

Running head: CSI MEMBERSHIP

It's Not Just Another Line on Your Resume...

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Note: This study was partially funded the Chi Sigma Iota Chapter Kappa Sigma Upsilon, and the Graduate Student Senate, at Kent State University

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Originating in the late 1800s, the profession of counseling took almost a century before it was officially considered a “profession.” To be considered a profession specific criteria must be met, including having a specific body of knowledge with recognized training programs that are accredited, professional organizations that include peers, legal and ethical policies, licensure standards, and supervised clinical training – just to mention a few (Hollis, 2000; Myers & Sweeney, 2001). Although the profession of counseling is now considered to be an “official profession,” it was not a quick or easy journey to achieve this status. As Sweeney (2001) reported, we, as a profession, have been lucky to have a “rich history...[of] strong leaders” that devoted time and energy into promoting and furthering our profession (p. 18). These leaders began with Jessie B. Davis, the first individual who attempted to make a guidance system part of a school curriculum in the late 1800s (Sweeney, 2001), and paved the way for today’s counseling leaders.

Typically, when one hears the word “leader” the definition or image that jumps to mind is one of a president of an organization, such as the American Counseling Association (ACA), Southern Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors (SACES), or a state level counseling association. However, leaders are not necessarily individuals who take leadership positions, but also can include people who are “behind the scenes” who are contributing to the counseling field through advocacy, service, research, and/or education.

Advocacy has been defined as an action that is “aimed at benefiting clients and/or the profession” (Engles & Bradley, 2001, p. 92) and includes “social activism as well as the promotion of the profession” (Myers & Sweeney, 2004, p. 466). Advocacy has helped to bring about our professional identity, definition of a professional counselor, national certification, state licensure, national accreditation for education programs, and more (Myers, Sweeney, & White, 2002). Although our profession has come a long way, we still have a challenging journey ahead of us. According to Myers, Sweeney, and White (2002) and Myers and Sweeney (2004), we still need advocates to publicize our profession and the services we provide, and to pursue legislative action.

Advocacy occurs through service, research, and education. According to Collison (2001) professional associations can help with advocacy for counselors and the future of the counseling profession. The majority of professional counseling organizations include a statement encouraging advocacy for the profession. One such professional association is Chi Sigma Iota (CSI). CSI originated in 1985 as a response to feelings of a lost professional identity in the field of counseling (Sweeney, 2001). Although the majority of professional counseling organizations include statements on advocacy, CSI is one of the few that incorporates advocacy and professional scholarship into its mission statement. CSI’s mission is “to promote scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership and excellence in counseling, and to recognize high attainment in the pursuit of academic and clinical excellence in the profession of counseling” (CSI, n.d.). CSI encourages and commends professionals, including students, educators, and practitioners, who have a commitment to research and service that strengthens and advocates for the profession of

counseling – including clients, professionals, *and* the profession as a whole (e.g., Beta Upsilon, 2004; Gladding, 2002; Myers, 2002).

CSI stresses advocacy by stating six advocacy themes that encourage education programs to ensure students graduate with a clear professional identity and sense of pride as a counselor; professionals to advocate within the counseling profession, as well as across other professions, for the advancement of counseling; professionals to promote the field of counseling and services provided through scientifically sound research; and to promote wellness and prevention as a main philosophy in which we perceive our clients and live our daily lives (CSI, 1998). Overall, CSI is an association that views one of the most important endeavors of advocating for our profession as “promoting of excellence in the profession of counseling,” which is the header that exists on their website (www.csi-net.org).

CSI has made the statement that being a member of CSI is “not just another line on your resume.” Although professional counseling organizations, particularly CSI, have stressed promoting excellence, advocating for our profession, and a commitment to the profession of counseling through research and service, no research has ever examined if this mission statement is true for members of the association. The current study was originally part of larger project examining leadership styles within the profession of counseling; however, one of the questions asked on the original survey was “Are you a current (dues paying) member of CSI?” This question allowed analyses to be conducted to examine the differences in advocacy (measured by scholarship and service positions) between CSI and non-CSI members.

The reason for the inquiry is two-fold. First, although professional associations have been found to stress advocacy for the profession (Collison, 2001), no research has been conducted that examines whether membership to an organization is related to advocacy for the profession. And second, CSI was specifically examined because through its mission statement, leadership excellence, and advocacy themes, CSI promotes and supports advocacy for our profession, ourselves as counselors, and our clients through service and research. Thus, the purpose of this paper was to examine the impact of professional association membership, specifically CSI, on research and service – two aspects of advocacy for the profession.

Thus, the current research questions being examined in this paper are (a) are CSI members significantly different in the amount of research and service they engage in than non-CSI members? and (b) is membership to a professional organization, such as CSI, related to the amount of research and service an individual engages in?

Methods

Sample

The sample consisted of 800 members from the Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) membership database. Permission to access this database was given

by the American Counseling Association. The researchers systematically randomly selected every fifth member from the ACES database, cycling through the database two times, resulting in 800 participants. Approval to use human subjects in the current study was granted by Kent State University's Institutional Review Board.

Instruments

For the current research questions, the demographics form was used. Participants were asked to report whether they were currently a dues paying member of CSI, along with reporting the number of positions they have held-excluding CSI specific positions (including presidential positions, committee members of various organizations, directors or project coordinators), presentations at conferences, and publications (including peer-reviewed, online, newsletters, etc). Other instruments were used to collect other information from participants for leadership styles and counselor characteristics for the purpose of the main study, but were not used in this study.

Administration Process

The self-administered surveys were estimated to take 40-minutes to complete. Participants received three separate mailings. The first mailing included an informed consent letter, the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), Counselor Characteristic Inventory (CCI), a demographic form, and a pre-addressed postage-paid return envelope for the survey. The second mailing occurred two weeks after the initial mailing of the surveys and contained a letter reminding them of the survey and providing contact information if they needed a replacement survey. The third mailing, which also contained a reminder letter, occurred five weeks after the initial mailing (three weeks after the second mailing). Participants were mailed a replacement survey if they requested one.

Data analysis

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to examine the differences in the amount of research, scholarship, and service engaged in by doctoral students, counselor educators, and practitioners, because these were the main respondents of the survey. It was determined that these differences needed to be examined prior to examining the research questions in order to verify if each of the groups (i.e., counselor roles) needed to be examined separately, and not as an entire sample, due to the amount of activity they reported. Independent t-tests were used to examine the differences between CSI members and non-CSI members in research, scholarship, and service. Finally, a multiple regression was used to examine the relationship that existed between CSI membership and research, scholarship, and service while controlling for demographic variables.

Results

The final sample consisted of 232 participants from the field of counseling (29% response rate). Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondents were female. Table 1 shows the

demographic breakdown for both CSI and non-CSI members. The majority of respondents were Caucasian (88%), with 3% identifying themselves as African American, 2% as Hispanic, 4% as other. Less than 1% of participants identified themselves as Asian American, Native American, or Pacific Islander. Participants ranged from 26 to 83 years old, with a mean age of 48.59 (SD=12.29). The majority of respondents had their master's (n=113, 49%) and doctoral (n=110, 48%) degrees, with 8 participants reporting having only received their bachelor's degree at the time of the survey.

Table 1
Demographics of CSI members (n=60), non-CSI members (n=166) and total sample (N=232)

	CSI Member		Non-CSI Member		Total Sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Sex						
Male	26	43.3%	60	36.1%	87	37.5%
Female	34	56.7%	106	63.9%	144	62.1%
Race						
Caucasian	57	95.0%	144	86.2%	205	88.4%
Asian American	1	1.7%	1	.6%	2	.9%
African American	2	3.3%	4	2.4%	6	2.6%
Native American	0	0.0%	2	1.2%	2	.9%
Hispanic	0	0.0%	4	2.4%	5	2.2%
Pacific Islander	0	0.0%	1	.6%	1	.4%
Other	0	0.0%	9	5.4%	9	3.9%
Primary Role						
Master's Student	1	1.7%	9	5.4%	10	4.3%
Doctoral Student	13	21.7%	21	12.6%	34	14.7%
Assistant Professor	16	26.7%	24	14.4%	42	18.1%
Associate Professor	7	11.7%	13	7.8%	21	9.1%
Full Professor	10	16.7%	16	9.6%	26	11.2%
Practicing Clinician	11	18.3%	80	47.9%	93	40.1%
Retired	2	3.3%	2	1.2%	6	2.6%
Highest Degree Completed						
BA	1	1.7%	5	3.0%	8	3.4%
MA/MS	22	36.7%	90	53.9%	113	48.7%
PhD	37	61.7%	71	42.8%	110	47.4%
Age						
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
	47.71	(10.98)	49.06	(12.21)	48.59	(12.29)

Although the sample originated from the ACES membership database, participants in the current sample were well-distributed across roles in the field of counseling. Participants were asked to indicate their primary role in the field of counseling. Nineteen percent of respondents reported that they were currently enrolled in a master's ($n = 10$) or doctoral ($n = 34$) program. Over one-third (38%) of participants reported being a counselor educator (42 assistant, 21 associate, 26 full professors), with 40% reporting being a practicing clinician and 3% being retired from the counseling profession. Thirty-seven participants out of the 232 indicated that they counseled part-time as an additional role; however, their main role was that of master's student ($n = 6$), doctoral student ($n = 12$), assistant professor ($n = 11$), associate professor ($n = 5$) or full professor ($n = 3$). Because being a practicing counselor was not the main role for these 37 participants, only the primary role was used for analysis purposes.

Sixty of the participants (26.4%) reported being a current, dues paying, members of CSI (see Table 1). These members were spread out across all of the counseling roles, including students, educators, and practitioners. Prior to attempting to answer the research questions, doctoral students, counselor educators, and practicing counselors were examined to determine if differences existed in the amount of research, scholarship, and service they engaged in (see Table 2). The current authors thought it was imperative to explore if differences did exist between roles in counseling in order to determine if groups needed to be analyzed separately for research question one (differences in research and service among CSI and non-CSI members).

Table 2 reveals that significant differences exist between counselor educators and doctoral students and practicing counselors in the number of presentations, publications, and positions held. Counselor educators reported significantly more activity in each of these areas than did students and practitioners. However, doctoral students and practitioners did not significantly differ in any of the areas of research and service.

Table 2

ANOVA examining differences in research and service among educators, students, and practicing counselors within the entire sample ($N=197$)

	Doctoral Students ($n=34$)		Counselor Educators ($n=89$)		Practicing Counselors ($n=93$)		F
	Mean	(SD)	Mean	(SD)	Mean	(SD)	
# presentations	6.15	(7.32) ^a	30.60	(34.65) ^b	3.60	(5.21) ^a	31.25*
# positions	6.00	(8.38) ^a	15.07	(20.98) ^b	3.93	(6.86) ^a	12.62*
# publications	3.97	(6.31) ^a	28.75	(48.74) ^b	2.58	(5.46) ^a	15.36*

*Note: * $p < .0001$; different letters (i.e., a,b) signify groups were significantly different in post hoc Schéffe analyses*

The significant differences that were found in the ANOVAs (Table 2) indicated that each of the groups needed to be examined separately when answering the first research question, “Are CSI members significantly different in the amount of research and service they engage in than non-CSI members?” In order to answer this question, independent t-tests were utilized. Along with examining differences between doctoral students, counselor educators, and practitioners individually, the entire sample was used to fully answer this question (see Table 3). The Levene test for homogeneity was used to examine if the assumption of equal variance was met due to unequal sample sizes between CSI and non-CSI members.

Table 3
Independent t-test on service and research for CSI and non-CSI members

	CSI Member			Non-CSI Member			t
	N	Mean	(SD)	N	Mean	(SD)	
# of positions							
<i>Entire Sample</i>	60	16.29	(24.33)	166	6.22	(9.53)	2.76**
Doctoral	13	6.25	(5.49)	21	5.85	(9.78)	.13
Students							
Counseling	33	22.60	(28.42)	53	10.36	(11.91)	2.34*
Educators							
Practicing	11	3.20	(4.54)	80	3.85	(6.96)	-.28
Clinicians							
# professional presentations							
<i>Entire Sample</i>	60	27.50	(37.79)	166	11.23	(18.98)	3.10**
Doctoral	13	6.67	(6.99)	21	5.86	(7.65)	.30
Students							
Counseling	33	42.12	(43.28)	53	24.48	(25.68)	2.10*
Educators							
Practicing	11	3.38	(2.85)	80	3.68	(5.43)	-.15
Clinicians							
# of publications							
<i>Entire Sample</i>	60	25.82	(55.65)	166	9.02	(18.71)	2.14*
Doctoral	13	6.33	(7.71)	21	2.47	(4.89)	1.71 ⁺
Students							
Counseling	33	39.87	(69.90)	53	22.61	(27.20)	1.35
Educators							
Practicing	11	3.88	(3.75)	80	2.10	(4.94)	1.04
Clinicians							

Note: **p<.01; *p<.05; ⁺p<.10

Using the sample as a whole¹, CSI members were compared to non-CSI members using independent t-tests. CSI members were significantly more likely to held more positions, conducted professional presentations, and have published more articles than non-CSI members ($t(2,203) = 2.76, p < .01$; $t(2,204) = 3.10, p < .01$; $t(2,204) = 2.14, p < .05$, respectfully; see Table 3).

When examining counseling roles separately², significant differences were still found for the number of presentations and positions held between CSI members and non-CSI members for counselor educators ($t(2,79) = 2.10, p < .05$; $t(2,78) = 2.34, p < .05$, respectfully), with CSI members publishing and holding more positions than non-CSI members. However, when examining counselor educators, no significant differences were found between CSI members and non-CSI members in the number of publications ($t(2,80) = 1.35, p > .05$). Even though a statistically significant difference was not found for publications, when examining the mean number of publications counselor educators who are members of CSI reported 17 more publications than non-CSI members (see Table 3).

Although doctoral students and practicing counselors were not found to significantly differ on research and service based on CSI membership, overall, CSI members tended to engage in more research (i.e., publications and presentations) and service (positions held) than non-CSI members. The only exceptions include the number of presentations and positions held by practicing counselors. But even practicing counselors who are CSI members reported publishing more than non-CSI members, although this difference was not significant.

In order to examine the relationship between CSI membership and the amount of service and research engaged in by participants, three separate linear regressions were used (positions, publications, and presentations) with demographic information being controlled for (Table 4). Due to the small number of participants within each counseling role, the entire sample was used to examine this relationship.

In the first regression examining the number of service positions one has, or currently is holding, the model explained 16% of the variance. Sex, age, and race were not found to be significantly related to the number of positions one has held; however, degree and being a CSI member was found to be significantly related ($\beta = .25, t = 3.55, p < .001$; $\beta = .24, t = 3.67, p < .001$, respectfully). This indicates, taking the sample as a whole, participants with a doctorate were more likely to hold positions than participants with a

¹ The Levene test of homogeneity was significant for each of the dependent variables ($F=19.75, p < .01$ for presentations; $F=21.99, p < .01$ for positions held; $F=16.15, p < .01$ for publications) when examining the *entire sample*. Thus, t-test results were used that did not assume equal variances between groups for the *entire sample* (each group was tested for homogeneity separately).

² The Levene test of homogeneity was not found to be significant for doctoral students or for practitioners, thus t-test results assuming equal variance among groups was used for these two groups. However, the Levene test of homogeneity was found to be significant for counselor educators, thus, t-test results that did not assume equal variances between groups is reported.

BA/MA degree, as well as individuals who reported being a CSI member were significantly more likely to hold positions than non-CSI members.

In the second regression model, 26.5% of the variance in the number of professional presentations was explained by demographic and CSI membership. Males were found to report significantly more presentations than females ($\beta = .19, t = 2.98, p < .05$). Similar to the number of positions held, degree and CSI membership was found to be significantly related to the number of professional presentations ($\beta = .35, t = 5.26, p < .001$; $\beta = .21, t = 3.36, p < .001$, respectfully). Age and race were not found to be significantly related to number of presentations.

Table 4

Relationship between CSI membership (yes/no), service, and research within the entire sample (N=232)

	Unstandardized B	Std Error	Standardized Beta	t	Adjusted R ²
# of positions					
(Constant)	8.35	5.24		1.59	
Sex (<i>reference: female</i>)	2.44	2.28	.07	1.07	
Age	.09	.10	.07	.98	
Race (<i>reference: Caucasian</i>)	.14	3.63	.00	.04	
Degree (<i>reference: BA/MA</i>)	8.08	2.27	.25	3.55***	
CSI Member (<i>reference: No</i>)	8.71	2.37	.24	3.67***	.158
# of presentations					
(Constant)	19.42	8.09		2.40	
Sex (<i>reference: female</i>)	10.59	3.55	.19	2.98*	
Age	.04	.15	.02	.30	
Race (<i>reference: Caucasian</i>)	9.87	5.66	.11	1.74	
Degree (<i>reference: BA/MA</i>)	18.57	3.53	.35	5.26***	
CSI Member (<i>reference: No</i>)	12.61	3.75	.21	3.36**	.264
# of publications					
(Constant)	1.95	11.09		.18	
Sex (<i>reference: female</i>)	11.33	4.74	.16	2.39*	
Age	.43	.21	.15	2.09*	
Race (<i>reference: Caucasian</i>)	5.91	7.53	.05	.78	
Degree (<i>reference: BA/MA</i>)	15.33	4.87	.22	3.16**	
CSI Member (<i>reference: No</i>)	14.78	5.06	.19	2.91**	.178

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

When examining the number of publications in the third regression, males were found to report significantly more publications ($\beta = .16, t = 2.39, p < .05$), along with participants who were older ($\beta = .15, t = 2.09, p < .05$). Again, degree and CSI membership were

found to be significantly related to the number of publications, ($\beta = .22, t = 3.16, p < .01$; $\beta = .19, t = 2.91, p < .01$, respectfully), with the CSI members and individuals with PhDs reporting significantly more publications than non-CSI members and BA/MA degrees. Demographics and CSI membership accounted for 18% of the variance in publications.

Discussion

In the present study the authors were able to answer the question about whether or not members of CSI engaged in a greater amount of research and service, as defined by publications, presentations, and organizational positions, than other professionals. Overall, CSI members were found to publish, present, and hold more service positions than non-CSI members. In the majority of the analyses, CSI members were found to engage in significantly more of these activities than non-CSI members. Even in the analyses that did not result in statistical significance, CSI members still reported considerably more research and held more service positions than non-CSI members. In addition, CSI membership was found to significantly relate to service positions and research, accounting for 16% to 26% of the variance (along with demographics). Thus, CSI membership seems to hold an important role in the activity and advocacy for our profession.

Specifically, being a member of CSI is not “just another line on your resume,” but instead, CSI seems to stay true to its original purpose, which is stated on CSI’s webpage (n.d.) and affirms that CSI was “established for counselors-in-training, counselor educators, and professional counselors whose career commitment is to research and service through professional counseling.” Although it can not be determined in the current sample as to whether individuals who already advocate for our profession through service and research join CSI, or membership in CSI encourages individuals to participate in service and research – CSI stays true to its mission statement to “promote scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership and excellence in counseling.”

Overall, when examining the entire sample, it was found that being a CSI member was significantly related to a higher number of publications, professional presentations, and number of positions held. Also, it was found that CSI members reported a significantly greater number of all three compared to non-CSI members. When examining doctoral students, educators, and practicing counselors separately a few differences emerged. Counselor educators, who were members of CSI, were found to report significantly more presentations and held more service positions than non-CSI members, yet no significant differences were found in the number of publications. A possible reason for the lack of significance in publications may be due to the requirements of most counselor educators to conduct research and publish their findings in order to move toward promotion and tenure. Thus, for this aspect of advocacy, it may not matter if one is a member of CSI, or any other professional association for that matter. However, for presentations and service requirements, it may be that requirements differ between universities for promotion and tenure requirements. For example, service may not necessarily consist of elected or unelected positions in professional associations or agencies.

In addition, doctoral students and practicing clinicians did not significantly differ in the amount of publications, presentations, or positions held between being a member, or not, of CSI. With only a total of 34 doctoral students between two groups, it may have been difficult to find a significant difference if one existed. It is not surprising that doctoral students were not found to differ in the amount of research and service conducted due to doctoral students being new in the profession and just beginning to work toward advocacy. It is promising, however, to see that even though the differences were not significant, doctoral students who were CSI members engaged in a higher level of research and service than non-members.

Membership in CSI did not result in significant differences for practicing counselors either, and, surprisingly, non-members were found to hold a greater number of positions and conduct more presentations. The lack of significance found among practicing clinicians may be due to the way that service and research were measured in this particular study. The number of positions, and conducting presentations and writing publications, may not be the way that practicing clinicians advocate for our profession. As mentioned earlier, advocacy includes advocating for the professional as a whole, for ourselves as counselors, and for our clients. Counselors, in general, may spend more time advocating for their clients, as well as their positions as counselors and the services they offered. As Myers and Sweeney (2004) reported, counselors in general reported that the areas in which they needed the most advocacy was publicizing the services they offered and professional identity. Thus, professional counselors may spend more time advocating for licensure, service definitions, and talking to local congressmen and senators rather than holding positions and conducting research and presenting it through presentations and publications.

Another interesting result that arose, unrelated to actual CSI membership, was the relationship between biological sex and the number of publications and presentations (see Table 4). In this sample, males were found to publish and present more than females. Roland and Fontanesi-Seime (1996) reported similar results from the U.S. Department of Education's National study that indicated that when controlling for rank and type of institution, male academicians published more than female academicians at a 2 to 1 ratio. The results from the current study, along with previous research, indicate a need for mentoring in the area of research for female counselor educators in our profession. The idea of mentoring, specifically for females in higher education, has been a topic of research and discussion during the last decade (e.g., Heward, 1996; Pistole, 1994).

There were limitations to the current study. One was the low response rate, thus, limiting generalizability to the profession as a whole. However, it should be noted that this was a national sample that included participants from a variety of roles in our profession. A second limitation was using only three measures of advocacy – number of presentations, publications, and position held. There are many different aspects of advocacy in our profession, including political and/or social activism, lobbying, promoting wellness, and spreading the word about our profession and its philosophy of development, prevention, and wellness. Thus, future research should examine advocacy in its entirety, as well as examine the membership of more than just one professional association, along with

assessing training in the area of advocacy. In addition, it might be important to examine advocacy and membership to professional associations longitudinally to determine if active professionals join professional associations, or if membership to professional associations encourage and initiate advocacy. The amount and type of advocacy training may also be a factor.

Overall, it is a beginning to see that members of CSI, in general, tend to engage in more presentations, publish more, and hold more positions than non-members – as this is consistent with the mission of CSI. Along with finding different ways to study advocacy to determine what some next steps are for professional associations such as CSI, maybe one of the next steps is to determine how to get the other professionals in counseling to join professional associations and become greater advocates for our profession, seeing that 74% of the current sample reported not being a current member of CSI. Imagine how far we could extend the impact of our profession if the entire population of counselors, counselor educators, and students consistently advocated for counseling professionals and the diverse array of clients we serve!

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