



Understanding School Faculty Perspectives on Behavioral Health and Substance Use Services: Results of a Nationwide Survey

Presented by Kendra Westmoreland



Introduction/Background

- Research has shown that adult substance use may be mitigated by intervention at an early age.
- Schools provide ~40% of all mental health treatment among youth in the US; because of this, substance use prevention programs may be most beneficial within schools as well.
- Only 16% of students (ages 12–17) who needed substance use treatment in 2018 received any form of intervention.
- The most recent developments of civil citations and diversion programs are less punitive efforts to prevent criminal records, but is not a sufficient replacement for treatment.

Safe Schools/Healthy Students

- The Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS) Initiative is a state-led program funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
- Between 2013–2017, 7 US states were granted \$14 million to increase mental health awareness/problem solving training among school faculty.
- Our current study analyzes the impact of this initiative by evaluating its progress with faculty surveys.

Research Questions

- Are there any differences among the program's success among different categories of faculty?
- How does progress of mental health services compare to substance use prevention?
- Have these services improved over time within participating schools?

Hypotheses

- Schools will be less prepared to implement services for substance use prevention than behavioral health
- There will be a much stronger improvement rate for mental health facilities than substance use prevention within participating schools

Methods

Setting & Participants

- Faculty of multiple school districts within the 7 states that received SAMHSA funding filled out the survey over the course of 3 years.
- Participants were grouped into 3 categories: Instructors, Administrators, and Mental Health Professionals.

Year	Instructors	Administrators	Mental Health Professionals	Total
2015	67	92	89	248
2016	154	125	118	397
2017	168	118	138	424

Data Collection & Analysis

- The responses to 3 paired questions on mental health and substance use services were recorded.
- 2 separate scales were created to evaluate mental health and substance use services comparatively.
- **Tests conducted in SPSS:**
 - comparative means analysis
 - paired samples t-test
 - one-way ANOVA



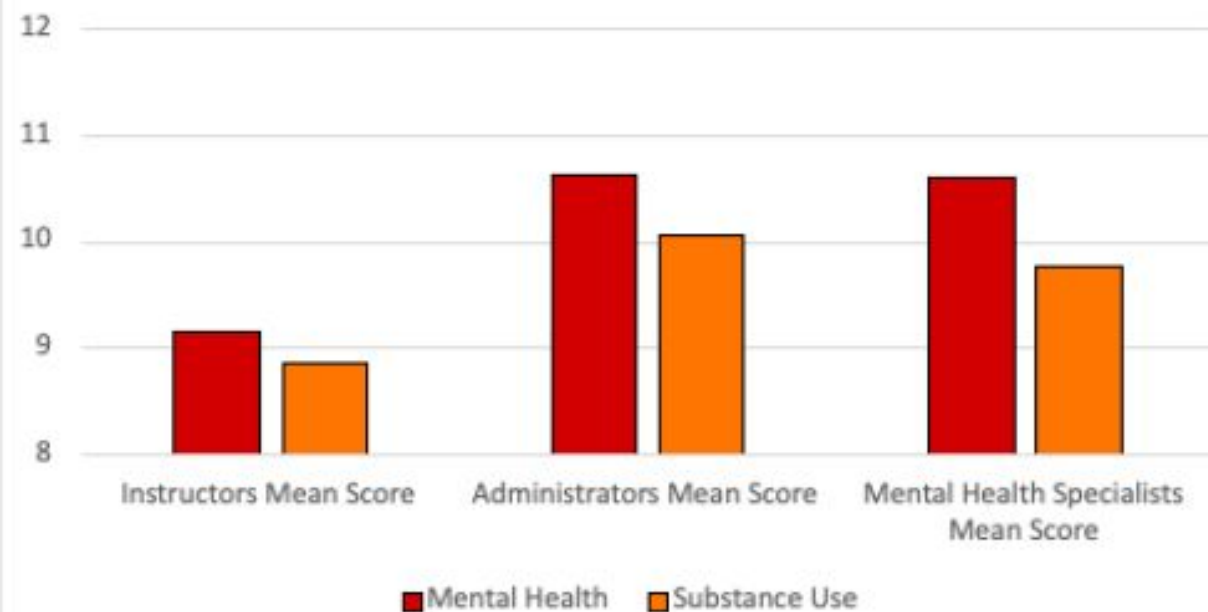
Survey Questions of Interest

1. There are clear, designated procedures or a clear authority for referral when students have [mental health/drug abuse service] needs.
 2. I receive the training I need to address student [mental health needs/substance abuse issues].
 3. The school has implemented programs for the prevention of student [behavioral health problems/alcohol, tobacco, and drug use].
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Results

Faculty Perception of Services

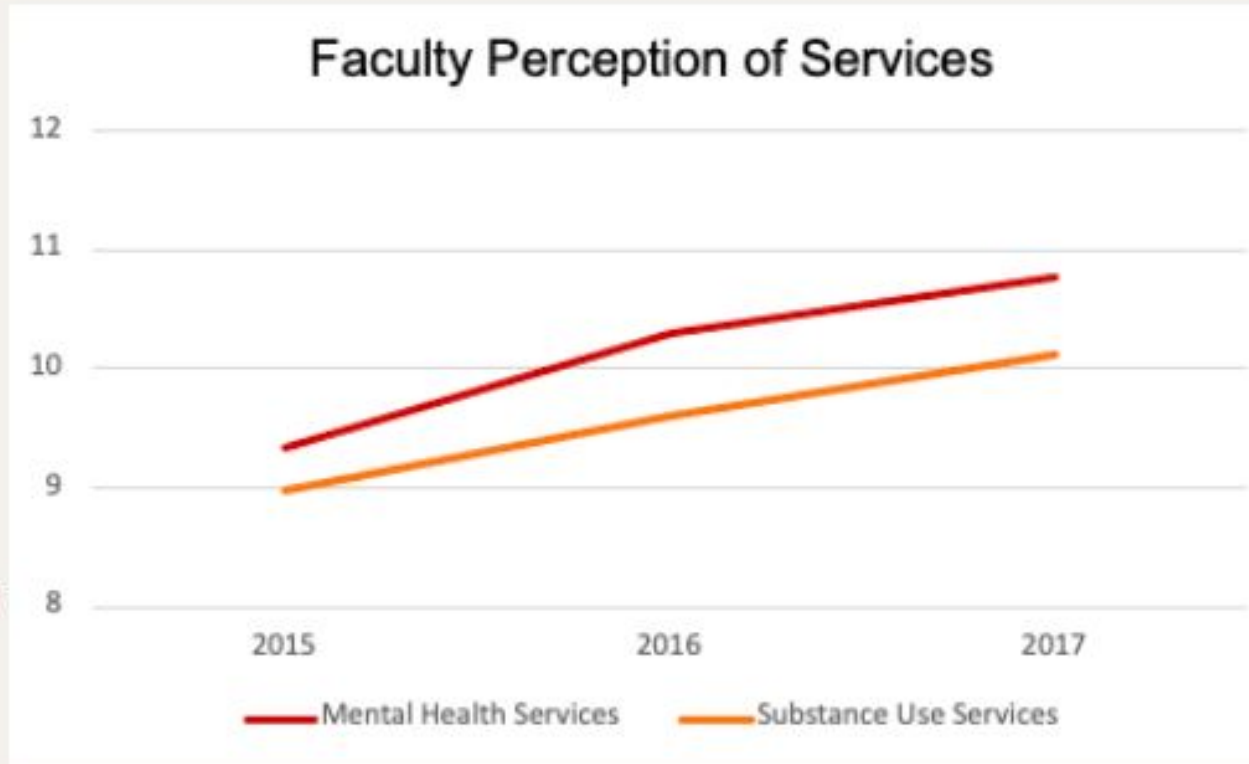


MH between groups p-value: 0.002

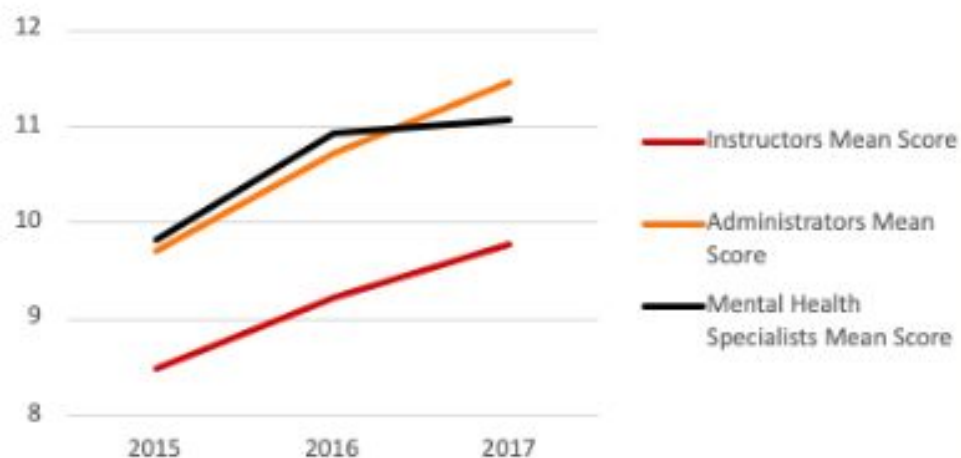
SU between groups p-value: 0.000

- Mean scores for all 3 years were taken from each scale
- Instructors had the most pessimistic view on improvement for both MH and SU services
- MH services were perceived by all categories to have a better rating than their SU counterparts
- All results were statistically significant

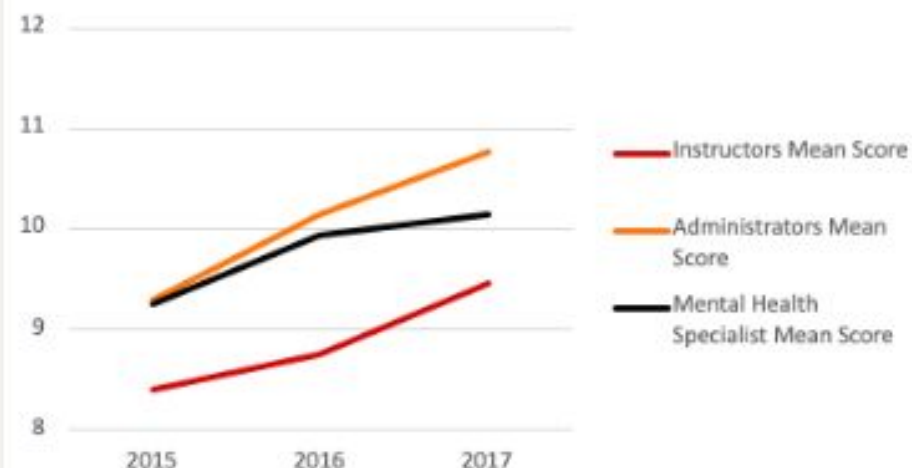
- The progress of MH and SU services over time grows at a similar rate
- Both categories receive improved ratings over time rather than decreasing in quality or remaining stagnant
- MH services maintain a consistently higher rating than their SU counterparts



Faculty Perception of Mental Health Services Over Time



Faculty Perception of Substance Use Services Over Time



Discussion

Implications

- Mental health services are improving at the same rate within schools than substance use services.
- Substance use should be treated as a separate issue than mental health, but be given the same weight in order for prevention services to see improvement.
- With the decriminalization of adolescent substance use, we need to provide prevention services in schools with the mindset of treatment over punishment.



Limitations

- Survey did not have many paired questions that focused on the differences in mental health vs. substance use services
- Our sample was not truly random

Direction for Future Research:

- Replicate survey procedure with more paired questions on mental health/substance use services
 - Interview a greater variety of school districts and faculty members
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