

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of this chapter is to present an overview of the study, summary of findings, conclusions, discussion, and recommendations.

Summary of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to identify the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors toward the importance of the counselor's role and the performance of public secondary school counselors in the Province of East Java, Indonesia. More specifically, the purpose of the study is to identify the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors on how important the role of school counselors and how often school counselors perform their role in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance. The study is also aimed at identifying the relationships between the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors toward the importance of the counselor's role and the performance of school counselors; differences in the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors with regard to region, gender, school location, level of work experience, and field of study; the extent of utilization of counseling services by students and teachers; problems brought by students and teachers to school counselors; the level of students' and teachers' satisfaction toward counseling services; and the barriers faced by school counselors.

To achieve the above purposes, a survey method, that is a descriptive exploratory study was used. The population to which the findings of this study might be generalized is all students, teachers, and counselors in the Province of East Java. The respondents of this study consisted of 401 students, 211 teachers, and 99 counselors. The respondents were drawn from four regions in the Province of East Java (Surabaya, Malang, Madiun, and Jember) using a simple random sampling technique. This technique enabled the researcher to give every member of the population an equal chance of being chosen to be in the sample.

The following demographic and personal data were treated as independent variables: region, school location, gender, field of study, and level of work experience. The dependent variable was the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors toward the importance of the counselor's role and the performance of school counselors.

A modified version of the Counselor Role Assessment Survey (CRAS) developed by See (1996) was used. The instrument was translated into Indonesian and the Indonesian version of the CRAS together with a letter of introduction and a self-addressed stamped envelope was sent to the selected school principals. Of the 880 questionnaires sent, 763 were returned. Of the 763 returned questionnaires, 711 were completely answered. The 711 usable questionnaires that were finally used accounted for 80 percent of the total number of respondents.

Summary of Findings

The findings of the study are summarized in the following headings.

1. Perception of students, teachers, and counselors toward the importance of the counselor's role

Generally, students and teachers perceived the role of school counselors in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance as either important or very important. Counselors, on the other hand, viewed these functions as very important roles of the school counselors.

Significant differences exist between the perceptions of students and teachers, and between the perceptions of students and counselors but there were no significant differences in the perceptions of counselors and teachers regarding the importance of the counselor's role in providing personal and educational guidance. However, there were no significant differences in the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors toward the importance of the counselor's role in providing vocational guidance.

In an attempt to define the professional role of public secondary school counselors in the Province of East Java, students, teachers, and counselors perceived the role of school counselors to include the following functions.

a. Personal guidance

The following 11 functions were perceived as very important roles of the school counselors by students, teachers, and counselors:

- i. meeting with students to address developmental needs (e.g. social skills, problem-solving skills, decision-making skills).
- ii. counseling students to resolve a problem (e.g. family conflicts, drugs, interpersonal relationship problems).
- iii. counseling students who are facing disciplinary action.
- iv. working with parents/guardians to resolve a student's problem.
- v. working with students to facilitate self-awareness (e.g. personality, interest, abilities) and/or understanding of others.
- vi. conducting special programs to meet the specific needs of students (e.g. truancy, drug abuse, smoking).
- vii. administering psychological tests (interest tests, personality tests, IQ tests) to students.
- viii. interpreting and communicating assessment results to teachers, parents/guardians, and students.
- ix. consulting with teachers and parents/guardians about the needs or concerns of students.
- x. providing individual students the opportunity to talk through their problems.
- xi. helping students to make wise decisions without imposing his or her own ideas on the students' potential.

Two of the following functions were viewed as important roles of the school counselors by students, teachers, and counselors

- i. training and using students as helpers in peer counseling programs.

- ii. counseling teachers regarding personal concerns.

Students and teachers felt the following two functions as important roles, while counselors felt them as very important.

- i. referring students with special needs (e.g. health, finance, addiction) to other professional or community agencies.
- ii. conducting group counseling on social and emotional adjustments.

b. Educational guidance

Students, teachers, and counselors perceived the following four functions as very important roles of school counselors:

- i. meeting with students to discuss academic matters.
- ii. helping students in selecting courses or further studies.
- iii. providing students with educational information.
- iv. helping students to plan steps to take in furthering their education.

The following function was perceived as an important role of school counselors by students, teachers, and counselors: conducting follow-up studies of students after they have moved away or promoted into higher grades.

Students and teachers perceived the following functions as important, while counselors felt they were very important.

- i. conducting workshops for students to help them develop academic skills (e.g. time management skills, study skills, test-taking skills).

- ii. making classroom placement of students with special abilities or needs.
- iii. conducting follow-up of new students to determine their academic adjustments to school.

Teachers and counselors perceived the following functions as very important, while students felt them as important.

- i. establishing and maintaining open lines of communication with administrators, teachers, parents, and students concerning the academic progress of students (e.g. dialogues, letters).
- ii. conducting individual conferences with children who are not achieving well in school.

Students and teachers perceived administering to an individual or a large group of students ability tests to assess students' ability level to pursue higher education, as very important, while counselors felt it as only important.

Students and counselors felt that administering to an individual or a large group of students an achievement test to assess students' achievement level as an important role, while teachers felt it as very important.

Teachers and counselors reported that organizing an in-service training program for teachers as an important role, while students felt it as only slightly important.

c. Vocational guidance

Students, teachers, and counselors felt the following three functions as very important:

- i. meeting with students to discuss career information and/or to help them in career planning.
- ii. providing vocational information to students wishing to explore careers.
- iii. helping students relate their abilities to future career choices.

Students, teachers, and counselors felt the following functions as important:

- i. conducting workshops for students to help them develop resume writing, interview and job seeking skills.
- ii. assisting students to seek employment (part-time or full-time employment).
- iii. administering to an individual or a large group of students a career inventory to assess students' career potential.
- iv. consulting with community agencies (education departments, social services departments) about job vacancies.
- v. planning activities (discussions, field trips) to stimulate interest in the world of work.

Counselors felt that providing information on the qualifications needed for jobs is very important, while teachers and students felt it as only important.

2. Perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors toward the performance of school counselors

Counselors felt that school counselors often performed their roles and functions in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance, while teachers viewed that school counselors often performed personal and educational guidance, but only sometimes provided vocational guidance. Students, on the other hand, felt that school counselors only sometimes performed their roles in providing the three services.

There were significant differences in the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors toward the performance of school counselors in providing the three functions, namely, personal, educational, and vocational guidance. Counselors felt that school counselors more frequently performed the three roles compared to teachers and students.

In an attempt to determine the performance status of Public secondary school counselors in the Province of East Java, students, teachers, and counselors rated the counselor's performance in providing each role from never performing to always performing the roles as shown in the following section:

a. Personal guidance

Students, teachers, and counselors felt school counselors either always or often performed the following functions:

- i. counseling students to resolve a problem (e.g. family conflicts, drugs, interpersonal relationship problems).
- ii. counseling students who are facing disciplinary action.
- iii. working with parents/guardians to resolve students' problem.
- iv. working with students to facilitate self-awareness (e.g. personality, interest, abilities) and/or understanding of others.
- v. interpreting and communicating assessment results to teachers, parents/guardians, and students.
- vi. providing individual students the opportunity to talk through their problems.
- vii. helping students to make wise decision without imposing his or her own ideas on their potential.

Teachers and counselors felt school counselors either always or often performed the following functions, while students felt school counselors only sometimes performed the functions:

- i. meeting with students to address developmental needs (e.g. social skills, problem-solving skills, decision-making skills).
- ii. conducting special programs to meet the specific needs of the students (e.g. truancy, drug abuse, smoking).
- iii. administering psychological tests (interest tests, personality tests, IQ tests) to students.
- iv. consulting with teachers and parents/guardians about the needs or concerns of students.

Students, teachers, and counselors felt that school counselors either only sometimes or rarely performed the following functions:

- i. training and using students as helpers in peer counseling programs.
- ii. counseling teachers regarding personal concerns.
- iii. referring students with special needs (e.g. health, finance, addiction) to other professional or community agencies.
- iv. conducting group counseling on social and emotional adjustments.

b. Educational guidance

Students, teachers, and counselors felt that school counselors either always or often performed the following functions:

- i. meeting with students to discuss academic matters.
- ii. helping students in selecting courses or further study.
- iii. providing students with educational information.
- iv. helping students to plan steps to take in furthering their education.

Students, teachers, and counselors reported that school counselors only sometimes performed the following functions:

- i. administering to an individual or a large group of students achievement tests to assess students' achievement levels.
- ii. administering to an individual or a large group of students ability tests to assess students' ability levels to pursue higher education.

Teachers and counselors felt that school counselors either always or often performed the following three functions, while students reported they only sometimes performed the functions:

- i. establishing and maintaining open lines of communication with administrators, teachers, parents, and students concerning the academic progress of students (e.g. dialogues, letters).
- ii. conducting individual conferences with children who are not achieving well in school.
- iii. making classroom placement of students with special abilities or needs.

Students and teachers felt school counselors only sometimes performed the following functions, while counselors reported they often performed the functions:

- i. conducting a workshop for students to help them develop academic skills (e.g. time management skills, study skills, test-taking skills).
- ii. conducting follow-up studies on students after they have moved away or into higher grades.
- iii. conducting follow-ups of new students to determine academic adjustments to school.

Teachers and counselors felt school counselors rarely performed their roles in organizing in-service training programs for teachers, while students felt school counselors never performed it.

c. Vocational guidance

Students, teachers, and counselors felt school counselors always performed their role in helping students relate their abilities to future career choices.

Teachers and counselors felt school counselors often performed the following three functions, while students felt school counselors only sometimes performed the functions:

- i. meeting with students to discuss career information and/or to help a student in career planning.
- ii. providing vocational information to students wishing to explore careers.
- iii. providing information on the qualifications needed for jobs.

Students, teachers, and counselors felt school counselors either only sometimes or rarely performed the following functions:

- i. conducting workshops for students to help them develop resume writing, interview and job seeking skills.
- ii. assisting students to seek employment (part-time or full-time employment).
- iii. administering to an individual or a large group of students a career inventory to assess students' career potential.
- iv. consulting with community agencies (education departments, social services department) about job vacancies.
- v. planning activities (discussions, field trips) to stimulate interest in the world of work.

3. Correlation between the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors toward the importance and the performance of counselor's role

There is a significant relationship, although not very high, between the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors toward the importance of the counselor's role and the performance of school counselors in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance.

4. Comparison between the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors toward the importance of counselor's role and the performance of school counselors

The comparison is made according to region, school location, gender, field of study, and level of work experience.

a. Regions

There are no significant differences between the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors from different regions (Surabaya, Malang, Madiun, and Jember) toward the importance of the counselor's role and the performance of school counselors in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance.

b. School location

There were no significant differences in the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors from urban and rural locations toward the importance of the counselor's role in providing personal and vocational guidance. However, a significant difference was detected in their perceptions toward the importance of the counselor's role in providing educational guidance. Urban respondents felt that providing

educational guidance is an important role of school counselors, while rural respondents viewed it as a very important function.

There were no significant differences in the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors from urban and rural locations toward the performance of counselors in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance.

c. Gender

There were no significant differences in the perceptions of male and female respondents toward the importance of the counselor's role in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance.

There were significant differences in the perceptions of male and female respondents toward the performance of counselors in providing personal and educational guidance, but there were no significant differences in their perceptions toward the performance of counselors in providing vocational guidance.

d. Field of study

There were no significant differences in the perceptions Science and Social Studies students toward the importance of the counselor's role in providing educational and vocational guidance, but a significant difference was detected in their perceptions toward the importance of the counselor's role in providing personal guidance.

There were significant differences in the perception of Science and Social studies students toward the performance of counselors in providing personal and educational guidance, but there were no significant differences in their perceptions toward the performance of counselors in providing vocational guidance.

e. Level of work experience

The four groups of teachers and counselors with different levels of work experience did not differ in their perceptions toward the importance of the school counselor's role in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance.

Teachers and counselors with different levels of work experience did not differ in their perceptions toward the performance of school counselors in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance.

5. Utilization of counseling services by students and teachers

The findings of the study indicate, in general, teachers utilized the counseling services more than students. More than half of the teachers (62.1%) have seen the school counselors for counseling or consultation. Surprisingly, only 38.4 % of students have utilized the counseling services in the last four months. Students are usually expected to see the counselors as the counseling programs are set to help mainly the students.

The findings also show that most of the students and teachers have met the school counselors 1 to 3 times and a small number of them had met the school counselors 4

times or over. As a source of help in solving problems, parents were ranked first, friends second and counselors third by students. This would be a good explanation for the lack of visits by students to their counselors, as they prefer to see other people.

6. Problems brought by students and teachers to school counselor

The findings of the study indicate that students and teachers brought different problems to the school counselors. The nature of problems faced by students can be categorized into three main categories: personal, academic, and career/vocational. For problems under the personal category, students frequently discussed spending leisure time, interpersonal relationship, family and stress. For problems under the academic category, students frequently discussed study techniques, preparing for examination, course selection, and discipline, while for problems under the career category, they frequently discussed about finding jobs, job interviews and writing resumes. Teachers, on the other hand, frequently discussed about academic, curriculum, personal, family, and career problems with school counselors.

7. Levels of students' and teachers' satisfaction toward counseling services

The results of the study indicate that a majority of students and teachers were satisfied with the counseling services provided by school counselors. The school counselor was seen as the person who can provide valuable assistance to students and teachers. One of the reasons for this satisfaction is that the counselors were able

to establish a healthy communication and interaction with teachers, students, and other school personnel.

The findings of the study also revealed that all school counselors felt that they enjoyed working as school counselors. This indicates that school counselors were happy with their jobs. One of the reasons as reported by school counselors was that the counseling profession is an honored profession aimed at assisting students to achieve holistic development.

8. Barriers faced by school counselor

The findings of the study revealed that school counselors faced various barriers and obstacles in carrying out guidance and counseling program. The three most serious barriers were lack of facilities, lack of training, and lack of support from other school personnel. Other barriers reported were lack of funds, and additional work-load. The additional work-load assigned to them include teaching subjects, being a relief teacher, doing administrative and clerical work.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions can be made.

1. Although students, teachers, and counselors of Public Secondary Schools in the Province of East Java, Indonesia have high awareness and favorable perceptions toward the importance of the counselor's role in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance to meet the different needs of students and teachers, the

three groups of respondents perceived the status of school counselor's performance in providing the three functions as unsatisfactory. They felt that school counselors have not successfully performed their roles in line with the guidance and counseling guidelines from the Ministry of Education and Culture. The unsatisfactory performance of school counselors in providing the three functions could be due to the fact that school counselors faced barriers and obstacles which include lack of facilities, training, support from school personnel, funds. In addition, they were given additional work not related to their counseling profession.

2. Students, teachers, and counselors rated the importance of the counselor's role in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance from slightly important to very important. They rated the performance of school counselors in providing the three functions from never performing to always performing the roles.
3. There were similarities and differences in the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors toward the importance of the counselor's role and the counselor's performance in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance. The similarities were found in the following categories:
 - a. Students, teachers, and counselors have similar perceptions toward the importance of the counselor's role in providing vocational guidance.
 - b. Student, teachers, and counselors from different regions and different levels of work experience have similar perceptions toward the importance of the

counselor's role and the performance of school counselors in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance.

- c. Students, teachers, and counselors from urban and rural areas have similar perceptions toward the importance of the counselor's role in providing personal and vocational guidance. They also have similar perceptions toward the performance of school counselors in providing the three functions.
- d. Male and female respondents have similar perceptions toward the importance of the counselor's role in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance.
- e. Science and Social Studies students have similar perceptions toward the importance of the counselor's role in providing educational and vocational guidance. They also have similar perceptions toward the performance of school counselors in providing vocational guidance.

The differences were found in the following categories:

- a. Teachers and counselors have more favorable perceptions toward the importance of the counselor's role in providing personal and educational guidance compared to the perceptions of students.
- b. Counselors have more favorable perceptions toward the performance of school counselors in providing the three functions compared to that of students and teachers.

- c. Rural respondents have more favorable perceptions toward the importance of the counselor's role in providing educational guidance compared to that of urban respondents.
 - d. Female respondents have more favorable perceptions toward the performance of school counselors in providing personal and educational guidance compared to that of male respondents.
 - e. Social Studies students have more favorable perceptions toward the importance of the counselor's role in providing personal guidance compared to that of Science students.
- 4. There is significant relationship between the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors toward the importance of the counselor's role and the performance of school counselors in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance.
 - 5. Counseling services were more utilized by teachers than students. Students and teachers were satisfied with the counseling services offered by school counselors. Counselors were also satisfied with their profession.
 - 6. Students and teachers brought various problems to school counselors. Problems brought by students include spending leisure time, interpersonal relationship, family, stress, study techniques, preparing for examinations, course selections, discipline, finding jobs, job interviews, and writing resumes. Teachers discussed with counselors about academics, curriculum, personal, family, and career problems.

Discussion

The major concern of this study is to assess the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors toward the importance of the counselor's role and performance in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of the counselor's role using a 5 Likert scale from 1 (Don't know) to 5 (Very important). They were also asked to rate the performance of counselors using a 6 Likert scale from 1 (Don't know) to 6 (Always perform). In this study students, teachers, and counselors appeared to have a general agreement concerning the importance of the counselor's role in providing guidance services. They felt the counselor's role in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance as either important or very important. The importance placed by students, teachers, and counselors on the three functions indicates that school counselors play a very important role in helping students and/or school personnel with personal, educational, and vocational matters. It seems that personal, educational, and vocational guidance are essentially the major role categories of a comprehensive guidance program.

The above findings confirmed three research studies that were conducted in early 1960s by Wrenn (1962), Schmidt (1962), and Dunlop (1965) who reported that personal, educational, and vocational guidance are the basic roles of school counselors. This clearly implies that the unique function of school counselors is counseling students in their personal, educational, and vocational concerns. If counselors, particularly secondary school counselors address the needs of students in

the above specified areas, these students may attain their potential and enter into the workplace or postsecondary education.

The results of the study revealed that students, teachers, and counselors have a favorable perception toward the importance of the counselor's role in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance. This favorable perception is one of the essential factors for school counselors to run the guidance program more effectively. It is important to note that school counselors should maintain the favorable perceptions held by students and teachers as so to motivate them to utilize and benefit more from the counseling services. Without such positive perceptions from students as the main recipient of guidance services, and teachers who have a close and direct relationship with students, school counselors would be unable to run guidance services smoothly. The findings are consistent, in part, with the research results of a number of previous studies conducted in Indonesia (Faqih, 1995; Suryadi, 1997; and Rahayu, 1997) and in other countries (Srisuvana, 1979; Boser et al., 1988; Hughey et al., 1993; Yockey, 1994; and See, 1996).

In 1995, Faqih assessed students' perceptions toward the counselor's role in Probolinggo, East Java and found that counselors were seen by students as playing an important role in running guidance services. The counselor's role involved the following services in order of importance: information, orientation, counseling, follow-up, referral, placement, and data collection. Suryadi (1997) who studied students' views toward the counselor's role in Pondok Modern Gontor (PMG), East

Java, found the students' views toward the counselor's role favorable. Counselors were seen by students as a source of help in solving their problems and making wise decisions. He further found that the role of school counselors mainly consisted of general role, personal role, educational role, and vocational role. A study by Rahayu (1997) revealed that more than half of the teachers surveyed reported that school counselors play an important role in implementing guidance activities. She also found that individual counseling is the main role of school counselors.

Srisuvana (1979) in his study in Thailand found that most of the students and teachers have positive attitudes toward guidance and counseling service and are aware of its importance. Boser et al. (1988) in Tennessee and Hughey et al. (1993) in Missouri found that counselors were doing a good job and should continue in the same manner. It was also found that counselor availability to students has valuable impact on students regardless of the student-to-counselor ratio. A study by Yockey (1994) indicated that school counselors are seen in a positive light. Of those surveyed, 42 percent agreed that school counselors spent most of their time in individual counseling.

In Malaysia, See (1996) concluded that there is awareness among administrators, counselors, and teachers on the importance of the counselor's role in meeting the needs of the students but the school counselors were not performing their roles to meet the needs. According to her findings, the role of counselors includes six areas of concerns: individual and group counseling; developmental, educational, and

career guidance; assessment and appraisal; consulting; coordination and management of a developmental and comprehensive program; professional ethics, personal growth and development.

In the present study, students, teachers, and counselors rated the performance of school counselors in providing personal, educational, and vocational guidance ranging from sometimes to often performing the roles. It can be inferred that according to students, teachers, and counselors the performance of school counselors in providing the three functions was unsatisfactory, even though they felt them as either important or very important functions. It seems to give the general picture that school counselors have not successfully performed their roles in meeting the needs of students. This finding, once again, confirms See's (1996) study, which revealed that school counselors were not performing their role functions as much as required to meet the needs of the students.

One of the important findings of this study is that students and teachers reported that school counselors only sometimes performed their role in providing vocational guidance. This indicates that school counselors did not give much attention and priority to vocational guidance. Therefore, students and teachers rather easily identified the counselor as a person who helped with personal and educational guidance only and not as a person who helped with vocational guidance. As a consequence, students cannot develop their vocational aspirations and they would not be able to maximize their potential. The fact is without encouragement and

proper guidance from school counselors many students were not motivated to look for occupational information. Vocational guidance would exist in name only. Perhaps the poor performance of school counselors in providing vocational guidance could be due to the fact that school counselors themselves do not have enough information on vocational guidance. If it is true, at the secondary level the main concern of vocational guidance is information-giving to familiarize the students with the world of work. According to Tan (2002) the information-giving approach was based on three assumptions: (a) that the students were motivated to use the materials provided, (b) that they knew beforehand what kind of information to look for, and (c) that they knew how to use the information once they had located it.

The findings of this study further revealed that there were significant difference in the perceptions of students, teachers, and counselors toward the performance of school counselors in personal, educational, and vocational guidance. Counselors perceived that they more frequently performed the three roles compared to students and teachers. This suggests that counselors rated their performance in providing the three roles significantly higher than was perceived by teachers and students. Some differences probably stem from a lack of exposure to what the counselor is actually doing. Other differences stem from a lack of communication. The findings of this study were similar to the findings of studies by Stinzi & Hutcheon (1972), Srisuvana (1979), Stickel (1990), McDowell (1995), and See (1996), who found that counselors had more favorable perceptions toward their own role compared to students, teachers, principals, and administrators.

The above findings have important implications for the school guidance programs. First, the findings of the study suggest the school counselors are identified by the functions they emphasize. In other words, the role identity of the school counselors emerges from the functions they perform. In this respect, Riper (1971) states that the identity of the school counselor is determined by what he does, not by what he would like to do, or *ought* to do. School counselors need to have clearly defined roles from the very beginning. This is to eliminate the confusion about the counselor's role among the students, teachers, and other school personnel. Role ambiguity contributes to role confusion and lack of clarity about the field of school counseling (Williams, 1993). In support to this, Baker (2000) notes that in the 21st century, school counselors will probably be more effective and their roles are better understood by students and teachers if they are able to provide proactive programs that meet and enhance developmental needs of students (Baker, 2000). Second, since the success of the guidance program will determine the success of the educational process in the school, these findings, indeed, imply that the school counselors need to communicate to the students and teachers through a variety of guidance programs and services. In other words, school counselors need to perform their duties by taking a proactive role in communicating what they do.

In the present study, female students, teachers, and counselors have more favorable perceptions toward the performance of counselors in providing personal guidance and educational guidance. Female respondents reported that school counselors more frequently performed their roles compared to male respondents. This finding is

incongruent with the finding of See's (1996) study, which revealed that male teachers held better perceptions toward the performance of school counselors than female teachers. Also, contrary to the findings of See (1996) is that level of work experience in the present study did not account for the difference in the perceptions of teachers and counselors toward the counselor's role. In her study, See found that the level of work experience influenced teachers' perception toward the counselor's role.

The data obtained in this study indicate that school counselors faced various barriers in running guidance programs. These barriers include lack of facilities, lack of training, lack of support from other school personnel, lack of funds, and additional work-load. These findings are similar with the findings of earlier studies by Menon (1983), Mukhlisoh (1998), and Iksan (1998). In their studies, it was found that school counselors were assigned additional duties not in line with their profession. The school policy is also non-supportive and there are not enough facility and funds. Since a guidance program is an integral part of education, the results of the study suggest that the school counselor needs to have the full support of other school personnel. As a team, school counselors and school staff must work hand in hand to achieve the goals of the school guidance program. School counselors also should be given enough funds and facilities in order to perform their roles more effectively.

The findings of this study indicate that among the problems students brought to the school counselors are leisure time, interpersonal relationship, family, stress, and

study technique as found in earlier studies by Redfering & Anderson (1975), Mayers & Butterworth (1979), Prayitno (1980), and Basuki (1986). In their studies, it was found that students brought to the counselors problems, such as, academics, jobs, social, economic, interpersonal relationship, and so forth. The implication of this finding is that in dealing with students' problem, school counselors need to be aware of the nature of the problems, try to find alternative solutions and finally assist clients to make wise decisions in solving their problems.

The findings of the study also indicate that students prefer to discuss their problems with parents and friends, than with their school counselors. It was also indicated that more than half of the students sampled (61.6%) never met the school counselors. This shows that students did not view counselor as a primary source of help. The findings of the present study are consistent with those of earlier studies by Newport (1977) in New Zealand, Mezzano (1971) in the United States, and Prayitno (1980) in Indonesia. In their studies, it was found that over 50 percent of the students ranked their friends as the first person in whom they would confide. This suggests that school counselors should consider that parents and students' friends are potential helpers in solving the students' problems. Also, it suggests that the school counselors should establish closer and wider relationships with students so both groups may understand and trust each other. This conducive and encouraging atmosphere and climate will make students feel free to seek assistance from school counselors.

Recommendations for Further Research

Below are some recommendations for further research that could be conducted in Indonesia.

1. In view of the fact that the subject of this study is limited to students, teachers, and counselors, a study should be conducted in the area of the school counselor's role as perceived by administrators, principals, parents, and counselor educators. This could identify how administrators, principals, parents, and counselor educators perceive the role of the secondary school counselors.
2. Since the independent variables involved in this study were limited to region, school location, gender, level of work experience, and field of study, a replication of this study should be conducted in the scope of the school counselor's role as perceived by the students in relationship to their socio-economic status (SES), academic achievements, and academic levels. It could identify whether there is a relationship between students' perception toward the counselor's role and their socio-economic status, academic achievement, and academic level.
3. This study is limited to the role of Public Secondary School counselors in the Province of East Java, Indonesia. Therefore, a replication of this study should be conducted to identify the role of elementary school counselors and university counselors. This might give important insights on the roles that counselors should play at the elementary school or university level as students at different levels of education may have different expectations of counselors.

4. The findings of this study show that the school counselors were not performing their role as much as they were required, although they felt it is an important role. Further research is needed to determine the reasons underlying this low performance of the school counselors.
5. This study was conducted in the province of East Java, Indonesia. A replication of this study should be conducted in other provinces in Indonesia so as to have a nationwide representation.

Recommendations for Practical Implication of School Counselors

Based on the findings of the present study the researcher recommends the following suggestions.

1. The findings of this study revealed that students, teachers, and counselors had favorable perceptions toward the importance of the counselor's role. They perceived that school counselors play an important role in running the guidance program to meet the different needs of students, teachers, and other school personnel. School counselors, therefore, should maintain this favorable perception and should play his or her roles, as suggested by the students and teachers, as much as possible because the school counselor is the most suitable person to conduct guidance and counseling programs. This is based on the notion that the success of the guidance and counseling programs will determine the success of the educational process in the school.
2. The results of this study, in general, revealed that school counselors were not performing their roles as frequently as they were required although they felt it

is an important role. One possible explanation is that school counselors themselves were unaware of their roles. As an attempt to improve and enhance their performance, therefore, it is recommended that:

- a. School counselors need to define or redefine their roles and functions to obtain a better professional identity. In this regard, school counselors must be able to describe their unique roles, specify their job functions, and show how their work is related to helping students learn better.
 - b. School counselors should improve the quality of guidance and counseling services by designing comprehensive guidance programs, actively engaged in guidance activities and being committed to helping students and teachers.
 - c. School counselors should communicate their role effectively to students and teachers. To implement this idea school counselors must develop clear program objectives in line with the local needs of students and teachers; students and teachers should be informed about the function and purpose of guidance and counseling and about the services available; teachers and other school personnel should be informed about their roles and responsibilities in the guidance program; and teaching load and administrative work of school counselors should be minimized to enable them to carry out guidance services effectively.
3. The findings of this study indicated that students and teachers perceived that school counselors sometimes performed vocational guidance. One possible explanation is that school counselors do not have enough information on

vocational guidance. To improve the counselor's performance in providing vocational guidance, and to meet the challenges of the new millennium, it is recommended that:

- a. There is a need to train professional career counselors, develop indigenous resource materials, and promote a new concept of career development among students. The fact is without encouragement and proper guidance from school counselors, many students were not motivated to look for occupational information.
- b. School counselors need to broaden their views about their function in facilitating their students' career decisions. As a starting point, counselors should think about what is really needed for the students in East Java.
- c. School counselors have to develop effective career counseling techniques and theories that are appropriate for secondary school students. They also have to develop new concepts, new visions, and new models in career counseling and guidance services as a response to new social demands in East Java, Indonesia.
- d. There is a need for career assessment tools to facilitate the practice of career counseling (vocational guidance). Career assessment tools, such as, interest, skills, values, personality and career decision measures are needed in East Java.

- e. School counselors should liaise with other agencies engaged in career information such as the Department of Public Labor and Manpower and other relevant agencies for information.
4. The findings of this study revealed a lack of support from other school personnel.

It is recommended that:

- a. School counselors set up a guidance committee in school comprising other members of school staff. School counselors must take a proactive position in encouraging school personnel to establish and implement guidance programs that help students in personal, educational, and vocational development.
- b. School counselors should play their role as a consultant for teachers and school administrators. Being a consultant, the school counselor will be able to direct and guide them to the objective of school guidance program and the types of guidance services that teachers may help school counselors such as identification of students' problems and referral.
- d. School principals need to ensure that there is greater teamwork between counselors and teachers; counselors and parents; and counselors and administrators.
- e. School principals should encourage teachers to guide students more intensively so that they are able to learn and manage their time well, and to adapt themselves to their new environment. They should make their teaching methods more interesting and attractive. Workshops, seminars and in-service training programs might be an effective way to equip

teachers with the basic skills of counseling and better understanding of the nature and philosophy of guidance programs.

- f. All school personnel, especially teachers, should take part in promoting and intensifying guidance programs as so to enable students to become more familiar with the counseling services and can benefit more from them.
5. The findings of this study indicated that students did not utilize counseling services as much as possible. It is, therefore, recommended that:
- a. School counselors need to have more access to students by giving them the opportunity to teach a particular subject such as self-development and vocational development.
 - b. School counselors need to establish a good rapport with students and to be more approachable, friendly, warm, and genuine in dealing with them. This is to instill a positive perception among students that the school counselor is a person who provides personal assistance to them rather than as an authoritative figure who gives academic instructions.
 - c. School counselors need to design a comprehensive program and a variety of services to facilitate the development of all students in three essential areas: personal, educational, and career development.
 - d. School counselors need to make more advertisements and public announcements about guidance services available in order to motivate students to come and see school counselors.

6. The findings of this study revealed that although most of school counselors were professionally trained counselors and they have attended some form of in-service training on guidance program, their performance was found lacking. Therefore, it is recommended that:
 - a. Counselor educators have to critically review their present programs, continue to identify promising candidates, and begin to evaluate their products. The programs, perhaps, were too theoretical and did not meet counselor's urgent skills.
 - b. School counselors should be given more professional training in sufficient depth and duration. The training program should focus on supplementary courses on specific techniques in guidance and counseling and the use of individual inventory services such as interest, aptitude and personality inventories. Such services would help make counseling services more effective.
7. The findings of this study revealed that school counselors were not given sufficient facilities and funds. Therefore, it is recommended that:
 - a. School counselors should be given a proper counseling room equipped with necessary equipment. This would make it possible for counseling to be conducted in a relatively comfortable setting where client's privacy and personal records are confidentially kept.
 - b. School counselors need to be given a specific fund for carrying out the guidance program. School counselors through the career guidance, should also manage to raise funds from their own efforts and projects.

8. The Regional Office of the Department of Education and Culture needs to equip school counselors as well as teachers with counseling skills and helping skills. These attempts might be facilitated through up-grading programs, workshops, seminar, and in-service training. Training programs for the counselors must provide a higher level of competence in counseling skills.
9. The Regional Office of the Department of Education and Culture needs to reactivate the functions of Indonesian School Counselor Association so that a forum for the exchange of information, ideas, experiences and programs can be created. This would provide an opportunity to the school counselors to benefit from the activities.