A Cross-cultural Comparison of the Role of the Mental Health Specialists in the Schools in Japan and the United States in Response to School Counselor Training in Japan

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Abstract
This study compares the role of mental health specialists in the schools of Japan and the United States. Special consideration is given to the historical development of the mental health specialists in the school counseling and school psychology fields.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the preparation and training of the school counselor in Japan to meet the future student needs in the schools of Japan.

This paper explores the school counseling curriculum and school counselor internship, the school counselor role and function, and school counseling program and services; especially from the perspective of the United States. From the cross-cultural comparison, this paper concludes that school counselor training and preparation in the United States is specific to working with and supporting the school staff and that the role and function of the school staff and mental health specialists is clearly defined.

As a result of this study, this paper recommends that future preparation and training needs of school psychology course students in Japan include 1. collaboration skills training and 2. internship at the schools in Japan. School counselors in Japan would be better trained in the future to collaborate with school staff and know the school culture.

This study further recommends research in investigating curriculum and course development and internship training and supervision.