**IMRF Grant Report:**

Psychometric Exploration and Synthesis of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS-8)

**Principal Investigator:**

Gerta Bardhoshi, Ph.D., NCC, CSC, LPC, LMHC, ACS

Associate Professor,

Department of Rehabilitation and Counselor Education

College of Education

N352 Lindquist Center

319-335-5942

[gerta-bardhoshi@uiowa.edu](mailto:gerta-bardhoshi@uiowa.edu)

**Introduction**

The purpose of this IMRF-funded project was to conduct a psychometric evaluation and synthesis of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS) (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa, 1986).

The SPOS consists of 36-item self-report items that measure employee’s global beliefs about their organization’s support of them. While the initial, full-length version of this scale has yielded robust indices of reliability and validity across diverse samples of professionals, the original authors also created a shortened 8-item version. While the SPOS-8 is increasingly being used in studies measuring perceptions of organizational support in human service providers, no study to date had attempted an omnibus psychometric analysis of the SPOS-8 with professionals engaged in emotionally-demanding counseling work, including school counseling.

Conducting a comprehensive psychometric synthesis of published psychometric evidence regarding this scale with human services professionals represented a compelling next step for further refining and validating this shortened version. In the thirty-two years since its development, the SPOS has been utilized in over 160 studies to measure employees’ sense of the organization’s commitment to them, especially in professions with high work demands and emotional investment, such as psychology, teaching, nursing, criminal justice, and child welfare. Our study attempted to examine the psychometric properties of the SPOS with a large national sample of school counselors, and conduct a subsequent psychometric synthesis of all available psychometric data published in the last 20 years on this instrument to a) explore implications of interpretations in using the SPOS-8 with professional school counselors, and b) highlight how the SPOS performs under normal circumstances across cumulative studies. Thus, the PI initiated a large sample (*n* = 1005) study to gather additional data regarding the psychometric characteristics of this instrument with school counselors working in K-12 schools. To date, this is the first study with a sample of counselors examining the SPOS-8, and the resultant data was then included in the psychometric synthesis to bolster combinatorial analyses.

**Results**

The purpose of this proposed study was two-fold: First we examined a large national sample (*n =* 1,005) of professional school counselors utilizing the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS-8) to examine the psychometric properties of SPOS-8 scores. The specific research questions were as follows: (a) What are the descriptive statistics of the SPOS-8 for each item and total score with a national sample of practicing school counselors ?; (b) What is the internal consistency of the SPOS-8 scores for the national sample of practicing school counselors?; (c) Does our sample data support the one-factor model of SPOS-8 as suggested in previous literature?; (d) Does the SPOS-8 indicate measurement invariance across race/ethnicity (i.e., White and racial/ethnic minority school counselors)?; and (e) Do the SPOS-8 scores significantly correlate with measures of school counselor burnout, self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and perceived school principal support? Since this was the first attempt to apply the SPOS-8 to a large national sample of school counselors, we expect our results to be a useful reference for exploring school counselors’ perceived organizational support in the future.

Second, we conducted a synthesis of psychometric evidence published in the last 20 years on the SPOS-8 to answer several important questions: (a) What is the aggregated internal consistency and test-retest reliability of SPOS-8 scores for participants across diverse work settings?; (b) What are the aggregated mean and standard deviation of SPOS-8 scores across diverse occupations? (c) Do the SPOS-8 scores significantly correlate with criterion measures?; and (d) Does available psychometric evidence support the one-factor model of SPOS-8 scores? The conducted psychometric study and synthesis are of value to both practitioners and researchers evaluating whether the SPOS-8 might be an appropriate tool for determining school counselor perceptions of organizational support.

The PI led a research team who reviewed all available published and dissertation studies of the SPOS-8 in the last 20 years, including internal consistency, test-retest reliability, external (convergent) validity with other related instruments, internal (exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis) validity. Inclusion criteria applied to 36 studies using the SPOS-8, including results from a large sample (*n* = 1,005) original study conducted by the PI to evaluate the psychometric characteristics of this instrument with practicing professional school counselors.

Psychometric properties of the SPOS-8 scores examined with a national sample of school counselors (*n* = 1,005) displayed good internal consistency (*α* = .92). CFA using MLR for the modified one-factor model revealed a robust fit of the data x2 (17) = 86.57 (p < .001); CFI = .973; TLI = .956; RMSEA = .064 [90% CI: .044-.087]; and SRMR = .027, with the absolute values of standardized factor loadings ranging from .69 to .89. Results also supported convergent and discriminant validity with four other scales. Measurement invariance was evident for White and racial/ethnic minority school counselors.

Aggregated internal consistency when all studies were weighted and then averaged was α = .88 (*n* = 21,394) and test-retest reliability (rtt = .54; n = 688; j = 3; mean interval = 2.14 years). Convergent comparisons were robust across 22 instruments, and the one-factor structure of the SPOS-8 was supported. Norms from aggregate samples were included in the synthesis and were created to facilitate score interpretation for use by human service professionals.

**Specific Work Products**

**\*** *represents student author*

* **Bardhoshi, G**., Erford, B. T., & Um., B.\* (under review). Psychometric Synthesis of the Counselor Burnout Inventory. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*
* **Bardhoshi, G.**, Erford, B.T. & Um., B.\* (In press). Psychometric Analysis of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS-8) Using 1005 School Counselors. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development.*