Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants (N = 91)

Characteristic		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%) of N
Gender			
	Female	79	87
	Male	12	13
Race/Ethnicity			
	White		65
	Black or African American		19
	Indian or Alaskan Native		1.1
	Asian		2.2
	Hispanic or Latino		5.5
	Other Race/Ethnicity		4.4
Family of Origin SES			
	At or below poverty level	14	15.5
	Just above poverty level	9	9.9
	Lower middle class	18	19.8
	Middle class	34	37.4
	Upper middle class	14	15.4
	Upper class	2	2.2

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics for Scales

Scale	# of items	Cronbach's -	Mean (SD)	F
Attitudes About Poverty				76.60*
Personal Deficiency	7	.37	4.15 (.53)	
Stigma	8	.83	2.84 (.72)	
Attributions of Poverty				1.46
Individualistic	15	.63	3.52 (.63)	
Fatalistic	8	.97	3.32 (.56)	
Structural	13	.86	3.31 (.64)	

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Attributes, Attitudes, and Perceived Self-Efficacy Levels of School Counselors Toward Poverty

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Abstract
School counselors' attitudes, attributes, and self-efficacy levels while working with individuals living in poverty were examined using quantitative measures. Qualitative measures were used to assess challenges and recommendations of participants working with students impacted by poverty. Findings indicate school counselors' rate personal deficiencies higher regarding their attitudes toward individuals living in poverty and rated fatalistic causes higher for explaining causes of poverty.

Keywords: poverty, school counseling, self-efficacy, adolescents, children

Introduction
Childhood poverty is associated with a range of negative developmental, behavioral and emotional consequences (Haft & Hoeft, 2017). For students living in poverty, one of the greatest challenges is academic failure (Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007; Ferguson, Bovaird, & Mueller, 2007; Hopson & Lee, 2011). Past research has indicated that students living in poverty are 10 times more likely to drop out of school than students from higher income families (Hopson & Lee, 2011) and living in poverty during early childhood is associated with lower than average rates of school completion (Kena et al., 2015). In fact, the academic achievement gap of students living in poverty has been well documented against the achievement levels of middle and upper socioeconomic students (Bemak & Chung, 2005; Yettick & Lloyd, 2015). This disparity is seen across all aspects of education. Amatea and West-Olatunji (2007) found that children from low-socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to have an elevated school failure rate, developmental difficulties and delays, lower standardized test scores and graduation rates, and higher rates of school tardiness, absenteeism, and school dropout.

The educational disparities are even more concerning when considered in relation to the growing numbers of children and adolescents living in poverty. Estimates are that over 30 million children in the United States live in low-income families and over 14 million children in the United States live in poor families (Jiang, Ezkono, & Skinner, 2015; Macartney, 2011). Currently,

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children represent 23% of the population, but comprise 33% of all people living in poverty (Jiang et al., 2015).

The detrimental effects of poverty on children can be multifaceted and long lasting (Children's Defense Fund, 2014; Macartney, 2011; Ozkan, Purutcuoglu, & Hablemitoglu, 2010). Poverty can impact a child's academic success, health, and emotional and behavioral outcomes (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Haft & Hoeft, 2017). Children living in poverty report higher levels of anxiety, depression, behavioral challenges, and lower levels of positive school engagement (Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007; Caughy, O'Campo, & Muntaner, 2003; Hodgkinson, Godoy, Beers, & Lewin, 2017; Samaan, 2000). Concerns continue into academic arenas where children living in poverty perform more poorly in math and reading and are 10 more times likely to drop out of high school than children from higher income families (Hopson & Lee, 2011).

Researcher have also found that the school environment can also impact student success (Cappella, Frazier, Atkins, Schoenwald, & Glisson, 2008; Engler & Black, 2008; Evans, 2004; Zhang & Han, 2017). Particularly, schools in economically disadvantaged communities struggle to provide interventions and support systems to foster the development of a strong school climate (Banerjee, 2016; Cappella et al., 2008; Evans, 2004). Due to poor funding, restricted resources, and limited support for students and teachers, low income schools often have highly stressed teachers resulting in high turnover rates and institutionalizing low academic expectations for students (Banerjee, 2016; Cappella et al., 2008; Evans, 2004; Griffin & Steen, 2011). These challenges may follow high poverty students throughout their education, with these students most likely experiencing low quality instruction and support throughout their elementary school years and into high school (Cappella et al., 2008; Engler & Black, 2008; Zhang & Han, 2017).

Addressing the possible attitudes school personnel may have towards persons living in poverty can be another challenge related to high poverty schools. There is evidence that societal beliefs about poverty often support or promote discrimination, bias, and negative attitudes (Auwarter & Aruguete, 2008; Bray & Schommer-Aikins, 2015; Cozzarelli, Wilkinson, & Tagler, 2001; Crumley, 2013; Sturm, 2008). School counselors may hold similar ideologies; therefore, their attitudes and beliefs should also be evaluated. Preliminary research has suggested that many factors impact the ability of counselors to provide services to people living in poverty, including counselors' attitudes about persons living in poverty, their beliefs about the factors contributing to poverty, and their own family of origin's socioeconomic status (Parikh, Ceballas, & Post, 2013; Parikh, Post, & Flowers, 2011; Sturm, 2008). Counselors may make false assumptions about clients living in poverty when the counselor infers the causes of the clients' problems (Sturm, 2008). Research among counselors has suggested that counselors may even perceive students from low socioeconomic backgrounds as having a less promising futures than other students (Auwarter & Aruguete, 2008).

The foundation for school counselors as well as other individuals' attitudes is best reflected in societal outlooks. Within society indications show there are negative attitudes toward persons living in poverty (Auwarter & Aruguete, 2008; Bray & Schommer-Aikins, 2015; Cozzarelli et al., 2001). Research findings have demonstrated that these negative attitudes often reflect a belief that poverty is caused by personal factors such as laziness (Bray & Schommer-Aikins, 2015; Bullock, Williams, & Limbert, 2003; Crumley, 2013). Cozzarelli et al. (2001) found that attitudes toward poor individuals were significantly more negative than attitudes toward middle class individuals and that poor individuals were most likely to be blamed for their poverty status. The presence of such negative attitudes among school counselors may potentially affect their relationship with students, students' families, and services provided.

According to the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) School Counselor Competencies, school counselors should have a mindset that "every student can learn, and every student can succeed" (ASCA, 2019, p. 2). Additionally, the American Counselor Association (ACA) Code of Ethics asserts that counselors should respect the diversity of their clients, not impose their values onto clients, and should seek training in areas where they feel like they may impose their values (ACA, 2014). In order to adhere to ethical codes, counselors must examine their attitudes and attributes toward individuals living in poverty. It is critical to understand the dynamic of school counselors' beliefs and attitudes toward poverty, since these beliefs and attitudes can directly impact their ability to advocate for students living in poverty (Ratts, Butler, & Singh, 2016). Nonetheless, attitudes are only one component of this issue, it is also imperative to examine how well prepared and effective school counselors believe they are when working with high poverty students. A critical component of this may be the self-efficacy school counselors possess related to working with students in these situations (Holcomb-McCoy, Harris, Hines, & Johnston, 2008).

According to Larson and Daniels (1998), counselor self-efficacy beliefs are the main factor contributing to effective counseling action. Specifically, counselors' self-efficacy can influence their behaviors, counseling practices and even their decisions to persist in challenging circumstances; and therefore, it is an essential component to understanding school counselors' work with students (Bodenhorn, Wolfe, & Airen, 2010; Gunduz, 2012; Holcomb-McCoy, Gonzalez, & Johnston, 2009; Mullen & Lambie, 2016). Thus, self-efficacy related to working with students living in poverty may influence school counselors' behaviors when working with these students and may correspond to beliefs or attitudes they hold towards persons living in poverty (Baggerly & Osborn, 2006; Brigman & Campbell, 2003; Sink & Stroh, 2003).

The purpose of this study was to 1) assess school counselors' attitudes and attributes toward working with students living in poverty; 2) examine the relationship between the level of perceived school counseling self-efficacy and attitudes toward low SES among school counselors; 3) assess relationship between the level of perceived school counseling self-efficacy and attributions toward low SES among school counselors; 4) assess challenges experienced by school counselors working with children and adolescents impacted by poverty; and 5) assess recommendation for preparing school counselors to work with children and adolescents impacted by poverty.

This study defined attitudes and attributes, among school counselors, parallel to

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Strum's (2008) definitions. Specifically, attitudes were defined as the positive and negative beliefs school counselors may hold towards students, primarily those students living in poverty. In addition, attributes were defined as the beliefs the school counselors may hold about the causes of poverty and the perception of a student or their family's individual responsibility for living in poverty. Furthermore, within the study, schools with high poverty levels were assessed related to the percentage of students participating in the school's free or reduced lunch program. Students qualifying for this program had families with incomes at or below 130% of the poverty level (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017; Ralston, Newman, Clauson, Guthrie, & Buzby, 2008); whereas, "low-income" referred to families with income levels below 185% of the poverty line for their household size (Crosnoe, 2009; National Center for Education Statistics, 2017).

Method

In this study, the attitudes and attributes of school counselors toward working with students living in poverty were examined using quantitative measures. Additionally, the self-efficacy levels of school counselors working with students living in poverty were examined. This included how these variables relate to each other, with specific consideration of school counselor self-efficacy as it related to attributions and attitudes towards persons living in poverty. In addition, data about respondents' ages, school setting, years of experience and current working grade level was collected. Lastly, respondents' challenges and recommendations for working with individuals in poverty were assessed using qualitative measures.

Procedures

Previously collected data were used for completion of this study. School counselors were recruited through the ASCA membership list. After institutional research approval, emails were sent to ASCA members asking for participation in a study assessing their attitudes and attributes toward working with students living in poverty and their self-efficacy level. Within the email, school counselors were provided a link to the survey and informed that completion of the survey would indicate informed consent to participate in the survey. The survey email included the information letter, demographic measure, Attitudes toward Poverty Scale Short Form (Yun & Weaver, 2010), Attributions of Poverty Scale (Strum, 2008), and School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005). After collection of surveys, all data were analyzed. Due to overall sample size parameters, the sampling was limited to those in the Southeastern United States (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia). Based on the power analysis, the ideal sample size for this study was 267 participants with 90% confidence level and $p < .05$.

Participants

Four hundred and twenty-eight (428) respondents submitted survey packets. Of that number, 271 respondents indicated that they were currently practicing school counselors; these participants were included in the study. Participants were excluded from the survey for failure to complete all survey items or for not being current practicing school counselors. Participant demographics characteristics included: African American (n = 36, 13.3%), American Indian/Alaskan Native (n = 1, 0.4%), Asian (n = 1, 0.4%), Hispanic/Latino (n = 12, 4.4%), White/Caucasian (n = 217, 80.1%), and other (n = 4, 1.5%). The number of respondents by gender included: female (n = 241, 88.9%), male (n = 29, 10.7%), and unknown (n = 1, 0.4%). The number of respondents by current practicing grade level included: elementary (K-5) (n = 135, 49.8%), middle (6-8) (n = 93, 34.3%), and high (9-12) (n = 84, 31%). Additionally, the school's reported socioeconomic category indicated low poverty (n = 38, 14%), mid-low poverty (n = 58, 21.4%), mid-high poverty (n = 77, 28.4%), high poverty (n = 89, 32.8%), and unknown (n = 9, 3.3%), as indicated by student participation in the free or reduced lunch program. The average age of respondents was 40.7 years. The average time of service respondents worked was 7.5 years. The ideal sample size for this study was 267 participants with 90% confidence level and $p < .05$. Descriptive measures of participants are shown in Table 1.

Measures

Demographic Measures

In addition to the demographic categories listed above, the demographic questionnaire asked participants two open ended questions about their perceptions of poverty. Specifically, these questions assessed: "What were the challenges school counselors experienced when working with children and adolescents impacted by poverty," and "What recommendations the school counselors had for preparing school counselors to work with children and adolescents impacted by poverty." The two open-ended questions were listed as the final two questions in the survey packet.

Attribution of Poverty Scale

The Attributes for Poverty Questionnaire (Bullock et al., 2003) was designed to assess a broad range of explanations for poverty including individualistic, structural, and fatalistic attributions. In the current study, beliefs about the attributes of poverty were assessed using this 36-item questionnaire (Strum, 2008). Using this questionnaire, participants rated their perceptions of the causes of poverty on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 indicating "not at all important as a cause of poverty" and 5 indicating "extremely important as a cause of poverty." The alpha coefficients for the three constructs in this scale were reported as 0.91 (individualistic), 0.91 (structuralistic), and 0.72 (fatalistic). These findings were parallel to what was found in the current study for which the overall Cronbach Alpha was calculated for all measures and compared against established reliabilities for each scale and subscale. Results showed the reliability estimates for subscale measures ranged from 0.757 to 0.907 with a mean of 0.843. In addition, the overall reliability estimates for measures ranged from 0.702 to 0.962 with a mean of 0.832. These results were comparable to the reliabilities scores from the original measures. The subscale scores for these measures ranged from 0.67 to 0.95 with a mean of 0.803. The overall reliability scores of the original measures ranged from 0.87 to 0.96 with a mean of 0.913.

Attitudes toward Poverty Scale Short Form

The Attitudes toward Poverty Scale was developed by Atherton and Gemmel (1993) to measure attitudes toward poverty and the poor population. A short form of this scale was formed in 2010 by Yun and Weaver that consisted of 21 scale items; the shortened form of the Attitudes Toward

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Poverty Scale was used in this study. Using this scale, participants rated their agreement with the provided statements on a 5-point Likert scale with SA (1) indicating "Strong Agreement" and SD (5) indicating "Strong Disagreement." Higher scores on the Attitudes Toward Poverty Scale indicate more favorable attitudes toward the poor. The alpha coefficient for the total 21 items was 0.87. Three subscales of individualistic, fatalistic, and structuralistic attitudes were used in this measure. The alpha coefficients of the subscales ranged from 0.50 to 0.70.

School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (SCSE)

The School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (SCSE) was developed by Bodenhorn and Skagg (2005) to link personal attributes with school counselor career performance. The SCSE was designed to help track the adoption of professional transition, increase literature about school counseling and career self-efficacy theory, assess the effectiveness of the education process in school counseling programs, and provide insight into the success of practicing school counselors. The SCSE consists of 43 scale items. Using a Likert Scale, respondents rated their confidence performing school counseling tasks. A rating of 1 indicated "not confident" and a rating of 5 indicated "highly confident." The coefficient alpha for the scale score was found to be 0.95 (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005). Subscales of the measure included 5 domains of Personal and Social Development (12 items); Leadership and Assessment (9 items); Career and Academic Development (7 items); Collaboration and Consultation (11 items); and Cultural Acceptance (4 items). Correlations of the subscale ranged from 0.27 to 0.43.

Analysis

Data were collected in this study to assess the perceptions of school counselors' attitudes and attributes towards working with poor students. The study also examined the self-efficacy levels of school counselors working with poor students. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Product for Social Sciences (SPSS) statistical analyses system. A correlation analysis was used to assess school counselors' attitudes, attributes and self-efficacy levels toward working with students living in poverty. Next, a multiple regression was used to assess the relationship across variables. Furthermore, a backwards elimination regression was used to assess the relationship between school counselors' self-efficacy levels and attitudes and attributes toward poverty. Lastly, a thematic analysis was used to assess quantitative findings.

A thematic analysis was conducted on the two qualitative questions to assess the challenges faced by school counselors when working with students impacted by poverty and to assess school counselors' recommendations for preparing a school counselor to work with individuals impacted by poverty. Thematic analysis is a six-phases process in which research researchers define and identify themes (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017). A second researcher was recruited to assist in identification of themes within the qualitative responses. Both researchers worked to identify potential biases before beginning data analysis. Themes were identified and agreed upon by both researchers before proceeding with the analysis. Additionally, the researcher met to discuss their coding methods and rationale. Once coding agreement was met, the authors identified the emerging themes for each of the open-ended questions.

Results

The first research question assessed school counselors' attitudes and attributes toward working with students living in poverty. Results indicated that on the Attributions of Poverty Scale, active school counselors rated fatalistic causes higher for explaining why individuals live in poverty ($M = 3.3141$, $SD = 0.662$). The mean scores of the other subscales were 3.24 (Individualistic) and 2.99 (Structural). Subscale difference were examined using a Within Subjects Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), $F(1.353, 365.401) = 13.807$, $p < 0.05$). Results of the analysis found significant differences between structural and individualistic subscales as well as structural and fatalistic subscales. However, the analysis showed no significant difference between individualistic and fatalistic subscales.

On the Attitudes Toward Poverty Scale, active school counselors rated personal deficiencies higher regarding their attitudes toward individuals living in poverty ($M = 4.016$, $SD = 0.595$). The mean scores of the other subscales were 3.06 (Stigma) and 2.64 (Structural). Subscale difference were examined using a Within Subjects Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Results of the analysis found significant differences between all subscales of personal deficiency, stigma, and structural domains, $F(1.299, 350.777) = 194.579$, $p < 0.05$).

Lastly, on the School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale, active school counselors were found to rate collaboration as the task they felt most confident performing ($M = 4.369$, $SD = 0.600$). Overall, the descriptive statistics for the School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale indicated that active school counselors rated themselves as "generally confident" ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.491$) in their confidence to perform tasks and activities related to school counseling. The mean scores of the other subscales were 4.34 (Personal & Social), 4.25 (Cultural Acceptance), 4.15 (Career & Academic), and 3.92 (Leadership & Assessment).

The second research questions examined the relationship between the level of perceived school counseling self-efficacy and attitudes toward low SES among school counselors. A backwards elimination regression was performed to assess the best predictor of active school counselors' self-efficacy levels when correlated with school counselors' attitudes toward individuals living in poverty. Using three subscales, an overall R2 of 0.042 ($F = 3.921$, $p > 0.009$) was obtained. Correlation scores for the three subscales were shown to be non-significant with Personal Deficiency achieving a r of .201, Stigma Attitudes with a r of .084, and Structural Attitudes with a r of -.070. Results of the backwards elimination regression showed a higher correlation using one subscale. The final restricted model contained the Personal Deficiency Scale and achieved a R2 of 0.040 ($F = 11.288$, $p = 0.001$). The R2 difference of 0.002 between these models was not statistically significant ($F = 0.270$, $p > 0.05$). Therefore, no significant difference was found between the models. The original model containing all three subscales accounted for 4.2% of the variance of attitudes about poverty ($R2 = 0.042$). This indicated that there was not a significant relationship between self-efficacy and attitudes about poverty. See Table 2 for result of the backwards elimination regression.

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The third research question assessed the relationship between the level of perceived school counseling self-efficacy and attributions toward low SES among school counselors. A backwards elimination regression analysis was performed to assess the relationship between active school counselors' attributes toward individuals living in poverty and their self-efficacy level. Using three subscales, an overall R2 of 0.011 was found ($F = 0.998$, $p = 0.394$). Analysis of the backwards elimination regression showed that removal of contributing variables did not contribute to the overall prediction of school counselors' self-efficacy levels. No variables could be removed from the full model to increase the prediction accuracy of the model. Correlation scores of the subscales were Individualistic with a r of -.037, Fatalistic with a r score of .03, and Structuralistic with a r score of .097. The original model containing all three subscales accounted for 1.1% of the variance of attributes about poverty ($R2 = 0.011$). This indicated that there was not a significant relationship between self-efficacy and attributes about poverty.

The forth research question assessed the challenges experienced by school counselors working with children and adolescents impacted by poverty. School counselors were asked in the demographic section of the survey, "What are the challenges you have experienced as a school counselor working with children and adolescents impacted by poverty?" Four themes were identified and agreed upon by both researchers. The four themes identified were: "Parental or Student Involvement," "Limited Resources or Services," "Inadequate Services," and "Lack of Training and Preparation." These themes varied in response rate. Thirty-seven school counselors failed to answer the question or it was not applicable to their school setting.

Approximately 60% of school counselors cited "Parental or Student Involvement" as a challenge they encountered when working with students. Example quotes by respondents of this theme were "Encouraging and motivating them to care about their performance (albeit behavior or academic) at school;" "One of the biggest challenges is the lack of importance placed on education by the families of students;" and, "Getting parents to accept responsibility and support their children with academics." Next, the "Limited Resources or Services" themes emerged in approximately 15% of school counselor responses. Example quotes of the this theme included, "Lack of resources that would help the student be a more effective learner, e.g., access to computers, tutoring, transportation and money;" "Not enough community resources available;" and, "My challenges in working with students impacted by poverty are that we don't have access to appropriate resources, district formulas for distributing resources and/or determining the number of student support services staff are inequitable or do not take into consideration the free or reduced lunch percentage." Thirdly, the "Inadequate Services" themed responses were prevalent in approximately 15% of school counselors' responses. Example quotes of this theme included, "Children who are hungry cannot learn anything effectively;" "Lack of mental health resources in the community and lack of low skill jobs in the community;" and "Students coming to school hungry or dirty because they did not have food or running water." Lastly, approximately 10% of school counselors cited "Lack of Training and Preparation" as a challenge school counselors faced when working with students in poverty. Example quotes of this theme included, "How to connect to them while showing empathy but not feeling sorry for them;" "Lack of awareness on the part of school staff;" and "Unintended bias by educators who prefer to advise lowest academic course work to low socio-economic students as a means of assuring students' on-time progression through school."

The last research question assessed recommendation for preparing school counselors to work with children and adolescents impacted by poverty. School counselors were asked in the demographic section of the survey, "What are your recommendations for preparing school counselors to work with children and adolescents impacted by poverty?" Three themes were identified and agreed upon by both researchers. The three themes identified were "Advocacy and Experiential Preparation," "Multicultural Training," and "Collaboration." These themes varied in response rate. Forty-four school counselors failed to answer the question or it was not applicable to their school setting.

Of the respondents, approximately 65% of school counselors cited "Advocacy and Experiential Preparation" as recommendations for preparing school counselors to work with children and adolescents. Example quotes of this theme included, "Part of the preparation program should include an internship in a high needs, high poverty/low income school;" "Have school counselors volunteer in food banks, shelters, low income schools/churches to expose them to situations they may encounter;" and, "One recommendation is to always be prepared to focus on the students' strengths when counseling, and be part of culture change (if necessary) when it comes to identifying students' strengths." Next, the "Multicultural Training" themed recommendations were cited by approximately 15% of school counselors. Examples of this theme were "Help counselors to know what these families' lives are like on a daily basis; what their priorities are;" "They need to be able to separate their middle-class mindset from the atypical poverty mindset and then be able to work with children and families who are poor;" and, "Therefore all children should be treated equally and with respect for their heritage regardless how different it may be from what the educator knows." The last themed identified within school counselors' recommendations was "Collaboration." Approximately 20% of school counselors responded in ways consistent with this theme. Examples of this theme included, "Collaborate with other community agencies to support the children's needs;" "Information on services to provide to students, parents, and the community to help students get where they need to be;" and, "Collaborations with community resources is crucial."

Discussion

Results of the analysis indicated that school counselors identified personal deficient attitudes to explain poverty more often than stigma attitudes or structural attitudes. When a person exhibits a personal deficient attitude, they are emphasizing a person's individual deficit as the primary cause of poverty (Yun & Weaver, 2010). This indicated, that among this sample of practicing school counselors there was a perception that the reason someone is living in poverty corresponds more to limitations or deficits in the individual versus consideration of how stigma and structural factors in our

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society may contribute to poverty. This was parallel to the participating school counselors' attributions related to the perceived reasons persons are living in poverty. In the current sample, school counselors attributed fatalistic and individualistic attributions as important reasons why people live in poverty. These attributions, especially the individualistic attribution for poverty focuses more on the perception that poverty is primarily caused by individual deficits versus societal barriers (Davidson, 2009).

When considered if there is a relationship between self-efficacy and these attitudes and attributions there are differences that are substantial. Specifically, while these attitudes and attributions may impact how school counselors interact with students and their families, they may also influence their beliefs or self-efficacy related to working with these students. Overall, there were indications that school counselors may generally be confident in their ability to perform personal and social, career and academic, collaboration, and cultural acceptance activities with students living in poverty and their families. Despite this identification, respondents showed only being moderately confident in their ability to perform leadership and assessment activities. Lower scores on this subscale may also be due to the push in today's education system for increased accountability measures (Barnes, Scofield, Hof, & Vrbka, 2005). When considered in relation to attitudes and attributions for persons living in poverty, there is the suggestion that school counselors' attitudes toward individuals in poverty corresponded more clearly to self-efficacy than their attributions about reasons people live in poverty. In fact, in this study, attributions failed to effectively predict school counselors' self-efficacy levels. Attributes in this study measured counselors' general beliefs about why a student is living in poverty, whereas, attitudes measured the degree to which the counselor viewed the student in a positive or negative light. The correlation between self-efficacy and attitudes is consistent with past studies which have shown that both attitudes and self-efficacy levels are related to behavior (Bandura, 1977; Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005; Cozzarelli et al., 2001). Attributions help shape attitudes toward the poor (Davidson, 2009), but may have less of an impact on behavior. These finding also highlight the challenge of understanding how counselors' beliefs and attitudes influence or impact their practice.

Several central themes were identified in the open-ended responses. These themes were, "Parental or Student Involvement," "Limited Resources or Services," "Inadequate Services," and "Lack of Training and Preparation." "Parental or Student Involvement" was found to be the most occurring theme. The parental and student involvement theme illustrated concerns school counselors had about engaging or involving parents of students living in poverty, this was identified by the school counselors as the most challenging issue. A central idea across these responses was the idea that these parents might not wish to participate in these activities. This included suggesting that these parents may not focus on or emphasize academic success. These findings suggest the need to help practicing and future school counselors identify methods to assist these families in participating. According to the ASCA National Model, school counselors work "with parents, teachers, administrators, school staff and community stakeholders to promote achievement for a specific student or to promote systemic change to address the needs of groups of students such as underachieving or underrepresented groups of students in the school" (ASCA, 2019, p. 81).

It was not surprising, when considering current research (Cappella et al., 2008; Evans, 2004; Murnane, 2007) that many practicing school counselors working with students living in poverty are working in schools where there are significantly limited resources. The theme of limited resources and services parallels these research findings and was found to be the second most common concern raised by practicing school counselors in this study. This theme included the challenges of trying to assist students academically when there are limited resources (books, tutoring, transportation, computers, and large class sizes) for teachers and students. This corresponded with the identification of limited resources in the community to help support students and schools. These findings continued to mirror the next identified theme that focused on limited and inadequate services. School Counselors identified that when working in schools with high poverty means, academic services and the school counseling program itself are limited. This included limited mental health and social support networks in the community. This only further challenged already overwhelmed school counselors to find resources and help students and their families.

Lack of training was also identified as a significant hurdle for school counselors. This included the challenges of balancing empathy while empowering students, and not simply "feeling sorry for them". Challenges of dealing with teachers or school personnel beliefs or attitudes about students who were dealing with poverty were also discussed. Some school counselors suggested that if these attitudes were negative that they might influence teachers' behavior towards students, influencing their expectations of student outcomes.

School counselors provided recommendations for addressing and dealing with these challenges. Three themes were identified and these focused on training and preparation, multicultural training, and emphasizing building collaborations. The most common of these was providing training for practicing school counselors and school counselors in-training on the development of skills that help prepare them to serve as advocates for their students. This was linked to providing training that was experiential, giving counselors the opportunity to learn about the experiences of their students living in poverty and what programs and services would be needed to assist them. Included in these recommendations were poverty simulation experiences, volunteering, and identifying social programs. Participants also suggested it would be highly beneficial to establish experiences, including practicums and internships, in high need schools to develop skills and awareness of these issues. Similarly, school counselors emphasized that multicultural and diversity training should include the cultural and social experiences of living in poverty. This included awareness of and understanding of societal attitudes and beliefs that are associated with poverty and economic class. The findings highlight the need to include consideration of these aspects and bias towards persons living in poverty. When considered with the finding that

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school counselors in the current study were more likely to focus on individual and personal deficit variables for the reasons for poverty, this supports the need to integrate multicultural training that considers economic class (Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007; Hutchison, 2011). The final theme was focused on collaboration and emphasized training needed to help school counselors develop skills necessary to build collaborations with those in the community and school who can assist students living in poverty.

Limitations

Overall these findings need to be considered in light of some specific limitations. The sample was limited to school counselors in the Southeastern region. In addition, a reliance on self-report measures limits the ability to draw direct reference to actual behavior. Specifically, attitudinal and attribution research is limited in the ability to directly predict or determine actual behavior (Ajzen, 2001; Glasman & Albarracin, 2006). It can be challenging to determine how participants' attitudes and attributions influence their mental health practice.

Recommendations

Overall the studies finding provide a foundation for examining recommendations to better prepare school counselors to address the needs of students living in poverty. School counselors in this study recommended advocacy and experiential preparation for preparing school counselors to work with individuals in poverty. Advocacy and experiential training experiences may provide practicing and in-training school counselors with the ability to develop their skills directly, including methods to enhance collaborations within the community and school, and may address some of their personal attitudes and attributes. By receiving more advocacy and experiential experience, school counselors may feel more prepared to work with this high-risk population (Thomas & Quinlan, 2014). The study also highlights the continued need to integrate economic class into training on multicultural and diversity training. Training on these issues can provide a foundation for developing awareness of attitudes and beliefs about poverty; this includes the impact of poverty on students and their families. School counselor training may also address how societal attitudes influence perceptions and beliefs about poverty.

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Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants

Characteristics		Frequency (n)	Percentage
Gender (N = 271)			
	Female	241	89
	Male	29	11
	Unknown	1	<1
Race/Ethnicity (N = 271)			
	White	217	80
	Black or African American	36	13
	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	1	<1
	Asian	1	<1
	Hispanic or Latino	12	4
	Other	4	2
School SES Category (N = 271)			
	Low Poverty	38	14
	Mid-Low Poverty	58	21
	Mid-High Poverty	77	28
	High Poverty	89	33
	Unknown	9	3
Grade Level * (N = 271)			
	K – 5th	135	43
	6th – 8th	93	30
	9th – 12th	84	27

* Participants were able to select multiple grade level categories to describe their work setting

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Table 2
Regression Findings – Attitudes & Self-Efficacy

	R2	S.E			
		Estimate			
Full Model	.042 a	.483			
Personal Deficiency			.201	.187	.221
Stigma Attitudes			.084	-.044	-.067
Structural Attitudes			-.070	-.036	-.049
Restricted Model	.040c	.482			
Personal Deficiency			.201	.201	.201
Factor			r	Semi-partial	Beta

*p<.05

[a]F(3, 270) = 3.921, p = 0.009

[c]F(1, 270) = 11.285, p = 0.001

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The Experiences of Elementary School Counselors Working with Gifted Students: Utilizing the ASCA National Model

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Abstract
An element of a comprehensive school counseling model is to support students identified as gifted and their unique social, emotional, and behavioral issues that they may face. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the experiences of elementary school counselors working with gifted students within the framework of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model. Researchers conducted a thematic analysis of participants' responses in semi-structured interviews and identified themes related to the participants' counseling practices with gifted students.

Keywords: gifted students, ASCA Model, school counseling, qualitative research

Professional school counselors are called upon to provide counseling services to an extremely diverse population of students with a range of social, emotional, and behavioral needs that individually or collectively may interfere with their ability to learn (Davis, 2015). Ghandour et al. (2019) reported that feelings of anxiety, stress, and aggression are on the rise among children in the U.S. Therefore, today's students experience a myriad of internal and external influences that seem to play a direct role in affecting their academic performance, peer relationships, and general mental health.

In response to addressing the mental health needs of students, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) adopted a position statement encouraging professional school counselors to identify and respond to the need for mental health and behavioral interventions that promote wellness for all students (ASCA, 2015). The mental health needs of students are often unmet in schools around the country (DeKruyf, Auger, & Trice-Black, 2013; Maag & Katsiyannis, 2010). Furthermore, students from diverse cultural groups are even less likely to receive appropriate services (Panigua, 2014).

One cultural subgroup of students within schools who have higher academic abilities, termed gifted, is not immune from needing mental and emotional support from the professional school counselor (Levy & Plucker, 2008). However, these students are regularly overlooked as not needing counseling services in schools (Gibbons & Hughes, 2016). Professional school counselors are leaders and

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