related mentoring), objective career success (compensation, salary growth, promotions), and subjective career success (career satisfaction and expectations for advancement / promotion opportunities / career plateau).

The meta-analysis results indicated that mentoring leads to generally positive career outcomes but effect sizes associated with objective career outcomes were small, leading the researchers to conclude that using mentoring as a primary means of supporting objective career success may be unwarranted. As predicted, the type of mentoring provided (career-related or psychosocial) appeared to affect the type of outcome observed. For example, career-related mentoring was more highly related with objective career success than psychosocial mentoring. "In contrast [the] review indicates that career related and psychosocial mentoring are both related to career and job satisfaction to a similar extent" (Allen et al., 2004, p.133). This was contrary to the authors' expectation that psychosocial mentoring would have a greater effect on this outcome.

The current body of mentoring research has been criticized on several fronts, however, the generally positive benefits of mentoring found by Allan et al. are supported by other reviews of the mentoring literature (e.g. Wanberg et al., 2003; Underhill, 2006). Although the dyadic mentoring relationship is not the focus of this current work, the potential benefits of dyadic mentoring should not be ignored, and inclusion of a dyadic mentoring component into a larger framework developed in this work is warranted.

Further empirical research to support the link between mentoring and professional identity is needed (Allen et al., 2004, p. 133), however, information about the theoretical relationship between professional identity and the subjective outcomes of mentoring first proposed by Kram (1985) is gained from the Allen et al. study. Given that both career-related and psychosocial types of mentoring appear to benefit the individual's

subjective career success, it is likely important to provide not only psychosocial, but also career-related mentoring activities for the purpose of professional identity development.

Developmental Networks

While mentoring research is considered to be a relatively new field (Allen et al., 2004), and research into mentoring relationships and its benefits in a variety of contexts is an active area of research (e.g. Eby, Allen, Evans, Ng, & DuBois, 2008; Poteat, Shockley, & Allen, 2009), the separate but related study of Developmental Networks has recently gained the interest of researchers. A developmental network is "...the set of people a protégé names as taking an active interest in and action to advance the protégé's career by providing developmental assistance" (Higgins & Kram, 2001, p. 268). While this definition has its roots in mentoring theory, developmental networks are not restricted to a single dyadic relationship between protégé mentor and recognize a variety of relationship constellations.

By combining the existing research on mentoring with work in the area of social networks, Higgins and Kram (2001) proposed a typology of developmental networks that has served as a basis for much of the research in the area (e.g. Dougherty, Cheung, & Florea, 2008; Blickle, Witzki, & Schneider, 2009; Dobrow & Higgins, 2005). At the core of Higgins and Kram's typology are two concepts adapted from social network theory; network diversity and tie strength. Network diversity is typically represented by range: the variety of social networks relationships come from, and density: the degree to which people within the network are connected to each other. For the sake of their model, Higgins and Kram used range as their definition of diversity. The authors' example of a high-range developmental network is a protégé with one network contact (developers) from a school, another from an employer, another from a professional organization and yet another individual from a community organization. In contrast, if a protégé's contacts all stem from the same social system (e.g. school), that protégé would have a low-range developmental network. Tie strength, the second core concept in their typology, is

defined as the “emotional affect, reciprocity, and frequency of communication” (p.269) between individuals within the developmental network. The authors characterized strong network ties as those with substantial interdependence, reciprocity and a high level of motivation on the part of developers and protégés.

Using combinations of the two core concepts, diversity and tie strength, Higgins and Kram generated four types of developmental networks: (1) entrepreneurial networks reflecting a high range of relationships and strong ties, (2) opportunistic networks also reflecting a high range of relationships but weak ties, (3) traditional networks reflecting a low range of relationships but with strong ties, and (4) receptive networks reflecting a low range of relationships and weak ties. A summary of these developmental typologies is represented in figure 1 followed by hypothetical examples of James, Lisa, Herman, and Barb representing each network type from a School Psychology perspective. While these four characters are hypothetical, they are based on this researcher’s own experiences and understandings of network development.

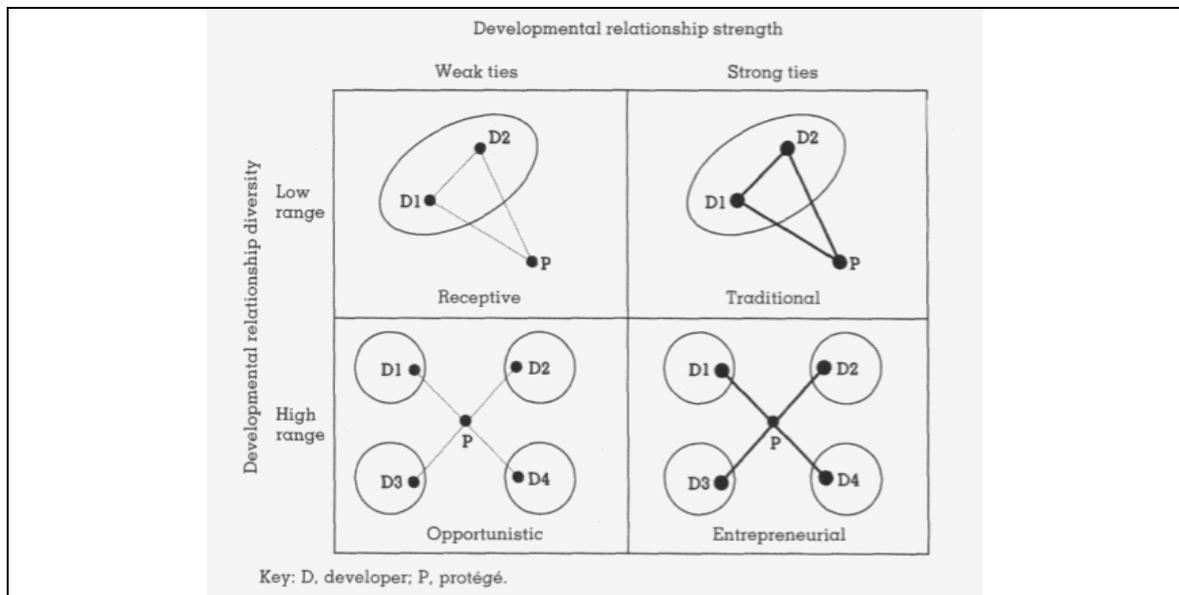


Figure 1. Developmental Network Typology from “Reconceptualizing mentoring at work: A developmental network perspective”, by M.C. Higgins and K.E. Kram, 2001, *Academy of Management. The Academy of Management Review*, 26(2), p. 270.

An entrepreneurial developmental network with its strong ties and wide-ranging network is characterized by individuals who tend to trust each other and are motivated to act on the protégé's behalf. In addition, the high diversity of this type of network provides the protégé with a wide array of information and expertise from a variety of contexts. For example, consider James. He has worked as an English teacher in a small high school for 6 years, followed by additional training and work experience as a special education coordinator at the division level within the same school division. After working in this capacity for four years, he decided to go back to school and trained as a School Psychologist. James is very personable, highly invested in each of his career pursuits and has maintained strong friendships and ties to his colleagues on his path to becoming a School Psychologist (strong ties). In addition, his varied work experience provides him with a wide variety of information from many different contexts as he begins to work as a provisional psychologist in a large urban school division. James has a strong personal and professional relationship with a number of teaching colleagues, fellow special education coordinators, professors and fellow students from his School Psychology master's program, and a practicing School Psychologist who is currently supervising him.

Lisa, too, has had a wide variety of work and school experiences on her way to becoming a School Psychologist. She worked for five years as a teacher's assistant in a school for special needs children before going back to school and getting her teaching degree. After finishing her degree, however, she decided that teaching was not for her, and took advantage of an opportunity to work with a close friend in an underprivileged country as part of an aid agency. Upon returning home, she applied and was accepted into a School Psychology program, but had to change universities half way through due to the relocation of her family after her husband lost his job. She is now working as a provisional psychologist in a hospital setting. Similar to James, Lisa has contacts from a wide variety of contexts (school system, university, the aid agency, and current supervisor) maintaining contact with her colleagues from the elementary school where she once worked, her undergraduate university class, the aid agency, and her colleagues

in the School Psychology master's program. Although she has accepted help from her contacts when offered, she does not actively seek help and takes a passive approach to cultivating these relationships (weak ties). A developmental network such as Lisa's is characteristic of what Higgins and Kram call an opportunistic developmental network; a network with high diversity but weak relationships.

Traditional developmental networks involve strong ties between a small number of developers (low-range). While traditional mentoring theory would restrict the protégé – developer relationship to a dyadic configuration, Higgins and Kram suggest that within the framework of developmental network theory, a close tie to one other individual within the same context as the primary developer is conceivable. Consider the example of Herman. Although his journey toward becoming a School Psychologist may have been similar to that of James or Lisa, he is particularly focused on his current role as a provisional psychologist working for a small clinical practice. Two of the practice members are equal partners in the business and a third member is an associate clinician. While Herman is being directly supervised by one of the owners, he looks to the other for advice and assistance as well. The small size of the practice is no accident as the two owners have strong opinions regarding best practices and tend to take on a specific type of client. Although the owners enjoy the high amount of control their small practice affords them, they also appreciate the fresh ideas, perspectives, and energy that a budding professional such as Herman brings to their professional lives. As a result, Herman not only feels he is supported by his colleagues, but he has a lot to contribute as well (strong ties).

Barb, on the other hand, works as part of a small team of School Psychologists that service both elementary and high schools in a geographically diverse rural school division. One reason she was hired by the school division was her high level of self-confidence and independent nature. Living in a rural community, Barb has very few professional contacts outside of her own office, and the most senior member of the group is supervising her. Although there are occasions when the team gets together to discuss

cases, due to the nature of the job and the high case-load, these times are few and far between and Barb is encouraged to trust her instinct and training to work out difficult cases on her own. A network such as Barb's is characteristic of a receptive developmental network with its weak ties and low range of diversity.

Higgins and Kram, through the presentation of their overall framework, (see figure 2) suggest that the protégé experiences career outcomes that are important to personal and professional development as a consequence of developmental network involvement. Using existing research, the authors postulate positive or negative associations between the four types of developmental networks and protégé career outcomes. Key antecedents, mediating and moderating processes that precede and cause the formation of developmental networks are also proposed, although the authors recognize that due to the dynamic nature of the model, consequences and causes may be indistinguishable (p.273).

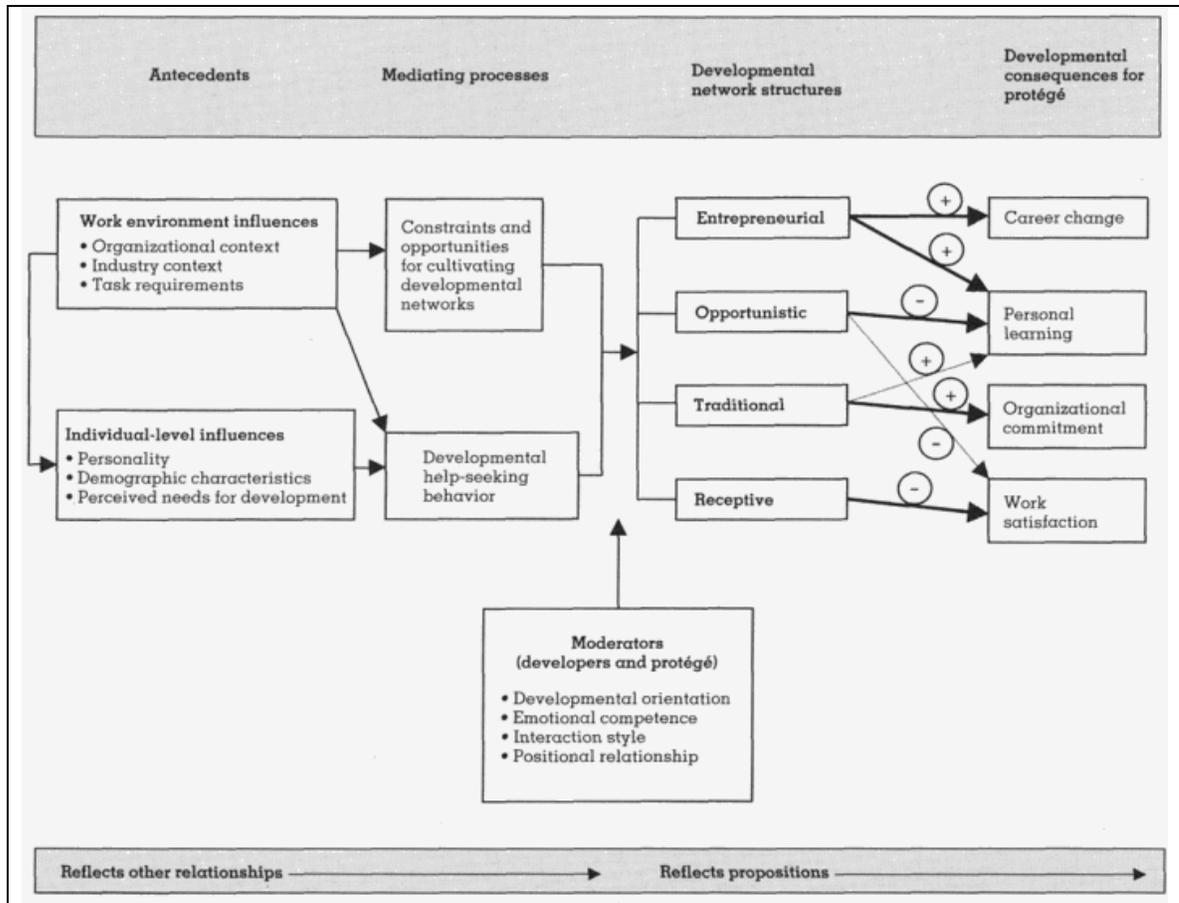


Figure 2. Antecedents and Consequences from "Reconceptualizing mentoring at work: A developmental network perspective", by M.C. Higgins and K.E. Kram, 2001, *Academy of Management Review*, 26(2), p. 274.

Chapter IV

Developmental Network Theory as applied to School Psychology

For the purpose of this work, the consequences of developmental networks and the positive and negative associations between the two will be explored first, in order to establish which type(s) of developmental networks lead to outcomes most relevant to the profession of School Psychology and the professional development of its members. Second, paralleling what Higgins and Kram (2001) call “key antecedents” to the development of networks to the current state of School Psychology will provide a context within which the framework is set. Finally, the “mediating processes” between the context (key antecedents) and the formation of developmental networks will be explored. It is hoped that the resulting framework presented in this work will be useful as a mediating process to circumvent contextual barriers to professional identity development and cultivated specific types of developmental networks that promote the professional identity of individual School Psychologists. Higgins and Kram also include moderating processes focusing on the individual characteristics of developers and protégés. These characteristics include factors such as the interaction style, perceptions of mentoring, emotional competence of the protégé and mentor as individuals, as well as the power differential in the relationship (Higgins & Kram). While this is an important component of network development, it is beyond the scope of this current work.

Consequences of Developmental Networks for Professional Identity

The major categories of consequences for the protégé are identified as: (1) career change, (2) personal learning, (3) organizational commitment, and (4) work satisfaction. Of particular interest to this study is the category of personal learning because the concept of professional identity is embodied within this category.

Personal learning as a developmental consequence for a protégé is a larger umbrella term for the following outcomes: (1) increased clarity of professional identity (one’s unique talents and contributions at work); (2) increased clarity of personal values, strengths, and

weaknesses; and (3) increased awareness of developmental needs, reactions, and patterns of behavior. (Higgins & Kram, 2001, p. 278)

This consequential category of developmental networks is consistent with the broad concept of professional identity, explored earlier in this section, as “the perception of oneself as a professional and as a particular type of professional” (Bucher & Stelling, 1977, p. 213) and “The relatively stable and enduring constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role (Schein, 1978). Due to the previously established need for professional identity development among members of the School Psychology profession, personal learning is a desirable and important outcome.

Higgins and Kram’s model identify three types of developmental network structures that are either positively or negatively related to the development of personal learning as a consequence: Entrepreneurial, Opportunistic, and Traditional. The entrepreneurial network structure, with its strong ties and high range, has a strong positive associated with personal learning, but also with the consequence of career change (Higgins & Kram, 2001). The authors define career change as initiated by the protégé and involving a change in organization or job that the protégé views as a career change (p. 277). While this may at first appear to be an undesirable consequence, consider the definitional-practice discrepancy that is currently present in the field of School Psychology. While changing of paradigms within a profession is not exactly what Higgins and Kram meant by career change, this author contends that to make the leap from the current practice of School Psychology to the aspirational definition of the profession, change on the scale of a career change is needed. Therefore, not only is the entrepreneurial network structure strongly associated with professional identity development itself, but also with individuals who are confident enough to embrace change. For these two reasons, and entrepreneurial network structure is important and warrants inclusion in the final framework proposed here.

Conversely, Higgins and Kram (2001) propose that an opportunistic network structure has a strong negative association with personal learning. Although the protégé

in this structure has access to a wide variety of information, the weak ties or lack of intimacy prevents the level of trust and risk-taking behavior to facilitate communication regarding the protégé's strengths and weaknesses (p. 279). In addition, this lack of intimacy is also associated with a weak negative association with the consequence of work satisfaction (p. 280), which is not a desired outcome. As a result, an opportunistic network structure should likely be avoided according to the Higgins and Kram model.

The traditional developmental network structure has a weak positive associated with personal learning in comparison to an entrepreneurial structure (p. 272). Its positive association with personal learning, however, is consistent with the current research on mentoring which is concerned primarily with dyadic or low range networks within the protégé's organization or workplace. This provides further support for including traditional mentorship along side Higgins and Kram's developmental network approach as part of the framework proposed here. In addition, a strong positive association has also been proposed between the traditional developmental network structure and organizational commitment. Higgins and Kram refer to Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) to define organizational commitment as "...the psychological bond between a member and his or her employer that may be characterized by emotional, behavioral, and cognitive consistency" (Higgins & Kram, 2001, p. 280). This bond is also likely associated with a strong commitment to the organization and alignment of the organization's goals and values (p. 280). Organizational commitment is an important factor in the retention of professionals within a profession. Given the predicted School Psychologist shortage and the negative effect of high School Psychologist-to-student ratios on facilitating change, organizational commitment becomes another positive consequence of this structure.

In summary, Higgins and Kram postulate that the developmental networks that are positively associated with personal growth (professional identity development) are the entrepreneurial and traditional network structures. These two structures are also positively associated with protégé consequences of career change and organizational commitment respectively. In addition, the current research on mentoring also appears to

be positively associated with professional identity development, and is similar to the traditional developmental network structure. To develop a network framework for use by School Psychologists, implementing a combination of entrepreneurial, traditional, and dyadic mentoring may be optimal in promoting professional identity development, and by combining the consequences of career change and organizational commitment it may aid in actualizing changes sought by the profession as a whole.

Antecedents and Mediating Processes

Higgins and Kram (2001) acknowledged that due to the dynamic nature of social networks and mentorship relationships, antecedents and consequences might be indistinguishable from each other. Additionally, the authors recognize the limitations of using the two large subdivisions of antecedents; work environment influences and individual-level influences.

Although our framework is not all inclusive, nor does it illustrate the full complexity of microlevel and macrolevel factors, it does highlight that both levels of analysis are essential to understanding factors that shape developmental networks. (Higgins & Kram, 2001, p. 273)

The authors label the bridge between the contextual factors or antecedents and the formation of a specific developmental network structure as mediating processes. As illustrated in their model (Fig. 2), work environment influences either constrain or provide opportunities for the cultivation of developmental networks. Citing previous research (e.g. Kanter, 1977; Ibarra, 1993; Berkhardt, 1994; Baker, 1992; Ensher, Murphy, & Sullivan, 2000; Daft, 1995), Higgins and Kram identify three levels of work environment influences: the organizational context the industrial context, and the task requirements. The second of the two mediating factors identified, developmental help-seeking behavior, is affected by both work environment and individual-level influences. The following three sections of this chapter use Higgins and Kram's general antecedent descriptions and apply them to the field of School Psychology (see Figure 3). Specific mediating processes intended to shape or facilitate strong ties and increased network diversity (characteristics of

entrepreneurial, traditional, and dyadic mentoring) are then presented. These mediating process form the conceptual framework, referred to hereafter as the School Psychology Professional Identity Development Framework (SPPID Framework) that is summarized in Figure 4.

The Organizational Context: Influences and Mediating Processes

The organizational context includes factors such as: (1) the composition of the workforce such as gender ratios and cultural diversity; (2) changes in organizational technology such as the effects of email on accessibility, frequency and quality of contacts; (3) spatial proximity of individuals, and how it may facilitate initiation and maintenance of ties; and (4) the implicit organizational context that include organizational values and norms (p. 273).

The School Psychologist workforce within the United States is predominantly composed of English speaking, Caucasian females working in a public school setting, with approximately one third of the professional population over the age of 50 (Curtis et al., 2004). The clients served by psychology and most other health professions, however, are increasingly diverse in their cultural makeup (Trescott & Crook, 2004). This discrepancy between professional and client base culture has ethical implications. “The ethical significance is not the fact of difference in itself, but that psychologists may fail to recognize the client’s different world view or individuality, thereby failing to provide beneficial services or actually causing harm” (p. 120). Consultation with colleagues of varying cultural backgrounds, therefore, would be extremely valuable to School Psychologists working with people from cultures different from their own.

The way that School Psychologists communicate with each other, specifically with regards to the frequency and effect of electronic communication such as email or list-serves, has not been well studied. Bramlett et al. (2002), however, found that most practitioners primarily rely on their own ideas for problem-solving and intervention

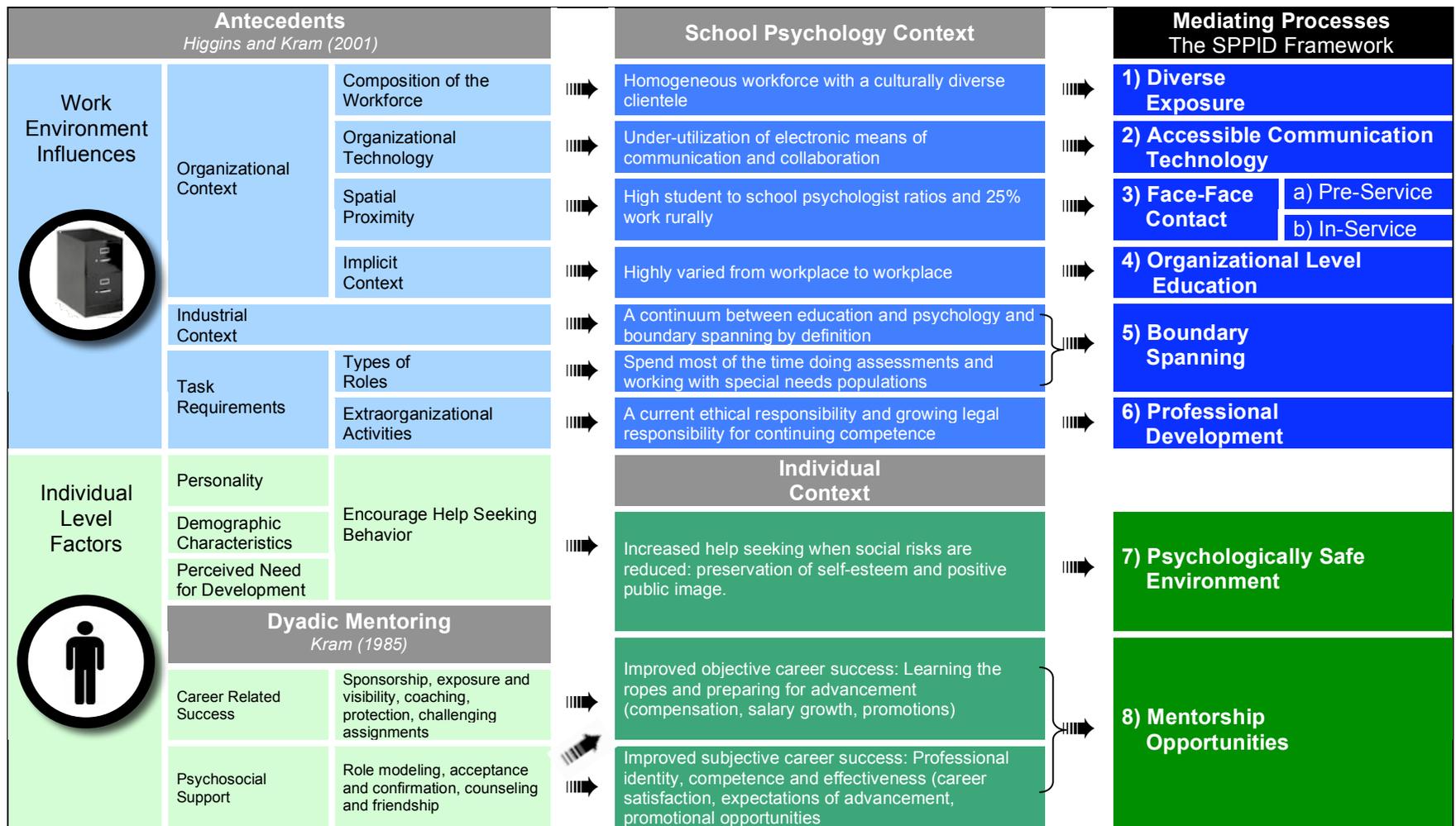


Figure 3. The theoretical and contextual basis for the School Psychologist Professional Identity Development (SPPID) Framework.

SPPID Framework		Description of Framework Components	Facilitates Entrepreneurial and Traditional Networks by...
1) Diverse Exposure		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate exposure to a diverse network of colleagues (i.e. race, gender, employment context, level of experience). 	
2) Accessible Communication Technology		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase frequency of communication by providing access to communication technologies that individual members are comfortable using. Facilitate communication between the profession's least and most experienced members. 	 
3) Face-Face Contact	Pre-service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take advantage of strong ties developed during university training between: fellow students, students and professors, students and research supervisors. 	 
	In-service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide equal access to professional development opportunities and facilitate collaboration with in-service colleagues. Allow for formal and informal re-connections of established relationships. 	 
4) Organizational Level Education		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate leaders at the organizational level (i.e. school division and hospital team leaders, multi-psychologist practice owners) to shape healthy organizational culture and attitudes toward developmental networks and mentoring. 	
5) Boundary Spanning		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for school psychologists to study how other professionals deal with common situations, challenges and difficulties. Encourage cross-professional collaboration and discussion. 	
6) Professional Development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide access to professional development (continuing competence) that meet both ethical and legal requirements of the profession. Work closely with professional organizations and licensing bodies to establish and/or maintain a common professional identity. 	 
7) Psychologically Safe Environment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to preserve individuals' self-esteem and public image within the workplace or organization (see #4). Inclusion of a component that is one step removed from the individual's immediate work environment. 	
8) Mentorship Opportunities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing mechanism that facilitates dyadic mentoring relationships. Provision of both career-related and psychosocial forms of mentoring support. 	
Legend:  =Increases network diversity  =Strengthens ties  =Encourages help seeking behavior			

Figure 4. Descriptive explanation of the School Psychologist Professional Identity Development (SPPID) Framework.

and it is the opinion of Bramlett et al. that communication between psychologists through electronic means is a large untapped resource.

The spatial proximity of the School Psychologists to one another, and thus the ease of initiating and maintaining strong ties is largely influenced by the number of students they serve and the location in which the individual practices. Large student-to-School Psychologist ratios mean that one School Psychologist potentially provides services in a wide geographical area. An extreme example is that of rural practitioners, with approximately 25% of School Psychologists practicing in rural communities (Curtis et al., 2004). While the specific concerns and issues of practicing School Psychology have not been extensively studied since the mid 1980s, the primary issues of concern such as limited availability of support services in the community and feelings of professional isolation have remained relatively consistent (Clopton & Knesting, 2006).

Finally, the implicit organizational context (values and norms) is likely to vary based on whether the practice is urban or rural, the size of the organization, the organization's mandate, and many other work setting factors. While the majority of School Psychologists practice in a public school setting (Curtis et al., 2004), the organizational values and norms between individual school divisions or individual schools can vary significantly. Therefore, instead of making a blanket statement about the values and norms of School Psychologists, it is likely more useful to acknowledge the variety values and norms across work settings. Given the organizational context of School Psychology summarized here, the following mediating processes are intended to bridge these antecedents to developmental networks and facilitate the formation of entrepreneurial and traditional structures.

1) *Diverse Exposure*: It is important for School Psychologists to be exposed to a diverse network of colleagues with regards to gender, race, employment (organizational) context, and level of experience. Not only will this promote a wider range of contacts, and facilitate help seeking behavior, but will provide access to information about

language, gender, culture, and race that will likely be useful in serving the increasingly diverse clientele of School Psychologists.

2) *Accessible Communication Technology*: Another key component is providing access to communication technologies that can be comfortably used by the largest range of professional members. The most experienced members of the profession, those over 50 years old, comprise about one-third of the professional body (Curtis et al., 2004). Considering the preferred communication method(s) of this population is just as important as providing cutting edge communication technology and methods. Given the rapid pace at which communication methods have changed over the last 30 years, it is conceivable that preferred methods of communication would differ most significantly between the professions newest and most experienced members. Finding ways for these two groups to meet in the middle (i.e. providing a high level of support for emerging forms of communication technology) is especially important because it is these two groups at extreme ends of the experience spectrum that can likely learn the most from each other, and by increasing the range of network contacts. Assuming a good match between available technology and individual preferences or competencies will increase the frequency of communication, development and maintenance of stronger ties is more probable.

3) *Face-to-Face Contact*: While regular face-to-face contact with colleagues may be possible in large urban office settings, the opportunities to have direct contact with colleagues depends on factors such as work load, office culture, individual personalities, and attitudes toward collaborative problem solving. For many School Psychologists, geographical separation limits the amount of face-to-face time with colleagues, especially considering that about a quarter of the workforce work rurally, often kilometers from another School Psychologist. Whether or not daily face-to-face contact with other School Psychologists is desirable or even geographically possible, there are two events that facilitate such contact: pre-service university training and in-service professional development.

The common experience of School Psychology students within their masters or doctoral programs is an ideal setting for the development of strong ties. A common interest in the field of School Psychology, taking classes together, and essentially being scheduled into spending time together as a cohort not only aids in the initiation of strong ties, but the common experience facilitates future maintenance of relationships. Maintaining pre-service ties in turn increases the diversity of an individual's network later in practice as newly trained School Psychologists go their separate ways. In addition to peer relationships, close contact with professors, researchers and supervisors provide an important tie to the research community, an essential feature in a field where research based intervention and evidence based practice is encouraged.

In-service professional development is the second event that facilitates face-to-face contact. It is, therefore, important that mediating processes are enacted that provide equal access to conferences, seminars, and interest groups regardless of an individual's practice context. Not only do these events bring together individuals with common interests and expertise, but allow for formal and informal re-connections between individuals with established relationships thus facilitating the maintenance of strong ties. Given that pre-service and in-service training events provide opportunities for face-to-face contact, it is important to take advantage of these time points in order to shape entrepreneurial and traditional network structures and ultimately facilitate professional identity development.

An additional question regarding face-to-face contact arises when considering virtual means of communication. For example, can communication be considered face-to-face if conducted in a real-time (synchronous) text-based chat? What about if it contains two-way video? With the current generation of school psychologists growing up with computer communication and social networking technology, are the benefits the same as meeting in person? While investigating answers to such questions is beyond the scope of this study, a broad definition of face-to-face interaction is used.

4) *Organization-level Education*: The formation of entrepreneurial and traditional developmental network structures is affected by the implicit values and norms of an individual's work context. For example, office culture and attitudes toward collaborative problem solving influence opportunities to communicate directly with colleagues, as discussed in point number 3 of the framework (*Face to face contact*). Although these implicit values and norms are likely to be as varied as workplace contexts, providing support and education at an organizational level regarding the benefits of developing entrepreneurial and traditional developmental networks among the organization's employees will likely help to shape organizational culture and attitudes.

The Industry Context: Influences and Mediating Processes

The second level of work environment factors identified by Higgins and Kram is the industry context. The historical development of School Psychology plays a large role in defining the School Psychology "industry." For example, historical analysis reveals that School Psychology as a profession falls somewhere on a continuum between psychology and education (Fagon, 1996). Furthermore, history has shaped the concept of the profession via a series of dichotomies: clinical versus educational application of services; mental health versus academic problem solving orientations; educational versus psychological preparation; and public, private or residential settings (Fagon, 1996). The boundary-spanning industrial context of School Psychology described here is not just a historical footnote, but remains a current reality of the profession as evidenced by the industry's current definitional themes. These common themes are summarized in Figure 5 and generally state that School Psychologists work in and outside of school settings with children, families, school staff members, and special populations in the areas of assessment, prevention, intervention, and program development. Moreover, School Psychologists have expertise in the areas of mental health and school systems / learning.

Scholars looking at the current state of School Psychology, however, have revealed that the day-to-day tasks of School Psychologists are at odds with the current

professional definitions. This leads to the final component of work environment influences in the Higgins and Kram (2001) model: task requirements. The authors define task requirements as the types of tasks/roles that individual professionals perform as well as the amount of extra-organizational activity required of individuals (e.g. conferences and organizational membership).

With regards to tasks and roles, School Psychologists spend the majority of their time performing educational assessments and working primarily with special needs populations (Smith, 1984; Reschly & Wilson, 1995; Curtis et al., 1999; Bramlett et al., 2002; Lewis et al., 2008). There is an expressed desire to expand the School Psychologists' role (task requirements) to better reflect the definition of the field (Gutkin & Conoley, 1990; Curtis et al., 2004) or industrial context; however, heavy reliance on a clinical model of service delivery (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000) and a misunderstanding of School Psychology by those outside the profession (Gilman & Gabriel, 2004; Gilman & Medway, 2007) are cited, among other factors, as barriers to role expansion. Therefore, mediating processes designed to facilitate entrepreneurial and traditional developmental network structures need to acknowledge the boundary-spanning industrial context of the field and focus on overcoming barriers to ameliorate the practical-definitional discrepancy.

5) Boundary Spanning: Given the profession's history, boundary-spanning industrial context, and desire for role expansion, School Psychologists would likely benefit from studying how other professions deal with common situations, challenges, and difficulties. Therefore a framework for developmental network formation needs to provide resources and opportunities for School Psychologists to participate in activities outside the specific field of School Psychology, thereby facilitating communication between different professions and promoting diversity of contacts. For example, using the definitions of School Psychology outlined in figure 5, School Psychologists would likely benefit from research in, or collaboration with individuals from, the fields of education, social work, psychology, pediatrics, family/parental counseling, special education, mental

School Psychologists...	Work in Schools	Work outside of schools	Work with Children/students	Work with Families/parents	Work with School Staff	Work with Special Needs	Have school system expertise	Have mental health expertise	Assess and Evaluate	Work toward prevention	Work on intervention	Develop/involved in programs
<p>Canadian Psychological Association "...School psychologists are the most highly trained mental health experts in schools. In addition to knowledge about prevention, intervention, and evaluation for a number of childhood problems, School Psychologists have unique expertise regarding issues of learning and schools. It is our ethical responsibility to become involved in programs aimed at problems that are broader than assessing and diagnosing what is wrong with a child. As the most experienced school professionals in this area, School Psychologists must become invested in addressing social and human ills such as those described. Although we will not 'solve' these ills, we must have a role in ameliorating their impact on the lives of children." (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000, p. 488)</p>	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>National Association of School Psychologists School psychologists work to find the best solution for each student and situation; they use different strategies to address student needs and to improve school and district-wide support systems. School psychologists work with students individually and in groups. They also develop programs to train teachers and parents about effective teaching and learning strategies, techniques to manage behavior at home and in the classroom, working with students with disabilities or with special talents, addressing abuse of drugs and other substances, and preventing and managing crises. (http://www.nasponline.org/about_sp/whatis.aspx)</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>American Psychological Association (Div. 16) School Psychology is a general practice and health service provider specialty of professional psychology that is concerned with the science and practice of psychology with children, youth, families; learners of all ages; and the schooling process. The basic education and training of School Psychologists prepares them to provide a range of psychological assessment, intervention, prevention, health promotion, and program development and evaluation services with a special focus on the developmental processes of children and youth within the context of schools, families, and other systems. (http://www.indiana.edu/~div16/goals.html#goals)</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Key: ✓=the definition contains this attribute; ✓=the definition infers this attribute

Figure 5. Current definitions of School Psychology

Health, and curriculum development. Inter-professional exposure and involvement exposes School Psychologists to other service delivery models and problem-solving approaches, possibly encouraging some individuals to break free of School Psychology's stereotypical role. Furthermore, understanding of School Psychology by those outside the profession would be improved through increased first hand exposure to School Psychologists (Gilman & Medway, 2007).

The second component of task requirements identified by Higgins and Kram is extra organizational activity. While maintaining competence through continuing education, training, consultation and supervision is emphasized in The Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists – third edition (2000), it is currently left up to a self-regulation process with problems only coming to light after the fact through a complaints process. In fact, the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB), the body that oversees the licensure of psychologists in the United States and Canada, has no routine external assessment of competence post-registration.

The mandatory requirement of continuing education is the sole licensing action addressing continued competencies by licensees. ASPPB and its member boards have not yet developed affordable and acceptable mechanisms to ensure maintenance of clinical skills and judgment over time (Rubin et al., 2007)

This situation, however, is changing. The credentialing of psychologists is regulated through each province's registering body, or college and the college in turn is subject to provincial legislation. A recent trend in Canadian provinces of bringing multiple health fields under one piece of legislation has had an affect on the regulation of psychologists (King & Mueller, n.d.). For example, the Health Professions Act (Bill 22) in Alberta has governed the activities and functions of the College of Alberta Psychologists (CAP) since January 15, 2006 (College of Alberta Psychologists, n.d.). A requirement of Bill 22 is the regulation of continuing competence by each health profession's regulator body, and therefore, CAP will pilot a continuing competence program in 2010 and will have it put in place for 2011 (L. Anderson, personal communication, June 15, 2009).

6) *Professional Development*: Given the existing ethical and increasingly legal requirement of School Psychologists to participate in ongoing education to maintain competency in their field, the promotion of professional development is important to the profession. Additionally, working closely with professional organizations and licensing bodies will assist in establishing and/or maintaining a common professional identity. Particularly important to the formation of entrepreneurial and traditional developmental network formation, however, is the previously discussed opportunity for face-to-face contact with other professionals, as it potentially increases both diversity and strength of ties.

Individual Level Influences and Mediating Processes

“Whereas aspects of the work environment primarily affect an individual’s constraints and opportunities for development networking cultivation, individual-level factors affect developmental help-seeking behavior...” (Higgins & Kram, 2001, p. 275). In other words, even if there are tools in place to facilitate the formation of entrepreneurial and traditional developmental network structures, the individual’s willingness to participate is key. Due to its inherently interpersonal nature, however, there are social risks to help-seeking behavior, including admitting dependence, inferiority and incompetence, that have a detrimental effect on individual’s self-esteem and putting forth a positive public image (Lee, 2002). Higgins and Kram cite research indicating that individuals are more likely to seek help when they feel psychologically safe (Fisher, Nadler, & Whitcher-Alagna, 1982), thus lowering the social risks involved in help-seeking.

Higgins and Kram point to other research linking help-seeking behavior to an individual’s personality and demographic characteristics. The authors provide the example of research on shyness (DePaulo, Dull, Greenberg, & Swaim, 1989), noting that shyness has a direct affect on help or feedback seeking behavior. Current research also shows an association between personality characteristics on the quality (Turban & Dougherty, 1994; Waters, 2004), as well as willingness to participate in mentoring

relationships (Larose et al., 2009). Similarly, an individual's demographic characteristics (Cohen, Guttmann, & Lazar, 1998 in Higgins & Kram, 2001) and gender (Lee, 2002) are associated with willingness to ask for help.

7) *A psychologically safe environment*: Personality and demographic characteristics are important antecedents to help-seeking behavior, developmental network participation and professional identity development. Reducing the social risk involved in asking for help is one way to encourage individuals, regardless of these individual-level factors, to make beneficial contacts and grow professionally. While individual work places and School Psychology's regulatory bodies may (and should) work toward creating a psychologically safe environment, individuals are less likely to seek help when they feel they are being evaluated during novel learning situations (Higgins, 2001). It is, therefore, important that a framework not only encourages a psychologically safe environment within the industry and individual work places, but also has a component that is one step removed from the protégé's immediate work context.

Finally, Higgins and Kram (2001) identify an individual's perceived need for development as a predictor of help-seeking behavior. It is suggested that prior experience with developmental assistance may affect the likelihood and extent to which an individual seeks developmental assistance. While it seems logical that an individual who has positive experiences in utilizing a developmental network would repeat this form of help-seeking behavior, research to support prior experience as a significant factor in help-seeking is sparse.

8) *Mentorship Opportunities*: Although Higgins and Kram (2001) propose that a developmental network approach better matches the current career context than a dyadic mentoring model (p. 266), the large body of research on the benefits of mentoring within organizations is hard to discount. Not only does mentoring theoretically promote professional identity development (Kram, 1985), but positively affects subjective career success (Allen et al., 2004; Wanberg et al., 2003). Additionally, the strong ties that are characteristic of a dyadic mentoring structure are more likely to grow into entrepreneurial

or traditional developmental network structures instead of the less desirable opportunistic or receptive structures. Providing mechanisms and opportunities for the development of dyadic mentoring relationships is, therefore, an important component of the overall framework.

The SPPID Framework is summarized in Figure 4 and represents this author's interpretation of the developmental networking and mentoring research as it specifically applies to the profession of School Psychology. The ultimate purpose of the framework is the advancement and growth of the profession, facilitated by individuals with a unified vision of the field and the self-confidence to advocate for change. Individuals with a strong sense of professional identity embody these two characteristics, thus development of professional identity through appropriate support and network development is vital to the profession's advancement. To accompany the SPPID Framework's development employed thus far, a deductive analysis will next be explored.

Chapter V

Existing Mechanisms: Analysis and Application to School Psychology

The Online Oxford English Dictionary defines *framework* as “a supporting or underlying structure” (Oxford University Press, 2009)^a and *mechanism* as “a piece of machinery. the way in which something works or is brought about” (Oxford University Press, 2009)^b. This study is focused on the framework level because mechanisms change in accordance with the technology available at any one point in time, and technology itself changes quickly. While people (this author included) are easily influenced by the latest gadgets and problem-solving technologies, jumping to a mechanism without understanding or regard for the framework is inefficient at best, and at worst, counterproductive.

To approach an issue from the framework level without regard for existing mechanisms and problem-solving approaches, however, is also a mistake. The risks of using inductive methodology in the absence of a deductive approach include the proverbial reinvention of the wheel as well as a discrepancy between theoretical possibility and practical usefulness. For this reason, the remainder of this chapter examines two examples of network development mechanisms. One such mechanism is in use by an unrelated profession, Veterinary Medicine, while the other is currently in use by School Psychologists. This two-pronged deductive approach, in concert with the previously explored inductive theoretical basis, will aid in the analysis of the framework proposed here.

General Descriptions of VIN and NASP

The Veterinary Information Network (VIN) is advertised as an independent, veterinary-focused online service. Dr. Duncan Ferguson and Dr. Paul Pion founded VIN in 1991, out of a perceived need for the profession to have a Veterinary-only forum for communication and information sharing. VIN currently has over 38,000 veterinary

members, and is 99% supported by veterinarians who make up the VIN community, as opposed to other continuing education entities that rely on corporate sponsors (Pion, n.d.).

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) is a not for profit organization, founded by School Psychologists from several state organizations in 1969 as a School Psychology specific organization. NASP's first online presence was in 1997, thanks to the work of webmaster Phil Bowser (D. Florell, personal communication, August 11, 2009). NASP currently has 26,500 members, all of whom have access to NASP's online services.

Rationale for Mechanism Choice

The reasons for using Veterinary Medicine as an example are threefold. First, the author is married to a practicing veterinarian, providing a first hand perspective on the profession as well as access to the profession's resources. Second, as with School Psychologists, Veterinarians are a provincially regulated profession with a national certification and accreditation process, and third, Veterinarians have an extensive and well-established networking mechanism (VIN). Another reason for choosing VIN instead of other similar services is this author's familiarity with it through his wife's nine-year (four years pre-service, five years in-service) experience with the network. While the analysis of VIN's components and structure presented here are the result of first-hand research and navigation of the website, personal conversations with practicing veterinarians (associates and practice owners), as well as one first-year veterinary student were used to confirm VIN as an appropriate mechanism to analyze for this purpose.

NASP was chosen as a School Psychology-specific mechanism for four reasons. First, this researcher has been a member of NASP since June 2008 during the middle of his School Psychology master's program. While joining NASP was partially motivated by intent to include it for analysis in this work, he also joined NASP for personal and professional developmental reasons. Second, this researcher discovered that much of

the School Psychology research conducted in recent years has used the NASP membership as a population base, and this population base has been found to generally represent School Psychologists (Lewis et al., 2008). Third, while NASP is by name a national association, the inclusion of Canadian members means that NASP is functionally international. Not only does an international organization potentially provide a larger membership base, but also it is generally comparable to VIN with regards to its scope of membership. Finally, NASP is not a regulatory body but rather, an association that has members registered through many different local (state or provincial) colleges. This not only speaks to NASP's general purpose, but is roughly comparable to the way that VIN fits into the Veterinary professional community. It is important to point out that use of the word "comparison" is not intended to imply that the author is comparing content of VIN and NASP, but rather to establish that both organizations play a roughly similar role within their respective professions, and therefore can potentially independently contribute to the framework for school psychologists presented here.

NASP's mission statement reads as follows: "NASP represents school psychology and supports school psychologists to enhance the learning and mental health of all children and youth (National Association of School Psychologists, n.d.)^b, with VIN's mission statement reading: "The VIN mission is to inspire and facilitate excellence within the worldwide veterinary community" (Pion, n.d.). Both organization's mission and goal statements are summarized in Figure 6. In general, the use of *inspire* and *facilitate* in the VIN statement of promoting professional excellence is comparable to NASP's use of the word *support*. Additionally, the NASP statement includes the word *represent*, which indicates a focus on promotion or advocacy of the profession to those outside of School Psychology.

Goal statements show that both NASP and VIN have goals of community building and collegial collaboration, continuing education, advocacy, and professional empowerment. NASP has two goals that are not overtly stated in VIN's list of goals, and they are enhancement of services to diverse clientele and the maintenance of

Mission Statement	VIN	NASP
	The VIN mission is to inspire and facilitate excellence within the worldwide veterinary community	NASP represents school psychology and supports school psychologists to enhance the learning and mental health of all children and youth
Goals*	VIN	NASP
Community Building & Collegial Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing together veterinarians "world-wide" as colleagues • Bringing easy access to colleagues who have specialized knowledge and skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Services: Provide quality membership services to school psychologists engaged in multiple professional roles
Continuing Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making CE - continuing education - available EVERY day • Bringing instant access to vast amounts of up-to-date veterinary information to colleagues • Bringing instant access to "breaking news" that affects veterinarians, their patients and their practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional competency: Ensure that all school psychologists have the skills and competencies needed to meet the learning and mental health needs of all children and youth.
Advocacy and professional empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowering our profession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy: Advocate for the value of school psychological services and for appropriate research-based education and mental health services for all children, youth, and families. • External Relationships & Communications: Promote the work and value of school psychologists to the general public and enhance collaboration with key stakeholders.
Enhancement of services to diverse clientele		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity: Enhance the association's responsiveness, through a focus on behavior, attitudes, and policy, to populations whose diversity may be expressed in terms of race, ethnicity, gender and gender expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ability, religion, and/or language,
Maintenance of organizational infrastructure		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational excellence: Maintain an effective infrastructure (e.g. governance, national office, and financial) to enable efficient and responsive service to all constituents
Source	http://www.vin.com/VIN.plx?P=About	http://www.nasponline.org/about_nasp/strategicplan.pdf
*The goal categories and the order in which VIN and NASP's goals are listed were imposed by the researcher to facilitate comparison.		

Figure 6. Mission Statements and goals of VIN and NASP

organizational infrastructure. Given that both VIN and NASP's mission statements and goals can be further categorized as increasing network diversity, strengthening ties, or encouraging help-seeking behavior, this researcher contends that both mechanisms are appropriate for deductive examination.

The Veterinary Medicine Example: Veterinary Information Network

The following information about VIN was obtained from *VIN Offline*, a 16 page promotional booklet published by VIN as well as personal experience browsing the VIN website under the supervision of a paying member of VIN, the author's wife. The description that follows focuses on VIN's framework, rather than the Veterinary-specific content, and each component is then compared to the SPPID Framework for School Psychologists (see Fig. 7).

There are eight basic components to the VIN website: new member supports and help, front page featured information, message boards, rounds, consultants and editors, library resources and searchable database, continuing education, and the Veterinary Support Personnel Network.

1) *New member supports and help*: With regards to new memberships, Veterinary students, interns, residents, and academics belonging to an accredited veterinary school receive their membership for free. The rate of membership is increased gradually after graduation with memberships costing 30% of the full rate in the first year after earning a Veterinary degree, and 60% of full cost in the second year. Each new member to VIN is assigned to an experienced VIN member (VIN Buddy) who shares personal experiences using VIN, helps the new user get the most out of the tool, and helps to answer questions that arise. In addition to the user's VIN buddy, the website help is provided via the usual "Help" and "FAQ" applications within the site, a toll-free telephone line, email mediated support, paper copy help and instructions through the VIN offline publication, an online video, as well as a free three-part online course presented the first three Wednesdays of every month.

SPPID Framework		Veterinary Information Network (VIN) The mechanisms organized according to the SPPID Framework
1) Diverse Exposure		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Message boards mediated by consultants/editors and peers
2) Accessible Communication Technology		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help and contact facilitated through the website, web courses, telephone, email, paper copy • Past rounds sessions available in transcript or podcast format
3) Face-Face Contact	Pre-service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free membership for students and faculty
	In-service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graded membership fees for 1st and 2nd year professionals • Weekly open mike virtual coffee house session • Case-specific rounds led by consultants / special guests with member participation
4) Organizational Level Education		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rounds discussion topics include practice management • Veterinary Support Personnel Network (VSPN)
5) Boundary Spanning		
6) Professional Development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case-specific rounds led by consultants / special guests with member participation • Availability of cross-organizational conference proceedings • Approved continuing education that includes a course library, discussion boards and real-time interactive sessions.
7) Psychologically Safe Environment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VIN is a Veterinary-run service independent of provincial, state or national regulatory bodies • Weekly case discussions are highlighted
8) Mentorship Opportunities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VIN Buddy pairing for new users
 Additional Deductively Introduced Components		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultant Mediation: Involvement of professionals in the field in the maintenance of professional standards, expertise and integrity and increasing network diversity. • Client Education: a client-directed resource, Veterinary Partner, that provides advertisement-free information to the veterinary client base.

Figure 7. Analysis of VIN using the School Psychologist Professional Identity Development (SPPID) Framework

The free membership for students and faculty encourages pre-service participation and experience with networking, and continued use through the first two years out of school is facilitated by the graded membership price. Where VIN really stands out with regards to encouraging participation is through the many modes in which help is provided and services are accessed. This variety ensures that members of all ages and technology comfort levels are accommodated. Not only is the VIN buddy an extension of this, but also adds a dyadic mentoring component to the process.

2) *Front page featured information:* the information featured on the front page includes daily news items, VIN navigation tutorials and tips, highlights from the message boards and professional literature, as well as an online newsletter and other professionally relevant information and resources that are updated weekly. Another component featured on the front page is a weekly case discussion that allows members to participate or read along as the discussion progresses. While the majority of the front page material is to be expected in a resource such as this, the weekly case discussion is a good example of providing a risk-free method of peer interaction. The case discussions are one step removed from the member's immediate work environment, making participation in this activity more likely.

3) *Message boards:* VIN message boards are guided by more than 180 VIN consultants and editors, providing an opportunity for members to ask questions and provide answers about cases. Discussions are archived, with published and unpublished professional literature made available through a searchable database. The message boards tool also allows for the upload and viewing of pictures, and relevant discussions can be bookmarked using a "My Stuff" feature.

The combination of peer, and approved expert replies to posts and questions, provides an opportunity for members to learn from peers as well as experts in a particular area. In this way, diverse exposure is facilitated across experience levels, expertise, as well as geographically. In terms of application to School Psychology, diversity of experience and expertise is desirable, however, care would need to be taken with

regards to the geographic diversity of responses. Differences in how school psychology is regulated between provinces, states, and countries require some areas of discussion to be held on an international, national, or provincial (state) level. For example, while discussion on the administration of a particular cognitive assessment could be international, ethical discussions would likely best take place on a national level, and the interface between psychological diagnosis and the education system or legislation would necessitate information on a provincial (state) level.

4) *Rounds*: Rounds refer to medical, surgical, and practice management discussions that are centered on a pre-determined case example, led by a VIN consultant or guest speaker, and are designed to be a learning experience. In addition, an informal weekly open mike session provides a virtual coffeehouse for friendly chatting. The rounds take place at a pre-arranged time and are live and interactive, with several rounds sessions mediated by VIN each week. Past rounds are available in transcript or podcast format for members to read or listen to retrospectively.

Rounds provide in-service professional development that is based in real cases and mediated by an expert, which also encourages direct interaction between peers. Less formal interaction, bond-strengthening discussions, are encouraged through the virtual coffeehouse. The inclusion of practice management discussion as a topic for rounds provides organizational level education for practice owners and managers. Additionally, the availability of past rounds session in electronic or paper format makes them accessible by topic and in multiple communication technology formats.

5) *Consultants and editors*: There are over 180 consultants working for VIN and are purported by the VIN Offline publication as being the “heart and soul of VIN... What makes VIN truly unique (p. 7).” The editors and consultants mediate discussion boards, lead rounds, provide professional development opportunities to members, and are some of the most well known experts and leaders in the profession. While the use of consultants to maintain professional standards and provide expert feedback to members does not necessarily fit neatly into the SPPID Framework, they provide the membership

with access to more diverse expertise, and assist to maintain the professional integrity of discussion boards. Additionally, VIN provides the consultants with an opportunity to share specialized knowledge with the community. This is a component of VIN that warrants addition to this author's current theoretically based framework.

6) *Library resources and searchable database*: The VIN library page contains a wide variety of materials including medical calculators, drug resources, forms and handouts, journals, conference proceedings, multimedia, book reviews, and a student center where Veterinary students can find resources specific to students. Full text scientific articles and online texts are also available to members through the library. The associated search tool operates much the same way as many university libraries, where advanced searches can be made. Search results can be elicited from professional journals and related literature, archives of message board and rounds discussions, conference proceedings, and client hand-outs. While the library and search feature on their own do not necessarily contribute to network diversity or strengthened ties, a component of the library, conference proceedings, does fit into the SPPID Framework.

VIN members have access to presentations from a variety of veterinary-specific conferences all over North America. While these conference proceedings are normally available only to conference attendees or members of the organization that presented the conference, all are available to VIN members. This feature allows for the crossing of organizational boundaries and provides equal access to cutting-edge professional information, regardless of geographical location or organizational membership.

7) *Continuing education*: Continuing education (CE) courses presented by VIN are submitted for approval by the Registry of Approved Continuing Education (RACE) committee of the American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB). Although not stated on the website, most courses are also accepted as continuing education in Canada. Completed VIN courses count toward the veterinarian's required continuing education credits. The online courses consist of three major components: the course library, message boards, and real-time sessions. The course library includes resource

material for the course, for example handouts, links, journal articles, and multi-media. The course message boards are course specific and provide a place for those enrolled in the course to interact. The real-time sessions are generally two hours long and held once a week for the duration of the course. Participants log on and participate in live interactive sessions with the instructor and other participants. In order to keep track of participation in CE events, software is used to keep track of an individual's course participation.

The accessibility, adherence to nationally regulated continuing education guidelines, and electronic tracking of course participation are all components that would be useful within a School Psychology framework. This is particularly true during a time when mandatory continuing competence training is becoming increasingly legally mandated. In addition, the ability to interact with fellow course participants and instructors through message boards or real-time sessions provides opportunities for increased network diversity and strengthening of ties.

8) *The Veterinary Support Personnel Network (VSPN)*: VSPN is essentially VIN for veterinary technicians, veterinary assistants, receptionists, practice/office managers and other support staff. Most of the components of VIN already discussed are part of VSPN as well, with content specifically directed toward support personnel. VSPN is free for veterinary support staff and is promoted by VIN to its members as a means of educating and promoting community building among staff members.

VSPN is another example of organizational level education. In school Psychology, support personnel may include psychological assistants, special education coordinators, and special education teachers. School Psychologists are frequently the professionals making recommendations, but are often not the ones carrying out those recommendations. Educating those who are actively working at the school level may help to increase follow-through that benefits the children, with or without special needs. Although at first glance this may appear to also fall under the boundary-spanning

component of the SPPID Framework, communication in this instance is only flowing from the psychologist to others, and not cross-professionally in a collaborative manner.

In addition to VSPN, VIN has a client directed site as well called Veterinary Partner. This site, like VSPN is free and provides information to clients in a professional, advertisement-free format. This type of service would be particularly helpful to School Psychologists, especially considering that the general public can find all manner of psychological information on the Internet, some of which may be accurate and reputable, while much of it may not be. An advertisement-free format speaks to the integrity of the information and is in line with most education systems' policy of keeping advertisements out of schools. A client-directed component such as this could be directed at students, teachers, principals, and parents, providing research-based information and assistance. While a client-directed component does not fit into the SSPID framework, as it doesn't facilitate increased network diversity or strengthen professional ties, it does address one of the barriers to role reconceptualization; the understanding of School Psychology from outside the profession. Due to the importance of educating the public to the growth and advancement of School Psychology, this researcher contends that a client-directed component warrants inclusion in the framework.

In general, VIN provides a mechanism to fulfill all but one of this author's framework components, Boundary Spanning. In addition two components, consultant mediation and client education were added to the framework due to their relevance to a School Psychology application. Next, a similar process of analysis will be applied to the National Association of School Psychologists website.

The School Psychology Example: National Association of School Psychologists

The following information about NASP was obtained from personal experience browsing the NASP website, mail-outs (*NASP Communiqué* and the *School Psychology Review*), and emails associated with being a NASP member. The description that follows focuses on NASP's framework, rather than School Psychology-specific content, even

though it is often difficult to separate the two. Each component is then related back to the SPPID Framework for School Psychologists (see Fig. 8). The three main points of contact this researcher has had with NASP since becoming a member, the website, NASP mail-outs, and emails, will be discussed in this order.

There are eight basic components to the NASP website: new member supports and help, front page featured information, about the profession and NASP, profession-specific information, continuing professional development, communication and advocacy, resource library and publications, and communities (message boards).

1) New member supports and help: With regards to new memberships, students of School Psychology can buy a membership for 30% of the cost of regular membership, with early career memberships for first and second year practitioners costing 75% and 92% of regular cost respectively. Separate member prices are available for retired professionals at 36% of the regular price and for international members (other than Canada) for a price about 10% higher than the regular member price. New registrations can be completed online or through a paper printed form. Member assistance in using the website is available by accessing the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) link, or toll-free number located at the bottom of each page. In addition, an introductory email sent when a member first signs up provides a toll-free number to call for website assistance, and NASP staff can also be contacted by email.

Reduced membership fees for students encourage pre-service participation and experience with networking, as well as continued use through the first two years out of school is facilitated by the graded membership price. In addition, the reduced price for retired members encourages continued participation by the profession's most experienced members, which in turn provides greater diversity of exposure for less experienced professionals. Multiple formats for obtaining help and for member registration encourage participation by members of varying technological comfort levels.

2) Front page featured information: The front page features two headings: New at NASP and NASP Resources. Under the first category, members are invited to explore

SPPID Framework		National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Website The mechanisms organized according to the SPPID Framework
1) Diverse Exposure		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NASP memberships available to retired members at 36% of regular cost A searchable NASP member directory (bilingual and language fields) NASP Student Mentorship Program Online events NASP blogs and Communities
2) Accessible Communication Technology		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help and contact facilitated through FAQ, Toll-free number and email Availability of pod cast, audio-articles, and paper copies of the School Psychology Review and Communiqué publications
3) Face-Face Contact	Pre-service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership for students provided at 30% of regular cost Student-specific discussions and content NASP Student Mentorship Program used by students
	In-service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graded membership fees for 1st and 2nd year professionals NASP Student Mentorship Program used by early career practitioners
4) Organizational Level Education		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ready-made presentations provided for member use and resources directly available to parents and educators Parent and Educator pages
5) Boundary Spanning		
6) Professional Development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved continuing education through CPD modules, self study and online events
7) Psychologically Safe Environment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student and Early Career pages with specific supports and content for these groups. Student and Early Career member access only to the NASP Student community (message board)
8) Mentorship Opportunities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NASP Student Mentorship Program
 Additional Deductively Introduced Components		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Client Education: Providing information to the clients of School Psychologists (parents and educators). Professional Advocacy: Providing tools for professionals to better advocate for their profession

Figure 8. Analysis of the NASP website using the School Psychologist Professional Identity Development (SPPID) Framework

new content and features of the website, with the Resources category providing links to a variety of online articles and publications. In addition, a changing right hand column cycles through several of the website's features (e.g. NASP Communities, NASP publications), inviting member involvement.

3) *About the profession and NASP*: This component of the website contains information intended to educate prospective School Psychologists, or those outside of the profession about School Psychology and NASP. Material is presented in the form of online descriptions, downloadable posters, and PowerPoint presentations, making it easy for members to integrate or adapt the information for presentations to employers (e.g. school divisions) or other professionals with whom they are working collaboratively.

Another component of this section is dedicated to information about what NASP is and its historical involvement in the field, a member directory, mission and position statements, as well as other organizational information and contacts. The member directory is in the form of a searchable database that allows for bilingual and specific language searches. This is an important feature for providing diverse exposure to other professionals of different ethnic or language backgrounds. As a Canadian member, however, the member directory is not currently helpful as the search tool is only designed to work within the United States.

There are four menu items across the top of each page: Student, Early Career, Families and Educator. These links lead to pages specifically designed for each group. Content on the Student and Early Career pages focus on information about beginning a career in School Psychology (e.g. certification, job searches), parent handouts, materials directed at promoting the field, and ways to become involved in the profession. Additionally, opportunities to participate in discussion and meet other students or early career professionals online are provided. This likely provides a psychologically safe environment for a new member to become involved and encourages pre-service involvement. The Families and Educator pages feature informational articles on a variety of topics ranging from mental health issues to tips on helping students transition to a new

school year. This serves as a client education component, and like the Veterinary Partner component of VIN, it does not fit into the SSPID framework, as it doesn't facilitate increased network diversity or strengthen professional ties. It does, however, address one of the barriers to role reconceptualization; the understanding of School Psychology from outside the profession. Due to the importance of educating the public to the growth and advancement of School Psychology, the Families and Educator pages warrant inclusion in the framework. In addition to providing information to clients of School Psychological services, the Families and Educator pages serve to educate on an organizational level. This is especially applicable for School Psychologists that work for a school division.

4) Profession-specific information: Profession-specific information on the NASP website includes Professional Standards and Training (licensure, certification, professional standards and ethics) National Certification (what it is and how to obtain it), and School Psychology careers (tools for employers, job-seekers and job application tips). This component of the website is strictly for information dissemination, and does not fit into the SPPID Framework as a means of increasing network diversity or strengthening ties.

5) Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Conventions: CPD is identified on the NASP website as one of the organization's primary missions. Information in this area includes the advertisement of NASP workshops and conferences, publications that can be used for self-study, and online CPD modules and online learning events. Of note, only NASP sponsored conferences are advertised or listed on the site.

A feature related to the NASP annual conference, the Mentoring Program, is particularly relevant to network formation. In this program, graduate students and early career practitioners can sign up, review a list of available mentors, and select a person that matches their interests. Mentors and mentees then exchange contact information and arrange a time during the annual convention to meet and discuss topics of interest to the mentee. Not only does this program provide a direct mentorship opportunity, it

facilitates face-to-face contact with other professionals and encourages diverse exposure (i.e. professionals outside of the mentee's school or workplace). Due to the many facets of this NASP program, it fits into multiple categories of the SPPID Framework.

Publications for self-study and CPD modules provide information for members in an organized fashion, through text, and/or video, with the CPD modules having the added component of a post-test. Additionally, completion of each CPD module counts as one hour of continuing education work (depending on requirements of individual regulatory bodies). The online events take place at a predetermined time, with notices sent out to NASP member by email. They are conducted on a wide range of topics and take the form of a real-time discussion, which is guided by an expert on the particular topic. While the self-study materials and CPD modules provide opportunities for professional development, the online events have the added advantage of providing diverse exposure to experts as well as peers with similar interests.

6) Communication and Advocacy: This section of the website focuses on communicating a consistent message regarding the importance and purpose of School Psychology to those outside the profession. While items in the area of communication include the education of school and school district personnel, it also includes a more general audience, especially in terms of advocacy. On the topic of advocacy, the following is posted on the NASP website:

NASP is a nonpartisan professional organization and does not endorse political candidates or "rate" sitting elected leaders. Our advocacy efforts focus on specific issues that support children's learning and development and school psychology.
(National Association of School Psychologists, n.d.)^a

While a professional advocacy does not fit into the SPPID Framework, as it does not directly facilitate increased network diversity or strengthen professional ties, it does address one of the barriers to role reconceptualization; the understanding of School Psychology from outside the profession. Due to the importance that public education and effecting political change to the growth and advancement of School Psychology, professional advocacy warrants inclusion in the framework.

7) *Resource Library and Publications*: The NASP library page contains a wide variety of materials including handouts, topical resources, NASP publications, journal articles, and book reviews. While most are accessible in text form, podcasts and audio-articles are also available for download. All resources are searchable by alphabetically listed topics. While the library and search feature on their own do not necessarily contribute to network diversity or strengthened ties, a component of the library, blogs, does fit into the SPPID Framework.

NASP blogs (Web Logs) are listed under three main headings: Early Career, Response to Intervention, and Psychologists-On the Job. Members can apply to have their own blog, read the entries of others, or post responses or comments in reference to existing entries. Use of blogs is one mechanism that facilitates diverse exposure, and has the potential of both increasing network diversity and strengthening ties.

NASP publications include several books and print resources available for ordering, as well as online access *Communiqué* (monthly), *School Psychology Review* (quarterly), and the *School Psychology Forum*, a quarterly online publication. Both *Communiqué* and the *School Psychology Review* are available in print form and are sent out to NASP members by mail. The multiple formats, in which these publications are available, as well as the podcast and audio-articles available through the NASP library provide multiple ways with which to access resources.

8) *Communities*: NASP communities are discussion boards that are organized by topic. The main headings of communities are: Online Events and Current Discussions, Member Resources, Interest Groups, Online Event Archives and NASP Students. The discussion boards are self-monitored with a user option to report inappropriate material that has been posted. This tool provides opportunities for school psychologists to interact with each other and increase their network diversity. One particular feature is that the NASP Students discussion board is only accessible to student and early career members, thus providing a psychologically safe environment for students to ask questions and get answers from each other. One potential drawback of this feature,

however, is that the range of contacts in this context is limited to individuals with a similar level of experience, limiting diversity of contact.

Application of the Mechanisms to School Psychology

The previously described deductive analysis shows that networking tools currently employed by two separate professions can be analyzed using the SPPID Framework. Furthermore, examination of the mechanisms employed by Veterinary Medicine and School Psychology provide practical examples and ideas for future application of the SPPID Framework as a professional identity supporting network. More importantly to this current study, however, are the additions and omissions the deductive analysis revealed when applied to the theoretical framework.

Missing from both networking tools examined was a boundary-spanning component. To review, boundary spanning refers to the provision of opportunities to collaborate and discuss common situations, challenges, and difficulties cross-professionally. While both networking tools included information for clients and other professions, they are essentially information dissemination mechanisms, and not a cross-professional information-sharing tools.

While it is debatable whether or not Veterinary Medicine is a boundary spanning profession, there is evidence that School Psychology is. To revisit an earlier point, the broad definitions of School Psychology (see Fig. 3) suggest that School Psychologists would likely benefit from research in, or collaboration with, individuals from the fields of education, social work, psychology, pediatrics, family/parental counseling, special education, mental health, and curriculum development. Although it is important that School Psychologists have the ability to communicate with each other in a secure and confidential manner, this researcher suggests that a parallel and cross professional forum for information sharing could, and should exist. The benefits of such a forum include exposure of School Psychologists to other service delivery models and problem-solving

approaches, role reconceptualization, and furthering the understanding of School Psychology by those outside the profession.

Three additions to the SPPID Framework were proposed through the deductive analysis of two mechanisms currently in place. They are Consultant Mediation, Client Education, and Professional Advocacy. While these three components will be added to the final framework, it is important to note that they are not based on Higgins and Kram's (2001) model, nor do they have the direct support of empirical research presented in this work. As stated previously, these three additions warrant inclusion in the SPPID Framework because they have the potential to advance the field of School Psychology and support the professional development of its members. To emphasize the difference in how Consultant Mediation, Client Education, and Professional Advocacy were added to the Framework, they have been added as items 9, 10, and 11 to the previously eight-part SPPID Framework.

9) Consultant Mediation: The VIN website identifies consultant mediation as a major feature, and as something that sets it apart from other networking tools within the profession. The inclusion of consultant mediation benefits the mechanism and profession as a whole through quality-control, benefits the protégé by increasing network diversity and access to expertise, and benefits the consultants by offering a mentorship or teaching opportunity. In the absence of an organized consultant mediation process such as one found on VIN, these benefits may still exist, however, it is more likely they will be left to chance.

10) Client Education: Both the VIN and NASP mechanisms include a client education component. While client education does not contribute directly to network diversity and strong tie development, or encourage the help-seeking behavior of School Psychologists, it operates on the macro-level, likely contributing directly to the profession's identity as a whole. With School Psychology being misunderstood by many outside the profession (Gilman & Medway, 2007; Gilman & Handwerk, 2001), addressing this barrier directly and in a unified manner is important. Not only is it of benefit to

currently practicing School Psychologists, but also in educating those thinking of entering School Psychology preparation programs.

11) Professional Advocacy: NASP includes an advocacy component that not only educates the clients of School Psychological services, but works on a political level as well. While separate from client education, professional advocacy also works toward role reconceptualization and a unified vision of the field on a macro-level. The way in which NASP implements the professional advocacy component is also important. School Psychology's tendency to react to external factors is addressed by NASP's provision of easily accessible tools such as presentations, hand-outs, and petitions, which instead empower individual members to advocate for change from within.

Chapter VI

Discussion

The Need for a Professional Identity Development Framework

There is a definition-practice discrepancy within the field of school psychology that has been well established in several studies (e.g. Smith, 1984; Reschley & Wilson, 1995; Curtis et al., 1999; Bramlett et al., 2002; Lewis et al., 2008). These studies indicate that the time School Psychologists spend assessing and working specifically with special needs populations is disproportionate to the other tasks and areas of expertise found in current definitions of the field. The historical development of School Psychology, along with the current reality of practice has likely contributed to this discrepancy.

Historically, School Psychology came into its own when the American Psychological Association (APA) recognized it as a separate division in 1944 (Fagon, 1996). Distinction among psychologists, however, did not mean unity of definition within the profession. Divisions between an overall psychological and an educational identity as well as smaller differences with regard to application of service, problem solving orientations, pre-service training, and work settings emerged and exist today (Fagon, 1996). The definitions that followed in 1949 and 1966 represented the expanding role of School Psychologists, and the influence of emerging School Psychology graduate programs, organizational change and legislative changes in the United States and Canada further increased diversity within the profession (Fagon, 1996). The examination of current School Psychology definitions indicates that the historical development of the field produced a richly diversified and well-defined profession.

In practice, however, School Psychology gradually became less diversified which has led to the current definition-practice discrepancy. One implicated factor is the model of service delivery that the profession has adopted. Sheridan and Gutkin (2000) assert that adoption of a medical paradigm of assess, diagnose, and place, has prevented the narrowing of the definition-practice discrepancy, and alternatively propose the

implementation of an ecological approach. The influences of external factors (e.g. school administration and government policy) are also implicated in defining the day-to-day role of School Psychologists in comparison to the diverse professional definition (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000; Bramlett et al., 2002; Fagon & Wise, 2007). While still an issue of much debate (Fagon, 2004), a personnel shortage resulting in high School Psychologist to Student ratios is yet another reason associated with the definition-practice discrepancy, specifically the confinement of School Psychologist to the task of assessment (Smith, 1984; Curtis et al., 2002). Finally, several studies (e.g. Gilman & Gabriel, 2004; Gilman & Medway, 2007) have shown that those outside the profession do not understand what school psychology is, nor School Psychologists' desire to expand their role to more closely resemble current definitions of the field.

Amelioration of the discrepancy or at least accelerating the rate of change requires School Psychologists to re-conceptualize their role, work toward a unified vision of the field, and demonstrate a willingness to advocate for change (Curtis et al., 2004; Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000). This researcher contends that while a macro-level approach (i.e. professional advocacy on a political level) is necessary, a focus on the professional identity development of individual School Psychologists is the key to narrowing the definition-practice discrepancy. One approach to professional identity development, and the one explored as part of this work, comes from Higgins and Kram's (2001) paper on developmental networks.

A search of the current literature has revealed an implied need for the professional identity development of school psychologists, but no model or framework upon which this need can be addressed. Without a framework, the development of individual School Psychologists' professional identity development is bound to be inconsistent at best, counteracting attempts to move individuals toward a unified vision of the field. While a definition-practice discrepancy is likely not unique to School Psychology, the solution needs to be. Direct application of a generic framework, or framework from another profession without regard for School Psychology's unique

history, strengths, challenges and aspirations will likely be deemed irrelevant and easily dismissed. It is, therefore, important for the profession to have a well-defined basis for professional identity development and related research.

The Proposed Conceptual Framework and its Development

Given the need for a framework of professional identity development for School Psychologists, a three-part approach was implemented by this researcher to develop the School Psychology Professional Identity Development (SPPID) framework (Figure 9). First, the establishment of a need for professional identity development, summarized in the previous section, also provided a means of contextualizing School Psychology in regards to its historical development and current definition and practice. Second, an established theoretical basis for professional identity development, Higgins and Kram's (2001) Developmental Networks model was introduced, explained, and applied to the context of School Psychology. Finally, deductive analysis of two existing mechanisms for network development was performed to demonstrate applicability to School Psychology, to identify possible additions to the framework, and demonstrate application of the framework presented here. One of the mechanisms, the Veterinary Information Network, came from outside the field while the other, National Association of School Psychologists, is currently being used by School Psychologists.

To ascertain the type(s) of developmental networks that are relevant to School Psychologists and may lead to professional identity development, this researcher began his analysis and application of the Higgins and Kram model (see Fig. 2) to School Psychology at the end, with the consequences of developmental networks. The most relevant consequence to professional identity development is what Higgins and Kram (2001) call Personal Learning, which is a broad term for increased clarity of one's professional identity, personal values, strengths, and weaknesses as well as awareness of developmental needs, reactions, and behavior patterns. Two other consequences of developmental networks are desirable for the purpose of this work; Career Change, and

Organizational Commitment. Career Change, according to Higgins and Kram, is a change in career that is initiated by the individual, "...that is, to change organizations, to change jobs, and to believe that the move was a 'career change' from what he or she did before" (Higgins, 1999 in Higgins & Kram, 2001, p. 277). This is desirable as an outcome because the extent of change required to narrow the definition-practice discrepancy is akin to that of a career change. Furthermore, individuals equipped to make such a change will likely be the same individuals who possess the willingness to advocate for change deemed by Sheridan and Gutkin (2000) as important in moving the profession of School Psychology forward. Finally, "Organizational commitment refers to a psychological bond between the member and his or her employer that may be characterized by emotional, behavioral, and cognitive consistency" (Mowday et al., 1979, in Higgins and Kram, 2001, p. 280). Individuals who have strong organizational commitment, according to this definition, are also likely to have a strong and unified vision of their profession, which is an attribute Curtis et al. (2004) viewed as important for the field of School Psychology.

Continuing backward through the Higgins and Kram (2001) model, the developmental network structures that are positively and negatively associated with the developmental consequences of Personal Learning, Career Change, and Organizational Commitment were examined. Personal learning, according to Higgins and Kram, has a strong positive association with Entrepreneurial structure and a weak positive association with Traditional developmental network structure. Career Change has a strong positive association with an Entrepreneurial structure and Organizational Commitment has a strong positive association with a Traditional developmental network structure. The Opportunistic structure is not only associated negatively with the Personal Learning outcome, but also with the outcome of Job Satisfaction. The Receptive developmental network structure is also negatively associated with Job Satisfaction.

Given these positive and negative associations between developmental network structures and the three outcomes important for the purpose of this work, Personal

Learning, Career Change, and Organizational Commitment, both Entrepreneurial and Traditional network structures are desirable. As Figure 1 illustrates, protégé within an Entrepreneurial network structure has a high range of contacts, and has strong ties (frequency of communication, emotional affect, and reciprocity) with all of them. A traditional network structure also has strong ties, but with less range, or fewer contacts.

In addition to Higgins and Kram's (2001) model, this researcher examined the topic of mentoring. Not only does the Higgins and Kram model have its basis in mentoring research, but it also remains an active area of study and its structure is similar to a Traditional developmental network structure. For these reasons, as well as the role of dyadic mentoring in professional identity development (Kram, 1985), a dyadic mentoring aspect was included as an eighth component of the SPPID Framework.

The next step in developing the SPPID Framework was to examine the opposite end of the Higgins and Kram (2001) model, antecedents to network development. Higgins and Kram use two broad categories of antecedents, work environment influences and individual-level influences. While Higgins and Kram suggest that work environment influences either constrain or provide opportunities for network development, they also, along with personal-level factors, encourage developmental help seeking behavior. It was by matching Higgins and Kram's antecedents to developmental network formation and dyadic mentoring theory (Kram, 1985), with the School Psychology context, that mediating processes specific to the profession were identified (see Fig. 3 and 4). These formed the first eight components of the SPPID Framework, and are intended not to just encourage developmental network formation, but to shape a particular type of network development, in this case, Entrepreneurial and Traditional structures.

Finally, the SPPID Framework was compared to two existing mechanisms of network development, the Veterinary Information Network and the NASP website. This analysis provided an example of how the SPPID Framework could be applied practically, and also revealed that neither mechanism examined addressed one particular component of the framework, boundary spanning. Boundary Spanning in this context

refers to collaboration across professions. While both mechanisms provided tools to disseminated information to other professions, no allowance for a collaborative forum was present. Furthermore, three additional framework components were added from VIN and NASP websites. The two components added from VIN were Consultant Mediation and Client Education (see Fig. 7) and one from the NASP website was Professional Advocacy (see Fig. 8). While these additional components did not fit neatly into the categories of strengthening ties, increasing network diversity, or encouraging help seeking behavior, they did address key barriers to the larger goal of this work: the advancement and growth of School Psychology to narrow the definition-practice discrepancy. The result of this process is the eleven-part framework proposed here, and summarized in Figure 9.

Limitations and Future Directions for Research

With regards to the research basis, most of the studies cited in this work are based on School Psychologist populations from the United States. While this study addressed the profession from a North American perspective, differences in political policy (in education and psychology), standards for accreditation, and regulatory processes influence the progression of School Psychology directly and vary from province to province, state to state, and country to country. This study did not address challenges specific to a provincial or Canadian level, nor was individual attention paid to the variety of work settings in which School Psychologists operate, and these delimitations represent areas of further study.

One method of addressing the Canadian perspective would be to examine a Canadian organization for School Psychologists, however, the Canadian Association of School Psychologists (CASP) only receives a brief mention in this work. While CASP actively publishes the Canadian Journal of School Psychology along with several other joint publications with the Canadian Association of Psychologists (CAP), it does not currently have a networking components such as those found within NASP. Furthermore, at the time this work was written, it appeared that the CASP website had not been

SPPID Framework		Description of Framework Components	Facilitates Entrepreneurial and Traditional Networks by...
1) Diverse Exposure		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate exposure to a diverse network of colleagues (i.e. race, gender, employment context, level of experience). 	
2) Accessible Communication Technology		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase frequency of communication by providing access to communication technologies that individual members are comfortable using. Facilitate communication between the profession's least and most experienced members. 	
3) Face-Face Contact	Pre-service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take advantage of strong ties developed during university training between: fellow students, students and professors, students and research supervisors. 	
	In-service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide equal access to professional development opportunities and facilitate collaboration with in-service colleagues. Allow for formal and informal re-connections of established relationships. 	
4) Organizational Level Education		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate leaders at the organizational level (i.e. school division and hospital team leaders, multi-psychologist practice owners) to shape healthy organizational culture and attitudes toward developmental networks and mentoring. 	
5) Boundary Spanning		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for school psychologists to study how other professionals deal with common situations, challenges and difficulties. Encourage cross-professional collaboration and discussion. 	
6) Professional Development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide access to professional development (continuing competence) that meet both ethical and legal requirements of the profession. Work closely with professional organizations and licensing bodies to establish and/or maintain a common professional identity. 	
7) Psychologically Safe Environment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to preserve individuals' self-esteem and public image within the workplace or organization (see #4). Inclusion of a component that is one step removed from the individual's immediate work environment. 	
8) Mentorship Opportunities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing mechanism that facilitates dyadic mentoring relationships. Provision of both career-related and psychosocial forms of mentoring support. 	
9) Consultant Mediation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of experts and leaders in the field to generally promote quality control, allow access to professionals by protégés, and provide experts with mentoring and teaching opportunities 	
10) Client Education		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing information to the clients directly, making tools available to professionals for the purpose of client education 	
11) Professional Advocacy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing tools for professionals to better advocate for their profession on a political level. 	
Legend:  =Increases network diversity  =Strengthens ties  =Encourages help seeking behavior			

Figure 9. The School Psychologist Professional Identity Development (SPPID) Framework

updated since October 2007, calling into question its relevance to this work.

Concerning this study's conceptual basis, reconceptualization as a means of narrowing the definition-practice discrepancy is only approached from the perspective individual school psychologists (micro-level). It is likely that a combination of macro-level (i.e. professional / political advocacy as a group) and micro-level approaches would best achieve this goal. Furthermore, the line between micro-level and macro-level approaches is blurry at best, as action in one domain inevitably elicits change in the other. While Psychologist organizations, especially NASP and APA specifically identify professional advocacy in their vision and goal statements, macro-level approaches were beyond the scope of this work. The organization of macro-level efforts, the framework on which they operate, as well as how macro and micro-level approaches can interact and complement each other require further investigation.

Four barriers to role reconceptualization were presented, however, one in particular deserves closer scrutiny. Sheridan and Gutkin's (2000) postulation that reliance on a medical model of service delivery is responsible for the slow rate of change within the profession of School Psychology, is presented in this study because it is cited in several studies examining the topic. An examination of the research within the field of medicine, however, reveals an emphasis on an ecological and team approach to service delivery. More research is required from the field of School Psychology that examines strategies the medical community has implemented to shed its diagnose and place reputation.

Another limitation to this study is the application of the Higgins and Kram model. The developmental network model used as a basis for the SPPID Framework is general, and was not necessarily intended for application to a self-regulating profession such as School Psychology. For this reason, the concepts and categories within the model were considered in a general sense rather than confined to the literal wording used in Higgins and Kram (2001). As a result, new research is required that explores the associations between the SPPID Framework components and their ability to facilitate the network

diversity, strong ties, and help seeking behavior necessary in Entrepreneurial and Traditional network typologies. That is, associations between the SPPID Framework and the outcomes (see Fig. 9) should be thought of as guidelines for further investigation, not empirically proven associations. It should also be noted that while the connection between mentorship, developmental networks and professional identity is implied (Higgins & Kram, 2001; Kram, 1985), more empirical research regarding the association between professional identity and these two concepts is required.

With regard to the deductive analysis of existing network development mechanisms, they were carefully chosen, but also choices of convenience and of particular interest to the author. In limiting analysis to two existing mechanisms, one from within and the other from outside of the field of School Psychology, the study cannot be considered comprehensive. It would be beneficial for further studies to use the SPPID Framework in the analysis of a wider variety of mechanisms, in and outside the profession, in order to demonstrated the validity, and facilitate the improvement of the SPPID Framework.

Conclusion

There are likely many approaches to ameliorating the definition-practice discrepancy and facilitating role reconceptualization in the field of School Psychology. It is also likely that multiple approaches are required in order to enact the change sought by School Psychologists. The framework presented here, seeks to facilitate change at the level of the individual school psychologist, through professional identity development, mediated by developmental network formation.

The SPPID Framework developed within this work should not be considered definitive, or even as a final form. The framework is, however, intended to provide a starting point for further exploration of the professional identity of individual School Psychologists with the hope that those who have a strong identity as School Psychologists will be leaders in closing the definition-practice discrepancy. It is also

hoped that presentation of this work stimulates the imaginations of other psychologists to look beyond their immediate circumstance, and even beyond their own profession to address the challenges that face the profession in a creative manner.

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