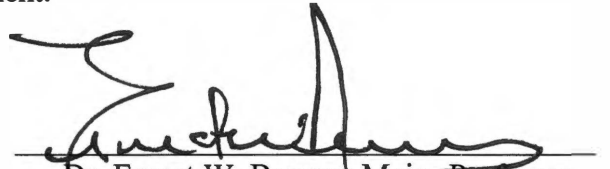


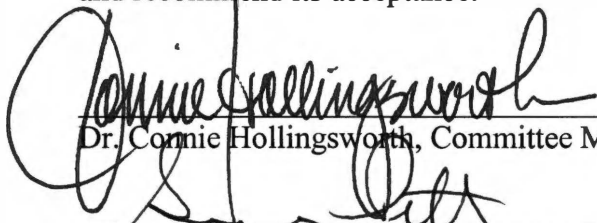
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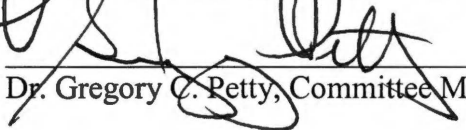
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Dr. Ernest W. Brewer, Major Professor

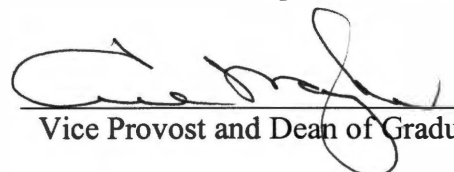
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**SOCIAL SUPPORT AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES PERSONNEL**

**A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of
Science Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville**

**Lori Simpson Wilkerson
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ABSTRACT

Current research has investigated the potential relationship between social support and job satisfaction. Researchers have found that social support can contribute to job satisfaction by buffering the effects of job stress. Using Cobb's (1976) buffering hypothesis, the purpose of this study was (a) to determine how satisfied student support services personnel were with their jobs and their social relationships, (b) to discover whether or not there were any differences in age, ethnicity, gender, and length of employment with respect to job satisfaction and social support, and (c) to discover whether or not job satisfaction and social support were significantly correlated.

The researcher mailed questionnaire packets to a random sample of 300 student support services personnel who were members of the Southeastern Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel (SAEOPP) association. The surveys for this study included (a) a demographic questionnaire, (b) the Job Satisfaction Survey, and (c) the Social Provisions Scale. After a subsequent follow-up, 150 usable surveys had been returned, yielding a response rate of 50.3%.

Statistical tests utilized to analyze data included multivariate analysis of variance, analysis of variance, and coefficient correlation. Frequencies, means, and standard deviations were used to describe the demographics of the participants. Participants were predominately female, either African American or White, and have worked 10 years or less. The results of the multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) showed no significant differences between job satisfaction and (a) age, (b) ethnicity, (c) gender, or (d) length of employment. In addition, no significant relationships existed between social support and (a) age, (b) gender, or (c) length of employment.

However, social support significantly correlated with ethnicity. African Americans experienced higher rates of reassurance of worth than did Whites. Also, job satisfaction significantly correlated with social support. Overall, the participants reported high social support and moderate satisfaction with their jobs. Participants reported high satisfaction with the nature of the work and the least satisfied with promotion. In addition, the social support variables of reassurance of worth, social integration, attachment, and reliable alliance strongly correlated with job satisfaction variables (supervision, nature of work, communication) at the $p = .05$ confidence level. In addition, social support variables of guidance, reassurance of worth, social integration, and attachment correlated with the job satisfaction variables of contingent rewards and coworkers at $p = .05$.

Future research should explore the use of longitudinal or qualitative research methodologies to study job satisfaction and social support. One limitation of this research was the use of self-report measures. A different research method might reveal stronger relationships between social support and job satisfaction than this present study did. A different research method might find significant differences in social support and job satisfaction for age, ethnicity, gender, and length of employment. However, based on this study, student support services personnel should implement the use of activities and processes that develop strong relationships among employees.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Organizations today face many competitive challenges that were unheard of and unfathomable to organizations of yesteryear (Ulrich, 1997). According to Ulrich, words such as globalization, downsizing, and decentralization have become common in today's organizational lexicon. The challenges of downsizing and decentralization mirror a common conundrum in the business world: How do organizations minimize costs and maximize productivity while maintaining a highly motivated workforce? Organizational leaders know they must find innovative ways to address these challenges and issues not only to drive business production and growth but also to retain high caliber employees (Hobfall & Freedy, 1993; Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Staw & Epstein, 2000).

A booming economy and the end of a culture that stays in a job for life means employees do not stay in unsatisfying and stressful jobs; they search for more meaningful and motivating vocations (Ulrich, 1997). Employees want to use their skills and abilities, and employers want their employees to tackle their tasks each week with drive and ambition. For employers, the question of how to increase job satisfaction while maintaining quality and profitability remains a conundrum. Therefore, job enhancement practices such as (a) quality circles, (b) high performance work teams, (c) employee empowerment initiatives, and (d) job sharing have been incorporated into an organization's basic structure (Staw & Epstein, 2000).

Ideally, leaders seek to change the relationship between the worker and his or her work as a way to increase job satisfaction and reduce job stress among employees. Employers are well aware of the consequences of job stress. Research has revealed negative effects of not experiencing satisfaction with work (Chan & Hui, 1998; Lee &

Ashforth, 1996; Wright & Cropanzano, 1998). Studies have shown occupational factors such as (a) job demands and pressures, (b) job complexity, (c) role overload, and (d) oppressive working conditions can overshadow one's satisfaction with work (Lee & Ashforth). These factors can leave one susceptible to job stress and possibly occupational burnout, the end result of accumulated job stress (Lee & Ashforth; Link, Lennon, & Dohrenwend, 1993; Martin & Roman, 1996; Martin, Roman, & Blum, 1996; Oldham & Gordon, 1999).

Consequently, organizations must reduce the sources of job stress because accumulated stress can lead to feelings of (a) distress, (b) anxiety, (c) powerlessness, (d) alienation, and (e) depression. In some portions of the population, these variables can lead to counterproductive behaviors such as violence, substance abuse, and problem drinking (Link et al., 1993; Martin & Roman, 1996; Martin et al., 1996; Oldham & Gordon, 1999).

Obviously, the feelings and behaviors induced by job stress can be devastating to employees' quality of work and life, and the organization can suffer economically (Hodson, 1997). As a result, researchers have concentrated on identifying organizational factors that can increase job satisfaction and reduce job stress. One promising avenue of job satisfaction research has been studying coworker relationships; specifically, researchers are interested in how occupational and personal social support can influence satisfaction, as this study seeks to understand.

The restructuring of organizations to include group and team-oriented processes spotlighted the significance of coworker relationships (Hodson, 1997). Hodson noted that coworkers made work enjoyable or made work miserable. In fact, almost a decade earlier, Hobfoll (1988) delineated the *conservation of resources* theory of stress, which stated

that social support was a valued job resource. The main concept of Hobfoll's theory was that burnout occurred when valued resources, such as social support, were lost or inadequately met the demands of work. Russell, Altmaier, and Van Velzen (1987) found that strong social support could reduce the intensity of job stress.

By definition, social support is “an interpersonal exchange in which one person gives help to another” (Taylor, Peplau, & Sears, 1997, p. 405). Giving and receiving support are vital aspects of human life (Jones, 1991). After all, as John Donne reminded, “no man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continents, a part of the main” (Donne, 1624/1975, p. 86). Traditionally, social support was thought to come only from spouses, friends, and family, but current research reveals that coworkers are also vital resources for support (Buunk, Doosje, Jans, & Hopstaken, 1993; Russell et al., 1987).

Just as social support can come from many sources, social support can be provided in many forms. Cohen and Wills (1985) identified four taxonomies of social support:

1. Emotional support is primarily expressed through love, help, and empathy (House & Wells, 1978; Kahn & Antonucci, 1980).
2. Instrumental support is expressed through goods, services, or monetary aid (Caplan, Cobb, French, Van Harrison, & Pinneau, 1975; House & Wells; Taylor et al., 1997).
3. Informational support provides one with advice or guidance about a stressful situation and can be extremely helpful to one in such a situation (Cobb, 1976).
4. Finally, social companionship refers to a person's network of friends and cohorts. Cobb argued that a large and diverse network could be supportive in many situations.

As previously mentioned, researchers argued that the benefits of positive social support are evident in the workplace environment (Hodson, 1989; Ray & Miller, 1991).

Social support acted as a coping mechanism for those experiencing job stress either by buffering the effects of job stress or by directly improving one's well-being (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Greenglass, 1993; Hobfoll, 1988). Because of this sentiment, the researcher for this study investigated how social support could relate to job satisfaction among student support services personnel.

Because social support can influence feelings of job satisfaction, it also was important to study demographic features of a population that may mediate job satisfaction and social support. Mazza and Reynolds (1998) argued for researchers to examine gender-specific relationships that may be potential variables in research studies. For instance, gender differences have been reported in the perception of and need for social support (Lee & Robbins, 2000). Greenglass (1991) pleaded for research to include the wide range of differences men and women possess in dealing with job stress. As an example, Hodson (1989) and Phelan (1994) discovered that women were as satisfied with their jobs as men even though women experienced less favorable working conditions (less authority, lower pay) than men. Greenglass explained that women used different coping mechanisms to help them adjust to stressful working condition.

Although researchers have provided mixed results, other demographic variables that may influence the social support-job satisfaction relationship include age, ethnicity, and length of employment. Sweeney, Hohenshil, and Fortune (2002) found that the variables of age, gender and race had no impact on job satisfaction among a sample of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) professionals. However, Day, Cross, Ringsels, and Williams (1999) found that self-categorization as an underrepresented ethnic group was correlated with lower levels of job satisfaction. Jennings (1998) found no correlation with

job satisfaction and length of employment. However, the research sample was very small ($N = 37$).

In sum, this study investigated the social support-job satisfaction relationship by determining if a significant relationship exists between social support and job satisfaction and by examining differences by gender, age, ethnicity, and length of employment in reported levels of social support and job satisfaction.

Significance of the Study

Almost any kind of job presents itself with stressful conditions (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). However, occupations that provide a philanthropic service for the community can be especially vulnerable to the debilitating effects of job stress and burnout because personnel in such occupations work in a highly charged, highly emotional atmosphere (Constable & Russell, 1986). Examples of such occupations are teachers, nurses, law enforcement personnel, and social service providers.

The population under investigation for this study was student support services personnel employed in the southeast region and are members of the Southeastern Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel (SAEOPP), which is a professional association for student support services personnel. A majority of SAEOPP members work for a program known as TRIO. Students support service programs such as TRIO are federally funded agencies that offer student support services to clients from low-income and first-generation families (Beavers, 1996; Hewitt, 1998). Student support service programs were created in 1965 when President Johnson signed the Higher Education Act (United States Congress, 1965), a proposal to increase and improve higher education institutions' resources. The Act also allowed for assistance to be provided to students in postsecondary education.

The SAEOPP association operates as one forum for student support services personnel to come together to network and learn ways they can create successful programs that broaden the educational opportunities of the students they serve. Organized in 1977, SAEOPP provides “direct services to thousands of low-income youth in the nation’s ghettos, in public housing and low income communities, and in depressed rural and Appalachian areas of the Deep South” (Hewitt, p. 71).

Grants for student support service programs are awarded to (a) public or private institutions of higher learning, (b) nonprofit organizations, or (c) a combination of both. Because these programs are federally funded, they are at risk for reduction in funding or program closure. Student support service programs serve a population of students who are considered disadvantaged and *at risk* for dropping out of school and not pursuing postsecondary education. Support services include (a) academic instruction, (b) tutoring, (c) counseling, (d) career exploration, and (e) personal development skills. Student support services personnel include (a) advisors, (b) coordinators, (c) counselors, (d) directors, (e) teachers, and (f) tutors (Beavers, 1996). These workers perform a valuable and needed service for disadvantaged families of the community (Hewitt, 1998).

Although job satisfaction has been widely studied, this study is significant because it examined student support services personnel. To date, few researchers have examined job satisfaction among student support services personnel. To support the significance of this study, investigation into the relationship between social support and job satisfaction could serve as a useful training and development tool for student support services personnel. Program directors could use this information to promote projects in their program that encourage employees to seek social support as a way to reduce job stress.

Funded by grants, student support services cannot offer competitive benefits and rewards as a private sector organization can; this is why it is important to study job satisfaction among personnel. To be successful, a student support services program requires a staff of motivated and dedicated people. Job satisfaction is necessary to retain a high caliber employee who can successfully complete the goals and objectives of their respective program.

Statement of the Problem

The importance of examining social support is based on the premise that significant relationships can affect an individual's satisfaction with work and can provide motivation for work (Constable & Russell, 1986). Furthermore, occupational support can buffer the negative effects of job stressors, thereby contributing to feeling satisfied with work (Greenglass, Fiksenbaum, & Burke, 1996; Schirmer & Lopez, 2001; Terry, Rawle, & Callan, 1995).

Because helping professions are especially prone to job burnout and to job-related stress (Constable & Russell, 1986), this study investigated the levels of job satisfaction and social support among student support services personnel in relation to (a) age, (b) ethnicity, (c) gender, and (d) length of employment. By identifying sources of job satisfaction among student support services personnel, researchers and practitioners can alter or improve the structure of student support programs to increase satisfaction and understand general nuances associated with job satisfaction.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship (correlation) between job satisfaction and social support among a sample of student support services personnel. Specifically, the purpose of this study was two-fold:

1. Using Cobb's (1976) buffering hypothesis, to examine the correlation between job satisfaction and social support.
2. To examine whether or not there were differences in age, ethnicity, gender, and length of employment with respect to job satisfaction and social support.

The primary purpose of the study was to determine if a relationship existed between social support and job satisfaction among student support services personnel. A secondary purpose of this study was to determine whether or not there were significant differences between (a) age, (b) ethnicity, (c) gender, and (d) length of employment with respect to social support and job satisfaction.

Theoretical Framework

The researcher used Cobb's (1976) buffering hypothesis as the theoretical framework of this study. The buffering hypothesis introduced by Cobb refined the many definitions of social support espoused at the time (Vaux, 1988). For example, Kahn and Antonucci (1980) defined social support as an interpersonal transaction that involved physical help, emotional support, and affirmations of caring. House and Wells (1978) defined social support as frequent, strong interactions that promoted positive feelings. They also defined emotional and instrumental support as basic components of social support.

Similarly, Cobb (1976) defined social support as information. However, this information led one to believe that he or she was cared for, loved, valued, and esteemed by other members of the social group. Under Cobb's theory, social support fulfilled one's needs and protected one from the pernicious effects of stress. Cobb viewed social support as the protective layer that buffered one from the effects of stress. Figure 1 visually depicts the buffering relationship between social support and stress.

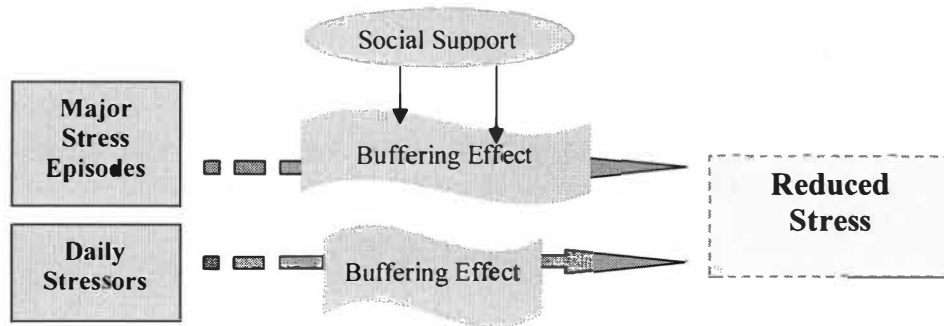


Figure 1. Cobb's Buffering Hypothesis. According to this theory, social support buffers the stress of major life events as well as stress from everyday normal activity.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Questions

This study built upon the current literature suggesting social support could be correlated with job satisfaction. Additionally, in this study, the researcher attempted to illuminate certain demographic conditions that could influence social support and job satisfaction. Using the buffering hypothesis of social support as the theoretical framework, the investigator composed the following research questions:

1. What were the demographic profiles of student support services personnel who are members of SAEOPP?
2. Were there differences in age, ethnicity, gender, and length of employment with respect to job satisfaction and social support among student support services personnel who are members of SAEOPP?
3. Did social support relate to job satisfaction among student support services personnel who are members of SAEOPP?

Hypotheses

The researcher developed the following null hypotheses as an extension of research questions two and three:

- H₀1: There was no significant difference between gender and social support among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀2: There was no significant difference between gender and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀3: There was a significant difference between ethnicity and social support among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀4: There was no significant difference between ethnicity and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀5: There was no significant difference between age and social support among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀6: There was no significant difference between age and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀7: There was no significant difference between length of employment and social support among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀8: There was no significant difference between length of employment and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀9: There was a significant relationship between social support and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are items presumed to be true but have not been thoroughly verified (Gay & Airasian, 2000). The following assumptions characterized this study:

1. This study assumed that the sample was representative of the population of student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
2. This study also assumed that the participants answered the questionnaire accurately and reported honestly their feelings of social support and job satisfaction.
3. This study assumed that the participants were aware of and experienced social support.
4. This study assumed that the participants were aware of and experienced job satisfaction.

5. Demographic variables such as level of education and job position may also influence perceptions of social support and feelings of job satisfaction. Nonetheless, such variables were beyond the scope of this study and were not controlled.

Delimitations

Delimitations are variables of research that the researcher deliberately controls (Gay & Airasian, 2000). For this study, the researcher chose to limit the boundaries of the research.

1. This study investigated only a slice of the wide job satisfaction spectrum. This study did not focus on other psychological (e.g. locus of control) or physical variables (e.g. workload) that influence feelings of job satisfaction.
2. This study was limited purposefully to student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association and was limited to a manageable number of randomly selected participants.
3. The researcher did not examine differences in job satisfaction between student support services personnel at state universities, private universities, and nonprofit agencies.
4. The evaluation of job satisfaction was limited to the variables measured within Spector's (1997) Job Satisfaction Survey: (a) pay, (b) promotion, (c) supervision, (d) operating conditions, (e) fringe benefits, (f) contingent rewards, (g) coworkers, (h) communication, and (i) nature of work.
5. The evaluation of social support was limited to the variables measured within Russell and Cutrona's (1984) Social Provisions Scale: (a) guidance, (b) reassurance of worth, (c) social integration, (d) attachment, (e) nurturance, and (f) reliable alliance.

Limitations

Limitations are variables that could affect the outcome of the research but that the researcher cannot control (Gay & Airasian, 2000). Particular limitations should be kept in mind when interpreting the conclusions of this study as the following could affect the generalizability of the results:

1. Constrained time factors and economic feasibility limited the overall parameters of this study.

2. According to Spector (1997), the subjective nature of job satisfaction and social support is difficult to measure and quantify accurately. The use of different instruments and research methods could produce different results.
3. This study was limited by the acquiescence of student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association to participate and the willingness to respond to and return surveys in a timely manner.

Operational Definitions

Most of the variables considered in this study are abstract. Therefore, operational definitions are provided to interpret these constructs as they are applied and measured in current literature. In addition, common terms such as age, ethnicity, gender, and length of employment are defined as used in this study.

1. *Affective social support*: support of this type provides one with feelings of being accepted and cared for (Cohen & Wills, 1985). It is also known as esteem support or emotional support.
2. *Age*: a distinctive period or stage of life (Severynse, 1999). On the demographic questionnaire, the researcher divided ages into the following categories: (a) 21-30, (b) 31-40, (c) 41-50, (d) 51-60, and (e) 61+. However, for data analyses, the researcher compressed the ages into the following categories because frequencies were distributed unevenly among the original age categories: (a) 21-30, (b) 31-40, (c) 41-50, and (d) 51+.
3. *Demographic questionnaire*: an original survey developed by Brewer to collect information about the profile of the participants. The researcher modified the demographic questionnaire for the purposes of this study. The demographic questionnaire assessed participants' (a) age, (b) ethnicity, (c) gender, (d) length of employment, (e) marital status, (f) employment position, and (g) employment status.
4. *Ethnicity*: the state of belonging to an ethnic group (Severynse, 1999). The following categories of ethnicities on the demographic questionnaire were: (a) African American, (b) Asian-Pacific Islander, (c) White, (d) Hispanic, and (e) Native American. Participants not of these ethnicities could select *Other* as a category. For data analyses, the researcher compressed ethnicities into the following categories because frequencies were distributed unevenly among ethnicities: (a) African American, (b) White, and (c) Other.
5. *Gender*: classification of sex as either male or female (Severynse, 1999).

6. *Informational support*: support that is given or received in the form of advice or guidance (Cohen & Wills, 1985).
7. *Instrumental support*: tangible aid or material assistance (Cohen and Wills, 1985).
8. *Job satisfaction*: the result of a worker perceiving the work environment as fulfilling personal needs, values, and expectations (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984).
9. *Job Satisfaction Survey*: an original, unpublished survey developed by Spector (1997) that measures nine facets of job satisfaction and overall job satisfaction.
10. *Job stress*: the experience of real or imagined mental, physical, emotional, or spiritual threats to occupational well-being (Sullivan & Nashman, 1996). Job stress is different from occupational burnout. Job stress may be one of the factors that precipitate burnout (Sullivan & Nashman).
11. *Length of employment*: condition of holding employment for a specified number of years (Burke, 1996). On the demographic questionnaire, length of employment was divided into the following categories: (a) 2 years or less, (b) 2-5 years, (c) 6-10 years, (d) 11-15 years, (e) 16-20 years, (f) 21-25 years, and (g) 26 years or more years. Because frequencies were distributed unevenly, the research compressed length of employment into the following categories for data analyses: (a) 2 years or less, (b) 2-5 years, (c) 6-10 years, (d) 11-15 years, and (e) 16 or more years.
12. *Occupational burnout*: the emotional and physical exhaustion of professionals that result from negative conditions at work (Sullivan & Nashman, 1996).
13. *Social companionship*: having people to do things with. Social companionship can be measured by the size of a participant's social network (Mueller, 1980).
14. *Social Provisions Scale*: an original, unpublished instrument designed by Russell and Cutrona (1984) that measures level of social support.
15. *Social support*: help provided by others in an attempt to meet goals. There are many definitions and measures of social support (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Cohen and Wills suggest that social support consists of four taxonomies: affective, informational, instrumental, and social companionship. Cobb described social support as information that led one to believe he or she was loved and part of a group.
16. *Southeastern Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel (SAEOPP)*: one of ten regional associations of student support services personnel that provide services to low-income and disadvantaged youth dwelling in urban locations as well as rural and Appalachian areas of the south

(Hewitt, 1998). States that make up the SAEOPP region are Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

17. *TRIO program personnel*: any class of student support services personnel employed in Educational Talent Search, Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math and Science, Veterans Upward Bound, Student Support Services, Educational Opportunity Centers, Training Grants, Demonstration Programs, and the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program. Members of SAEOPP are typically TRIO personnel.

Summary of Introduction

To summarize, social support can be an important coping mechanism that buffers the debilitating effects of job stress (Hobfall, 1988). However, researchers have paid little attention to the potential impact social relationships may have upon job stress and burnout (Ducharme & Martin, 2000). The population under investigation was student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association, which serves thousands of disadvantaged and at-risk youth, veterans, or displaced workers. Using Cobb's (1976) buffering hypothesis, the purpose of this study was to discover if job satisfaction and social support significantly correlated among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association and to discover whether or not there were any differences in age, ethnicity, gender, and length of employment with respect to job satisfaction and social support.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In Chapter I, the researcher stated that the purpose of this study was to measure the degree to which social support and job satisfaction were related among personnel working for student support services. A secondary purpose of this study was to measure the degree to which age, ethnicity, gender, and length of employment were related to job satisfaction and social support. In Chapter II, the researcher reviewed the literature concerning social support and job satisfaction. The following sections present a theoretical synopsis of social support and job satisfaction as well as a summary of current related research.

Theoretical and Conceptual Perspectives

Early Theories of Social Support

Over a century ago, Durkheim (1897/1951) revolutionized the concept of social support with research about suicide (Vaux, 1988). Durkheim discovered that suicide was most prevalent among people with weak social ties. Those who severed ties with their family, community, and church eventually felt a sense of anomie (alienation, absence of norms and values), which led to suicide. His ideas have withstood time as researchers today discover the importance of social support in relation to suicide ideation (Mazza & Reynolds, 1998). Mazza and Reynolds uncovered in their longitudinal investigation of adolescents that depression and absence of social support were significant factors related to suicidal ideations in women.

Attachment Theory. After the groundbreaking work of Durkheim (1897/1951), early psychologists and sociologists realized that social relationships were important to personal development (Ainsworth, 1979; Bowlby, 1969; Harlow, 1965). The most

prominent psychological theory during the early 20th century was psychoanalytic theory, which suggested that early attachment between infant and caregiver influenced future relationships (Harlow). Adult social relationships were seen as a reflection of childhood attachment issues such as the need for security or acceptance (Horney, 1945; Sullivan, 1953).

Today, current research into adult attachment theory has pervaded research of social support and job stress (Schirmer & Lopez, 2001). As an example, Schirmer and Lopez investigated how adult attachment styles and supervisor support contributed to job stress, which was a novel undertaking because most adult attachment style research focused only on dating and intimate relationships. Using responses from 117 participants, Schirmer and Lopez discovered that workers having anxious attachment styles had higher levels of job stress and physical symptoms of job stress than did workers having avoidant attachment styles.

Social Exchange Theory. In contrast, social exchange theorists have proposed that people engaged in relationships because relationships offered rewards and provided valuable resources (Homans, 1961; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Homans as well as Thibaut and Kelley suggested that rewards and resources come in the form of love, status, information, money, goods, and services. These theorists also argued that there are many different types and sources of relationships. From the perspective of social exchange theorists, relationships were a diverse, idiosyncratic, and situational phenomenon because of the rewards offered and gained (Vaux, 1988).

Summary of Early Theories. To best understand how social support impacts one's life, early theorists suggested relationships served a vital, critical purpose (Bowlby, 1969; Buss, 1991; Maslow, 1968). Not only does social support help people discover and

shape personal emotions or reconnect with childhood needs and issues, but people also use social support as a way to (a) provide confirmation of adequacy, (b) offer shelter when beliefs are shaken or disproved, or (c) gain rewards and valuable resources (Weiss, 1974).

Social Provisions Theory

Although not based on social exchange theory, Weiss (1974) presented ideas that influenced later social support research (e.g. Cutrona & Russell, 1987; Russell, Altmaier, & Van Velzen, 1987) and provided a basis for a social support measure (Russell & Cutrona, 1984). Weiss conducted a yearlong qualitative study of a support group located in the suburbs of Boston. The results of this study contributed to Weiss' (1974) social provisions theory. The support group Weiss studied was named Parents Without Partners, a group that offered assistance to single parents in a variety of ways. Members joined the group because they experienced loneliness resulting from a loss of a marital relationship.

For one year, Weiss (1974) participated with and interviewed current as well as former members. His initial assumption was that the experience of loneliness would subside after time spent in positive group involvement. However, after a year of activity in the support group, Weiss found that people still were lonely. The close friendships formed as a result of group participation did not compensate for the loss of a marital relationship. Weiss theorized that a marital relationship must provide an emotional resource not found in any other relationship. He went on to theorize that relationships provide specific resources that satisfy basic human needs called *relational provisions*. When these relational provisions were fulfilled, a person felt satisfied with life. Weiss identified six relationship types and their accompanying provisions.

1. *Attachment*: Provided a sense of security and place. Without this provision, people felt lonely and restless. Marriage or close different sex relationships provided the relational provision of attachment.
2. *Social Integration*: Provided companionship and a way to share common concerns and ideas. This provision was provided by membership in a society or a network of friends.
3. *Opportunity for Nurturance*: Provided a sense of being needed and was provided by the responsibility of caring for children.
4. *Reliable Alliance*: Referred to the unconditional support and assistance from others. Family membership provided a sense of reliable alliance.
5. *Guidance*: Emotional support received from a trustworthy, authoritative figure. The absence of guidance leads to feelings of uncertainty and anxiety.
6. *Reassurance of Worth*: Reassurance of worth from the belief that one was competent in his or her occupational roles.

For Weiss, relationships were crucial to overall life satisfaction: One had fundamental needs that could be met only by relationships.

Buffering Hypothesis of Social Support

Cassel (1974), Caplan (1974), and Cobb (1976) contributed to the theoretical and empirical investigation of social support. They examined how relationships and the support received from relationships could help one overcome life's demands and stressful situations (Vaux, 1988). Cassel's, Caplan's, and Cobb's studies generated a general buffering hypothesis, which maintains that the benefits of social support would be most noticeable during periods of high stress and not during periods of low stress.

Interestingly, the buffering hypothesis has continued to be among the most prevalent and widely investigated of all social support theories (Vaux).

Cassel. Cassel (1974) argued that social support played a key role in stress-related disorders. His views were fundamental to social support research because he argued that social support serves a protective function by buffering the effects of a stressful

environment or situation. His study on noxious urban conditions (poor housing, overcrowding) linked these conditions with high rates of disease and psychological disorder. However, social ties helped buffer the harmful effects of the stressful conditions, which explained why two people from the same environment varied in disorders and disease when all other factors were controlled. Cassel argued that resources available from relationships buffered the effects of stress for the person with strong social ties.

Caplan. Caplan (1974) offered a similar view of social support. He also believed that social support influenced the stress level of an individual in crisis or in a significant life transaction. One notable point about Caplan's theory was that social support could protect an individual from everyday life demands as well as crisis situations. Social support, according to Caplan, provided one with (a) resources to manage emotional problems, (b) materials to help deal with specific life stresses, and (c) encouragement and help to complete demanding tasks. His work on community mental health confirmed his belief that the benefits of social support can be received from many kinds of relationships: clergy, support groups, friends, family, etc.

Cobb. Concurrent with Cassel (1974) and Caplan (1974), Cobb (1976) emphasized that social support could buffer the effects of stress. However, Cobb conceptualized social support as information that would lead one to believe that he or she is cared for, loved, respected, and esteemed. According to Cobb, social support served two important functions: fulfillment of social needs and protection from the negative effects of stress and crisis situations. Cobb further reasoned that there were three types of social support that provided information: (a) esteem support, (b) belonging support, and

(c) social group membership. He theorized that the reception of these types of support buffered and sheltered one from the effects of stress.

Summary of Buffering Hypothesis. In summary, Cassel (1974), Caplan (1974), and Cobb (1976) contributed novel concepts about social support and influenced current researchers. Their views that social support buffered against stress have dominated the nature of social support research (Vaux, 1988). Although the buffering hypothesis has remained a dominant theme in social support literature, convergent ideas have been proposed about the utility of this hypothesis (Ducharme & Martin, 2000). Alternate viewpoints and related research are presented in the next section.

Direct Effects Hypothesis of Social Support

The direct effects (also known as main effects model) hypothesis of social support posited that social support is always beneficial to a person's well-being (Taylor, Peplau, & Sears, 1997). According to this theory, the positive effects of social support would be noticeable during nonstressful times as well as stressful times (Taylor et al.). Ducharme and Martin's (2000) study examined the effects of social support on job satisfaction under the framework of the buffering hypothesis and the main effects model. Data analysis failed to confirm the buffering hypothesis and confirmed the main effects model. Social support proved beneficial to one's feelings of job satisfaction whether or not there were any stressful situations present.

Buffering Hypothesis versus Direct Effects Hypothesis

Recently, there has been debate about which hypothesis is most suitable for testing social support (Ducharme & Martin, 2000; Greenglass, Fiksenbaum, & Burke, 1996). Although both camps of thought provided empirical evidence for their claims neither has held an overwhelming advantage (Greenglass et al.). Greenglass et al. found

support for the buffering hypothesis in their study of burnout among school-based educators. However, Ducharme and Martin failed to find support for the buffering hypothesis and instead confirmed the direct effects hypothesis. This controversy warranted further investigation into the relevance and applicability of these theories in research. Therefore, the researcher chose the buffering hypothesis as the conceptual framework of this study.

Job Satisfaction Theories

Glaser (1976) noted that in 1981 Wood described research of the quality of work life as being concerned with how the relationship between worker and the work environment (physical, social, and emotional) affects job attitudes and behaviors. Wood argued that job satisfaction was dependent on how well workers' job values match the work environment (*interactionist theory*). Wood conducted a yearlong study and found support for the interactionist theory: job satisfaction related to workers' values and work setting.

However, concern for workers' life on the job was not a novel concept at that time (Glaser). Glaser described how the turn of the century brought focus and attention to changing a monotonous, autocratic worklife. During this era, workers were not happy with traditional management authority, as the rise of labor unions could attest to this fact (Glaser). Thus began a rethinking of basic job structure and how the work environment could be altered to increase job satisfaction and improve overall worklife.

Motivational Theories

The Hawthorne Studies revolutionized perceptions of employees and their attitudes toward their jobs (Linder, 1998). Linder (1998) noted that in 1924 Mayo conducted experiments about productivity and work conditions at the Western Electric

Hawthorne Works. Preliminary experiments involved the effects of light on worker productivity. These experiments proved that the amount of light in a workspace was not related to amount of productivity.

However, Mayo began to research other variables that would affect productivity. In the process, he stumbled across a principle of human motivation that would revolutionize the theory and practice of management: Money alone did not motivate employees to perform their jobs well and feel satisfied with their work (Linder, 1998). There were other factors involved; as a result, researchers focused on why and how employees became motivated. As a result of the Hawthorne studies, researchers (and managers) focused on the human element of work and management. The needs and motivations of the employees became the primary focus. The term *motivation* has been defined as (a) an internal force to gratify an unsatisfied need, (b) the psychological process that gives behavior principle and path, and (c) the resolve to achieve (Dworetzkey, 1991). Motivational theories discussed in the upcoming sections are Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Allport's job identity, and Herzberg's two-factor theory.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Maslow (1968) developed a need-hierarchy theory to explain employee motivation. According to Maslow, five levels of human needs existed on a theoretical pyramid, which is depicted in Figure 2. The first two levels typified basic human needs such as physiological needs (food, shelter) and safety needs (physical and emotional). The third level represented social needs. A person needed to feel love and belongingness in a group to fulfill this level. The fourth level typified the esteem needs; A person must feel a sense of accomplishment and achievement to fulfill this need. The final level referred to the self-actualizing need. A person fulfilled self-actualization (or perfecting of the self) when he or she had fulfilled each prior level.

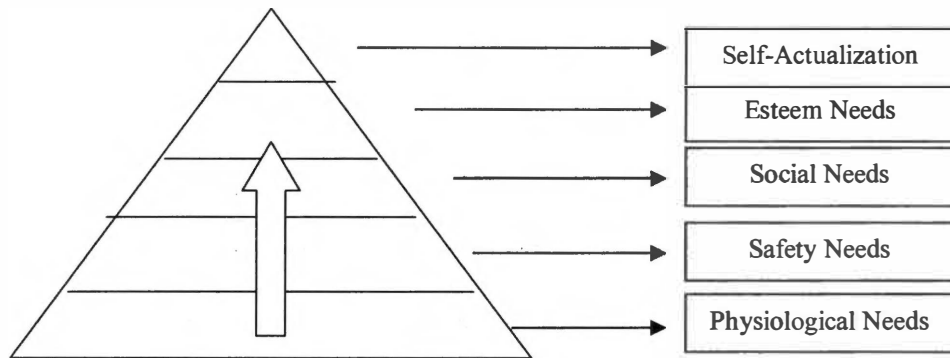


Figure 2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. According to Maslow, needs were organized on a theoretical pyramid. Basic needs had to be fulfilled before complex needs could be filled.

Maslow (1968) argued that one could not fulfill a higher level of need unless the bottom levels of needs were fulfilled. Maslow also argued that some needs were more powerful than others depending on an individual's circumstance. In general, Maslow's theory was a valid description of human motivation. However, Maslow's theory has been criticized by researchers because the theory fails to predict behaviors and motivations in unusual and complex situations (Dworetzky, 1991).

Allport's Job Identity. Glaser (1976) reported that Allport (1960) succinctly expressed an integral component of satisfaction: job identity. Employees realized job identity when they used all of their talents in their work, understood completely the nature and meaning of their work, and enjoyed their coworkers and managers. Heightened productivity and happiness with the job resulted from feelings of job identity. Allport theorized that job satisfaction would be low if the worker did not find work meaningful, did not participate in job decisions, and was unhappy with coworkers and authority.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. In 1959, Herzberg (1966) interviewed a group of workers to find out what factors made them feel satisfied with their jobs and what factors made them feel dissatisfied with their jobs. Developed as a result of this research, Herzberg's two-factor theory has dominated employee motivational theory. In essence, Herzberg believed that most workers wanted to do a good job and be productive. During his interviews, Herzberg discovered that money alone did not make a worker happy or motivate a worker to be productive. There were other aspects of a job that contributed to job satisfaction and motivation to succeed; workers have a need for responsibility, recognition, achievement, and growth. Basically, Herzberg classified motivation into two categories: motivators and hygies.

According to Herzberg (1966), *motivators* (also called satisfiers) had the potential to make employees productive, creative, and committed to their jobs because they fulfilled internal needs for meaning and growth. Increased job satisfaction would be the result of the fulfillment of motivators. As depicted in Figure 3, examples of motivators were (a) achievement, (b) recognition, (c) meaningful work, (d) responsibility, and (e) opportunity for growth.

In contrast, *hygies* (also called dissatisfiers) had the potential to make employees dissatisfied with their jobs. Hygies were environmental factors of the job that, if not handled properly or were absent, could create job dissatisfaction. However, these environmental factors could not directly increase the motivation levels of the employees. As depicted in Figure 3, examples of hygies were (a) pay, (b) company policy, (c) supervision, (d) working conditions, and (e) interpersonal relationships.

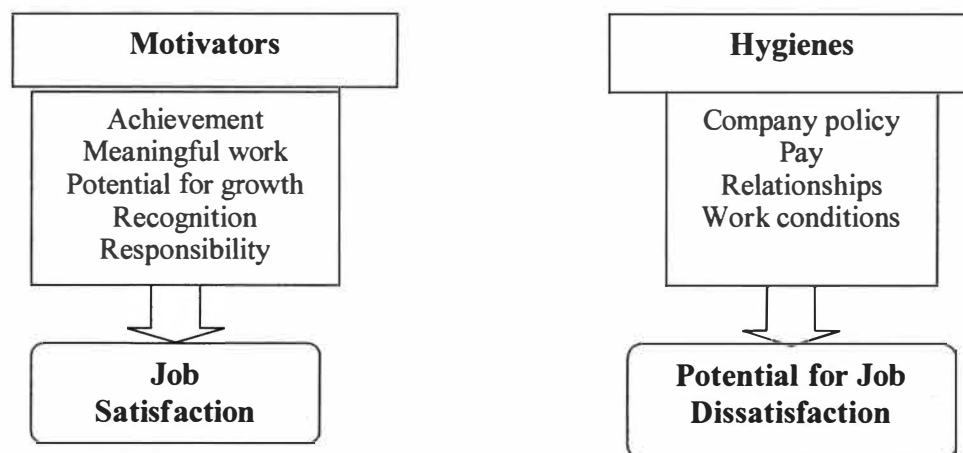


Figure 3. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory.

Spillover Hypothesis

Weaver (1978) predicted that there would be a positive correlation between satisfaction with life and satisfaction with work. The spillover hypothesis suggested that feelings of satisfaction in one area of life affected feelings of satisfaction in another area. By this reasoning, one could assume that if an employee felt satisfied with his or her life roles then those feelings of satisfaction would influence that employee to feel satisfied with his or her work role. Current research has confirmed the utility of the spillover hypothesis (Judge & Watanabe, 1993; Lance, Lautenschlager, Sloan, & Varga, 1989; Near, Rice, & Hunt, 1978; Schaubroeck, Ganster, & Fox, 1992). However, research has not determined whether or not satisfaction with life causes satisfaction with a job, or whether or not satisfaction with a job causes satisfaction with life. Some researchers have argued for the later because work is important and valuable to people (Near et al).

Judge and Watanabe (1993) conducted an original investigation of the relationship between life satisfaction and job satisfaction. Previous researchers used either cross-lagged correlations or nonrecursive models as methodologies. Judge and Watanabe used a cross-sectional and longitudinal design to analyze data collected from

the 1972-1973 and the 1977 Quality of Employment Surveys. The researchers analyzed 804 completed surveys for job satisfaction and life satisfaction. The results suggested that job satisfaction and life satisfaction were positively and reciprocally related. In Judge and Watanabe's study, job satisfaction influenced life satisfaction, and life satisfaction equally influenced job satisfaction. However, these effects became weak over a period of time, as the longitudinal data indicated. The authors recommended that future research should attempt to understand the nature of the relationship in greater detail.

Current Research

Social Support and Job Satisfaction

More studies in organizational research have focused on job satisfaction than on any other organizational variable (Spector, 1997). Researchers as well as organization managers have wanted to know how well people like their jobs and how satisfied they are with different aspects of their jobs such as (a) pay, (b) promotion, or (c) opportunity for advancement. As a result, researchers have conducted empirical investigations to question why jobs satisfy people and what contributes most to job satisfaction (Spector).

Recent studies have focused on environmental characteristics of the job such as (a) organizational constraints, (b) role variables, and (c) workload that may influence satisfaction (Spector, 1997). Other studies have focused on character traits of workers such as (a) locus of control, (b) negative or positive affect, (c) self-efficacy, and (d) person-job fit (Spector). For this study, the researcher reviewed literature that concentrated on social support as a variable that could influence job satisfaction among the helping professions as well as other professions.

The relevant literature examined how social support may contribute to job satisfaction (Cook & Mandrillo, 1982; Decker & Borgen, 1993; Hinshaw, Smeltzer, &

Atwood, 1987; Karasek & Theorell, 1990; McCloskey, 1990). For example, Cook and Mandrillo investigated coworker relationships and job satisfaction to test the assumption that colleagues provide an important source of social support. They found that coworker relationships were most highly correlated with job satisfaction than with any other situational support.

In the same vein, Hinshaw et al. (1987) discovered that group cohesion was a significant influence on job satisfaction. Likewise, Karasek and Theorell (1990) concluded that social support moderated the effects of job stress. In this regard, social support acted as a coping mechanism in the face of organizational strain and stressors, which then allowed an individual to interpret the stressor as controllable.

Further investigation about social support as a coping mechanism included McCloskey's (1990) study concerning the effects of autonomy and social integration on job satisfaction among staff nurses. One hundred fifty (150) staff nurses in a midwestern hospital completed questionnaires pertaining to job autonomy, satisfaction, and social integration. Data analysis revealed that nurses who felt low job autonomy and low social integration felt less satisfied with their jobs than did nurses with high job autonomy and high social integration. One notable insight was that nurses who felt low job autonomy but felt high social integration were relatively satisfied with their jobs. McCloskey noted that social support could have had a buffering effect on stress in this sample.

Decker and Borgen (1993) focused on variables that could predict occupational strain and job satisfaction, such as negative affect and coping resources. Two hundred forty-nine (249) participants who worked full-time in a variety of occupations completed a battery that measured (a) occupational stress and strain, (b) job satisfaction, and (c) coping resources. Coping resources consisted of recreational activities, self-care, and

social support. Results showed that high coping was associated with low stress and with high job satisfaction.

Some studies have shown that social support may either buffer or directly influence the effects of job stress thereby increasing job satisfaction (Cook & Mandrillo, 1982; Hinshaw et al., 1987; Koniarek & Dudek, 1996; Rook, 1990). Ducharme and Martin (2000) investigated the effects of social support on perceived levels of job satisfaction on a nationally representative sample. Whereas extant research examined affective support only, Ducharme and Martin chose to examine the effects of affective support and instrumental support on job satisfaction. The authors used data constricted from the 1997 National Employee Survey, which was conducted by the Survey Research Center and the University of Georgia's Center for Research on Deviance and Behavioral Health. The survey consisted of questions regarding attitudes and behaviors toward (a) work, (b) occupational conditions, and (c) employees' personal habits such as excessive drinking. Moreover, additional questions assessed job satisfaction and depressive symptomology.

The sample size the Ducharme and Martin (2000) study included 1,951 participants, and after comparison with data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the demographics of the sample proved almost identical to the demographics of the population. Under the rubric of the buffering hypothesis and the main effects model, the investigators used regression analyses to determine whether affective support and instrumental support predicted levels of job satisfaction. Their first hypothesis was that affective and instrumental social support would influence the experience of job satisfaction regardless of the presence of stressful work situations, thereby testing the main effects model of social support. Their second hypothesis tested the buffering

hypothesis; they expected to find that instrumental support would buffer the effects of job stress only in high stress situations.

Their data analyses yielded interesting results. With respect to the general experience of job satisfaction, (a) low autonomy, (b) low levels of task complexity, (c) high job pressure, and (d) low extrinsic rewards correlated with low job satisfaction and high levels of job stress. As a test of the main effects model, data analyses supported Ducharme and Martin's (2000) hypothesis; indeed, social support in the workplace improved one's overall job satisfaction. Affective support showed a definite positive prediction of job satisfaction and interestingly, instrumental support also had a strong impact upon job satisfaction. However, the investigators failed to find support for the buffering hypothesis. They noted that the effects of instrumental support on job satisfaction during periods of high stress were trivial at best.

This research proved significant because it revealed that instrumental support might have a greater influence on job satisfaction than once previously thought. Much of the previous research on social support focused only on affective support while neglecting instrumental support as a possible variable in the social support-job satisfaction relationship. The following sections discuss research related to social support or job satisfaction with respect to (a) gender, (b) ethnicity, (c) age, and (d) length of employment.

Gender

Mason (1995) tested three theories that rationalize why men and women differ in their experience of job satisfaction. One theory was the socialization perspective. This perspective argued that women are satisfied with jobs in which they can form a supportive, cooperative community with their coworkers. This perspective also argued

that women are socialized into accepting values, attitudes and behaviors that are communal. On the other hand, men are satisfied with jobs in which they can assert themselves and master the task at hand. The socialization perspective argued that men are socialized into accepting values, attitudes, and behaviors that are agentic in nature. Therefore, satisfaction with a specific job is largely based on gender.

To contrast, the situational perspective argued that satisfaction with a job lies within certain facets of a job that complement gender-based values. To explain, enriched opportunity structures of a job offer the opportunity to satisfy agentic values such as opportunities for growth and obtaining rewards. Men typically fill such jobs. Impoverished opportunity structures offer the opportunity to satisfy communal values such as good relations with coworkers. Women typically fill these jobs.

Lastly, Mason (1995) described Eagly's (1983) social role theory, which can be considered a combination of the previously mentioned theories. Social roles referred to the set of norms that apply to people in particular positions, such as teachers or doctors. To illustrate, cultural norms typically dictate that women fill communal jobs such as a teacher or secretary (an impoverished opportunity structure) while the same norms dictate that men fill agentic roles such as a manager or doctor (an enriched opportunity structure).

Taking data obtained by an extensive survey conducted by a large North-American management consulting company, Mason (1995) divided the sample into four categories: (a) clerical men, (b) clerical women, (c) managerial men, and (d) managerial women. Clerical positions were considered impoverished opportunity structures; managerial positions were considered enriched opportunity structures. Questionnaires assessed two classes of dependent variables: the participants' perceptions of job

opportunities such as opportunity to learn new skills or opportunity for advancement and job satisfaction facets such as interesting work and fair treatment.

A statistical analysis revealed support for the situational perspective, some support for social role theory, and no support for the socialization perspective.

Differences existed between men and women within each job category concerning the variables of advancement, feedback from supervisors, performance evaluation, and pay.

Interestingly, an important discovery of this study was that managerial men and managerial women did not differ in their sources of job satisfaction.

Spector (1997) posited that although reported gender differences in job satisfaction have been inconsistent, gender remains a crucial element in job satisfaction research. For instance, Huang (2001) studied high school teachers' perceptions of their school environment in regards to (a) job satisfaction, (b) student discipline, (c) principal leadership, and (d) teacher-student relations. Huang's purpose was to determine if gender differentiated responses of perceptions. The researcher asked participants to complete the Teacher's School Environment Survey. One hundred twenty-seven (127) men and 148 women completed the survey. Results indicated that women reported higher levels of job satisfaction than men did.

On the other hand, though not a direct study of gender differences in job satisfaction, Lood (2001) discovered that there were no reported gender differences in job satisfaction among a sample of doctoral level school psychologists. Similarly, Hundley (2001) conducted an interesting study concerning job satisfaction among a sample of self-employed business owners. After analyzing data from the 1997 National Study of the Changing Work Force, Hundley found that both genders reported satisfaction with self-

employment. However, married women with children were less satisfied with their earnings than men and women without children.

In an effort to understand relationships and social connectedness, Lee and Robbins (2000) tested the hypothesis that women and men equally share a need for social support and connectedness. However, they postulated that women and men differ in the types of relationships that sustain their social needs. For women, Lee and Robbins hypothesized that intimacy (guidance) and physical proximity (reliable alliance) would fulfill their social needs. For men, the researchers hypothesized that relationships offering social competitiveness (reassurance of worth) would fulfill their needs for social support and connectedness.

Lee and Robbins (2000) recruited participants from a large southeastern university and administered a questionnaire packet consisting of: (a) the Social Connectedness Scale, (b) the Social Provisions Scale, and (c) the UCLA Loneliness Scale-Revised. Statistical interpretation of data revealed support for Lee and Robbin's (2000) initial hypothesis: college women and men did not differ on their self-reported levels of social connectedness. In addition, results revealed that women and men did differ in the types of relationships that fulfilled their social needs. Women looked to relationships that offered reliable alliance to fulfill their social needs while men looked to relationships that offered reassurance of worth to fulfill their social needs.

Rotheram-Borus, Lee, Murphy, Futterman, Duan, Birnbaum, and Lightfoot (2001) conducted a 15-month study concerning health practices of HIV infected youths after attending preventative interventions. The interventions emphasized using coping mechanisms such as social support in an effort to reduce risky health behaviors.

Rotheram-Borus et al. noted some gender differences in responding to the interventions.

HIV infected youths ages 13-24 were assigned to either a 2-model intervention group or a control group. At the end of the study, the researchers discovered women rather than men were more likely to change their habits and actively use social support as a coping mechanism. Both women and men in the intervention group increased their use of the social support coping mechanism as compared to the control group.

Greenglass, Burke, and Konarski (1998) examined differences in how each gender used social support and coping mechanisms to influence burnout. They correlated social support and coping mechanisms with three dimensions of burnout: (a) depersonalization, (b) emotional exhaustion, and (c) lack of feeling personal accomplishment. During the first part of the study, 833 school-based educators completed inventories consisting of the Maslach Burnout Inventory, measures of social support, measures of coping, and a measure of somatic complaints attributable to burnout.

The results found gender differences in the ways social support and coping mechanisms were used to control burnout dimensions. Women who perceived themselves as having strong coworker support felt low levels of emotional exhaustion. Men who perceived themselves as having supervisor support and strong coworker support felt high levels of personal accomplishment. For men only, those who reported high levels of internal control also reported high perceptions of personal accomplishment.

Overall, the literature review revealed that gender differences in job satisfaction were situational and multifaceted. The reported differences in job satisfaction for each gender may be related to values and rewards obtained from employment.

Ethnicity

Day et al. (1999) explored the concept of ethnicity as a variable of job satisfaction. Of the 254 subjects sampled, 58 reported themselves as members of

underrepresented ethnic groups. The researchers noticed that this self-categorization was associated with lower levels of job satisfaction than the other subjects. It was also associated with poor perceptions of organizational climate and negative reactions to diversity issues.

Another study found different results. Kaye, Alexander, and Kauffman (1999) examined the factors that contributed to job satisfaction and commitment to stay in an organization among older adults aged 55 and over. They administered the Job Satisfaction Index (JSI) to a sample of 164. The job satisfaction scores were high for all subjects and did not differ significantly for age and gender. However, Whites did report significantly less satisfaction with work than did Hispanic and African American workers. Interestingly, Kaye et al. found that Hispanics, Whites, and men reported less interference between job and personal life than African Americans and women.

Conversely, Omundson, Schroeder, and Stevens (1996) found no association between job satisfaction and ethnicity. Their study concerned Euro-American and Hispanic certified public accountants. The researchers wanted to compare differences between the two ethnic groups about their respective (a) personality traits, (b) job satisfaction levels, and (c) intent to leave ideations. Eight hundred sixty (860) Euro-Americans and 119 Hispanics completed surveys. Omundson et al. discovered that ethnicity was not associated with any of the independent variables.

Snowden (2001) explored the correlation between social support and stress among African American women, White women, and White men. Using the main effects hypothesis as a framework, the study examined the effects of social support upon two domains: personal life and professional life. The researcher examined data extracted from a national 3-year study of stress and health. Participants in the study worked for a large

health promotion program. The sample ($N = 757$) consisted of primarily white-collar African American women, White women, and White men. African American men were not used in the data analysis because data on this group were incomplete.

The 3-year study used a questionnaire survey of stress and health as well as collected illness and attendance records of the participants in the sample. Snowden (2001) used data collected from the questionnaires for the study. The questionnaires assessed participants' (a) stress and well-being, (b) depression, (c) source of social support at home (spouse, friend, family), and (d) source of social support at work (supervisor, coworker). The questionnaires also asked participants to rate the quality of social support at home and at work. With respect to work social support, the results found no significant difference in the level of job-related tension between African American women, White women, and White men. However, White men experienced significantly higher job satisfaction than White women and African American women.

Snowden (2001) noted that high levels of home support were associated with low levels of job-related tension for White men and White women. The relationship between job-related tension and home support for African American women was not significant. However, home support reduced depression and strain for all groups. Job support proved significant for White men and White women in the personal domains but not for African American women.

One interpretation of this result is that the support of supervisors and coworkers could reduce depression and strain for White men and White women. Nevertheless, this support is not beneficial to African American women. Another interesting result of this research was that for all three groups high levels of job support significantly related to high levels of job satisfaction.

The study was important because the growing diversity of this country's workforce calls attention to the cultural differences each group has in response to stress and well-being. One way to facilitate workforce diversity is to understand how stress and social support interplay within and outside of the workplace for each cultural group.

Age

Finegold, Mohrman, and Spreitzer (2002) wanted to detect the characteristics of an employee that predict commitment and willingness to change companies. Their goal was to determine whether or not age was a characteristic that predicted commitment and willingness to change. The researchers surveyed over 3,000 technical professionals. The participants aged 31 and over reported high satisfaction with job security. The reported satisfaction with job security positively related to commitment for this age group. The participants aged 30 and under felt satisfied with their work-life balance. Whereas those 31 and over felt satisfied with job security, the 30 and under group felt satisfied with opportunities and with pay based on performance. A satisfaction with (a) work-life balance, (b) opportunities, and (c) pay positively correlated with commitment for this age group and negatively correlated with intent to leave. Although these findings were statistically significant, the researchers noted that the size of the age effect was small.

Similar previous research on the effects of age upon job satisfaction yielded mixed results (Hochwarter, Ferris, Perrewé, Witt, & Kiewitz, 2001). Some problems of previous research have been limited samples and failure to control for tenure and affective disposition (Hochwarter et al.). To control these problems, Hochwarter et al. conducted a meta-analysis of age and job satisfaction research. They controlled the factors of gender, supervision, position tenure, and affective disposition. After reviewing the data analysis, Hochwarter et al. concluded that the relationship was not linear. They

argued that a U-shaped curve was the best way to describe the relationship between age and job satisfaction: Satisfaction was highest in younger and older workers and lowest in middle age workers.

Bernal, Snyder, and McDaniel (1998) chose to measure age and job satisfaction because the true form and strength of the relationship between these two variables remained a puzzle. Bernal et al. reported that because there have been many contradictory reports about the nature of the relationship between age and job satisfaction, the debate about this subject remains largely unanswered. Previous research like Hochwarter et al. (2001) has reported the relationship to be (a) positive linear, (b) negative linear, (c) U-shaped, (d) inverted U-shaped, or (e) no significant relationship. However, Bernal et al. criticized previous research for lack of large samples, inherent methodological problems in the execution of the research, and using participants employed in a single occupation within a single organization.

Bernal et al. (1998) used a large, national sample ($N = 1,095$) for their study. They extracted the data from the 1977 Quality of Employment Survey sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor. The researchers mentioned that the study used participants employed in many different occupations from all types of organizations (e.g. manufacturing, service, government). Bernal et al. developed their own job satisfaction survey based on items from the 1977 Survey. The Bernal scale measured (a) coworker satisfaction, (b) pay satisfaction, (c) promotion satisfaction, (d) supervisor satisfaction, and (e) work satisfaction. In addition, they provided internal consistency reliabilities for each facet of job satisfaction measured by their scale. Nevertheless, Bernal et al. provided no information concerning the validity of their own scale or the original 1977 Survey.

Overall, job satisfaction and age reported a positive linear relationship, although the significance was very small. Three of the five facets of job satisfaction (coworker satisfaction, supervisor satisfaction, and promotion satisfaction) proved no relationship with age. The remaining two facets (pay satisfaction and work satisfaction) did show a small relationship with age. Because of their research, Bernal et al. (1998) argued for future research to step away from using age as a variable of job satisfaction because aging is a unique and complicated process that may be difficult to measure in relation with job satisfaction. Nonetheless, the present researcher used discretion regarding the soundness of this proposal since the Bernal et al. study used 20-year old data. Much has changed about the nature of work and the work environment in the past twenty years. In addition, there was no discussion about the structure of the job satisfaction scale. This researcher was interested to determine whether or not the current results of this study would corroborate Bernal et al.'s assertion.

Length of Employment

A popular thought has been that as length of employment increases so does job satisfaction (Burke, 1996). Burke sampled 829 women and 766 men in a large organization to see how satisfied they were with their jobs and what factors contributed to job satisfaction. Burke discovered that overall job satisfaction was moderate. Burke also discovered that, after controlling different factors, men and women at higher levels in the organization were more satisfied than men and women at lower levels.

Based on the idea that long tenure with a job equates with high job satisfaction, many organizations mistakenly place emphasis on creating motivation and satisfaction in new employees while assuming that long-term employees are already motivated and satisfied with their jobs (Traut, Larsen, & Feimer, 2000). However, the researchers

cautioned that, to have a successful workplace, organizations must pay attention to and invest in their long-term employees. They based this argument on their study of job satisfaction among long-term fire department personnel. The researchers surveyed 123 employees on five facets of job satisfaction: (a) satisfaction with the supervisor, (b) satisfaction with the agency relationships, (c) satisfaction with job training, (d) satisfaction with job content, and (e) overall job satisfaction.

Traut et al. (2000) used regression analysis to analyze the data collected. They discovered that new employees felt more satisfaction with their jobs than did long-term employees. The researchers noted some suggestions for improving job satisfaction among long-term employees: (a) recognize and reward for a job well done, (b) involve employees in decision-making, and (c) continually train and educate the employees no matter their length of employment.

Related Research

The antithesis of job satisfaction is job stress or feeling threatened in an occupational role (Sullivan & Nashman, 1996). The result of accumulated job stress is burnout, the emotional and physical exhaustion of workers (Sullivan & Nashman). Both can affect one's feeling of satisfaction with work. Some research has shown a relationship between quality social support and decreased job stress and burnout (Chan & Hui, 1998; Schonfeld, 2001). For this reason, research concerning social support with respect to job stress and burnout is discussed.

Job Stress

Terry et al. (1995) tested Thoits' (1986) model that coping mediates the relationship between social support and stress. The research was comprised of two studies. Using a short-term longitudinal design, the first study focused on employee

adjustment to a recent stressful experience at work and the second study focused on social support, coping, and adjustment among a sample of expectant mothers. The first study sample consisted of 137 employees working for a large retail organization in Australia. During the first intervention, the subjects completed two questionnaires assessing social support and coping. Two weeks later, of the subjects who completed questionnaires, 116 completed questionnaires that measured job satisfaction and psychological well-being, which are both indicators of adjustment.

From results obtained through structural equation analyses, the researchers found support for Thoits' model. High levels of colleague support were related to subjects' responses to work stress. Subjects with high levels of work-based support were using that support as a coping mechanism to adjust favorably to work stress. The second study consisted of 197 expectant mothers and was designed similar to the first study. Results indicated that high levels of family support had direct and positive effects of adjustment to motherhood.

In response to the growing body of literature that suggest teachers work under severely stressful conditions, Chan and Hui (1998) conducted an investigation of Hong Kong teachers' stress level. Four hundred fifteen (415) guidance and non-guidance secondary school teachers completed inventories that measured amounts of (a) perceived stress, (b) amounts of social support, and (c) levels of psychological symptoms such as depression, anxiety, insomnia, nervousness, fatigue, and social dysfunction. The researchers calculated overall measurements for stress, social support, and psychological symptoms. Data analyses indicated that high levels of stress correlated with high levels of psychological symptoms. However, regardless of stress level, teachers who reported high levels of social support reported significantly lower levels of psychological symptoms

than low social support teachers. As an aside, the researchers indicated that gender did not have a significant effect on stress levels.

Another study examined the impact of job stress among teachers. Schonfeld (2001) discovered that adverse working conditions began to affect women teachers as soon as they started working. The short-term longitudinal study involved 184 new teachers and focused on the relationship between (a) negative working environments, (b) social support, (c) locus of control, (d) school factors, and (e) depressive symptoms. Data were collected in fall and in spring. Factors that affected depressive symptoms, job satisfaction, self-esteem, and motivation to teach in the spring were social support and adverse work conditions experienced in the fall. Specifically, social support from supervisors and colleagues received in the fall was positively related to job satisfaction in the spring; social support from nonwork sources was positively related to high levels of self-esteem and low levels of depressive symptoms in the spring. Conversely, locus of control and school factors showed no significant correlations with job satisfaction, depressive symptoms, self-esteem, or motivation to teach.

Burnout

To improve teachers' quality of life, Greenglass et al. (1996) questioned how social support could buffer the effects of burnout among a sample of male and female teachers employed in a large Canadian city. Specifically, the facets of burnout under investigation were (a) emotional exhaustion, (b) depersonalization, and (c) reduced personal accomplishment. Eight hundred thirty-three (833) teachers completed questionnaires that measured burnout, sources of stress, and social support. Multiple regression revealed that coworkers were the most significant buffer against emotional

exhaustion and that emotional support from both coworkers and supervisors buffered against depersonalization.

Starnaman and Miller (1992) studied burnout and communication among 182 schoolteachers in an urban school district. The variables of (a) work overload, (b) role conflict, and (c) role ambiguity constituted the examination of burnout and job satisfaction. The variables of participation in decision-making and support from the principal were examined as possible influences for reduced experiences of burnout. The results indicated that the workload of the teachers and the amount of support the principal gave the teachers significantly related to burnout.

A study of public school teachers revealed that teachers were less likely to experience burnout or emotional exhaustion when supervisors fulfilled the social provision reassurance of worth (Russell et al, 1987). When teachers were praised for the quality of their work, they were less likely to experience the exhaustive effects of daily strains and stresses and were more likely to feel a sense of personal achievement. By having their sense of worth reassured, teachers focused on the important contributions they made to their students on a daily basis.

This concept has been replicated in a study concerning the burnout of nurses conducted by Constable and Russell (1986) who found when nurses were encouraged and praised for their accomplishments by supervisors, they felt less burnout and more personal achievement. These nurses were characterized as underpaid and constantly in sight of human suffering; their positions elicited a high degree of pressure. Gaining reassurance of worth enabled these hard workers to cope with stressful interactions that would otherwise have fatigued their motivation and commitment to their job.

Although not a study on social support and job satisfaction, Brewer and Clippard (2002) studied job satisfaction among Student Support Services Personnel (SSSP). Using the Job Satisfaction Survey and the Maslach Burnout Inventory, Brewer and Clippard measured the relationship between burnout and job satisfaction among 250 SSSP participants. Their results showed that significant relationships existed between three variables of burnout and overall job satisfaction. The burnout variable personal accomplishment positively related to overall job satisfaction while emotional exhaustion negatively related to overall job satisfaction. This research was significant because it measured job satisfaction among a student support services program. In addition, their research found that SSSP participants experienced lower burnout and less job satisfaction than counterpart in other helping professions.

Alternate Views

Although researchers have found support for a positive relationship between social support and job satisfaction, a clear consensus of the strength of the relationship has not been established. For example, Blegen and Mueller (1987) conducted a longitudinal investigation of levels of job satisfaction experience by nurses. They concluded that social integration had little effect on job satisfaction. A similar study found that interaction between close friends at work did not correlate with job satisfaction or intent to leave a job (Price & Mueller, 1981). Accordingly, Ross, Altmaier, and Russell (1989) did not find support for the buffering effects of social support on stress.

A study conducted by Burke and Greenglass (1994) examined possible predictors of job satisfaction and emotional well-being of teachers. Burke and Greenglass collected data from 833 teachers that measured (a) situational variables, (b) job stressors, (c) role conflict, and (d) social support. While results found support for job stressors as potential

predictors of job burnout, social support had little correlation with emotional well-being and job satisfaction. Their results confirmed a previous study that concluded social support and role conflict had little effect on job satisfaction and burnout (Burke & Greenglass).

In study of 1,023 hospital nurses, researchers attempted to isolate social support as a factor that alleviated levels of burnout among these professionals (Koniarek & Dudek, 1996). Koniarek and Dudek investigated the influence of work-specific social support on the burnout variables of (a) emotional exhaustion, (b) depersonalization, and (c) personal accomplishment. They also investigated the potential relationship between general social support and job stress as well as overall stress and well-being.

Koniarek and Dudek's (1996) results lent partial support for the buffering hypothesis of social support. In short, burnout components correlated with social support only according to type and amount of social support. Personal accomplishment correlated with general social support and work-specific social support. General social support and not work-specific social support correlated with low levels of depersonalization. In fact, the researchers did not find any correlation between any social support and emotional exhaustion. The researchers concluded that neither type of social support buffered stress and job burnout.

Conclusions

Several trends emerged from the literature suggesting that the relationship between social support and job satisfaction is dynamic and multifaceted. While it is generally accepted that social support contributes to job satisfaction, the direct links and causal requirements are not completely understood by researchers. Perhaps demographics may be a third variable affecting the social support and job satisfaction relationship.

The studies clearly showed the need for additional investigation into situational as well as static factors revolving around job satisfaction. More investigation into social support could contribute to the knowledge of how mechanisms are used to control job stress and increase job satisfaction.

Summary of Review of Literature

Job satisfaction research has uncovered how some workers cope with the inevitable stress of demanding occupations and prevent burnout and stress from reaching dysfunctional levels. Some researchers have focused on relationship between social support and job satisfaction. The review of literature revealed that an important yet puzzling link existed between social support and job satisfaction. Most notably, (a) age, (b) gender, (c) ethnicity, and (d) length of employment served as a piece of the puzzle. With a few exceptions, the research suggested that social support did buffer the effects of job stress and could reduce occurrences of job burnout among the helping professions.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Chapter II reviewed the literature related to job satisfaction and social support. The review presented both concepts in terms of theoretical perspectives and current research approaches. Chapter III provides a description of the research design, instrumentation, population, data collection, and statistical analysis.

Research Design

The purpose of this research was to examine social support and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association. Additionally, the researcher examined the differences between (a) age, (b) ethnicity, (c) gender, and (d) length of employment with respect to job satisfaction and social support. Selected participants were asked to complete three questionnaires: (a) the Social Provisions Scale, (b) the Job Satisfaction Survey, and (c) the demographic questionnaire. The researcher statistically analyzed data by using tests of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), analysis of variance (ANOVA), and Pearson product moment correlational coefficient (r). The Pearson product moment correlational coefficient allowed the researcher to decide if a significant relationship existed between job satisfaction and social support. The MANOVA and the ANOVA allowed the researcher to decide if significant differences existed for (a) age, (b) ethnicity, (c) gender, and (d) length of employment with respect to job satisfaction and social support.

Variables

Dependent Variables

For this study, job satisfaction and social support were dependent variables. As measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), job satisfaction variables consisted of: (a)

pay, (b) promotion, (c) fringe benefits, (d) coworkers, (e) supervision, (f) communication, (g) operating conditions, (h) nature of work, and (i) contingent rewards. As measured by the Social Provisions Scale (SPS), social support variables consisted of: (a) attachment, (b) guidance (c) nurturance, (d) reassurance of worth, (e) reliable alliance, and (f) social integration.

Independent Variables

The independent variables under investigation were demographic characteristics measured by the demographic questionnaire. Gender, ethnicity, age, and length of employment were measured with each variable of social support and job satisfaction to decide if significant differences existed between these four demographic characteristics and the dependent variables.

Instrumentation

To choose the most appropriate instrument for this study, the researcher reviewed many instruments to measure social support and job satisfaction. The researcher chose the Social Provisions Scale, the Job Satisfaction Survey, and the demographic questionnaire to measure the variables; these instruments are described in detail at the end of this section. In the following section, the researcher briefly described the various instruments not chosen for use in this study.

Social Support Instruments

For researchers, the measurement of social support often poses a difficult problem (Vaux, 1988). Social support is a complex phenomenon and has been defined differently by many researchers (Vaux). Some define social support as (a) group membership, (b) esteem support, or (c) guidance. Others define social support as a behavioral or cognitive phenomenon. Thus, researchers often find themselves in an instrument quagmire; there

are as many different instruments available to measure social support as there are definitions that conceptualize social support. Vaux reasoned that the difficulty in measuring social support is because no clear theoretical framework exists for social support. Also, researchers have not reached a consensus for one definition of social support. There is no guiding theory available for social support researchers. In fact, more social support theory exists than acceptable measures (Vaux). Early instruments did not possess acceptable reliability and validity. As a result, Vaux outlined three questions to guide the evaluation of social support measures:

1. Is the measure based on a specific theory?
2. Does the measure report distinct scores for support resources, support behavior, or support appraisals?
3. To what degree does the instrument measure different sources of support and different types of support?

Personal Resource Questionnaire. The Personal Resource Questionnaire ([PRQ]; Brandt & Weinert, 1981) measured participants' total level of perceived social support and the scope of the social support network. The measurement consisted of two parts. Part I was a descriptive portion that measured size of network, number of problems experienced, and level of satisfaction with the help received. This part asked participants to check from a list the people they would seek for support during a problem. The participants also were asked whether or not there was a problem within the past six months. Finally, participants were to indicate on a 6-point Likert scale how satisfied they were with the help received from the resources. Part II consisted of 25 subjective statements and measured level of perceived social support on a Likert scale.

Normative data have been established for age groups. The researchers have yet to determine normative data by demographic data such as educational level, race, and

income. The researchers indicated the test-retest reliability to be .81 for Part I (scope of network) and .72 for Part II (perceived social support). To date, the validity had not been soundly established.

To summarize, the PRQ was a measure that determined one's size and quality of social network and assessed one's level of perceived social support. Considering that the PRQ was still in development stage and its validity had not been firmly established, this instrument was not suitable for this study.

Social Relationship Scale. The Social Relationship Scale ([SRS]; McFarlane, Neale, Norman, Roy & Streiner, 1981) focused mostly on social network size and appraisals of the social network. Participants listed people with whom they would discuss problems in six areas of life that were considered potentially stressful: (a) home and family, (b) health, (c) money and finances, (d) personal and social, (e) society in general, and (f) work. The participants then rated how helpful or unhelpful the discussions had been with the people listed. The instrument administrator calculated a score by averaging the network members and helpfulness.

The SRS was a short measure, and assessed network size across a variety of life domains. Another strength was that the SRS assessed the perceptions of helpful and unhelpful interactions with social network members. However, the SRS failed to capture information about the quality of different types of support received; the measure simply gave a score for the size of one's social network and some indication of satisfaction with the social network. Considering that the SRS was developed in 1981, the research opted for a more recent instrument and one that gave more information about social support resources.

Social Connectedness Scale. The Social Connectedness Scale ([SCS]; Lee & Robbins, 1995) was a self-report questionnaire that measured the degree of closeness that a participant experienced in social networks. The scale also measured the degree of difficulty in maintaining closeness with peers, friends, coworkers, etc. There were eight statements on the SCS, and participants rated each statement on a 6-point Likert scale (1 = strongly agree and 6 = strongly disagree). A high score indicated a strong sense of being close with others in the participants' social network.

The SCS has shown significant correlation with global measures of (a) self-esteem, (b) social support, (c) anxiety, (d) academic performance, and (e) other personality measures (Lee & Robbins, 1995). Lee and Robbins also noted a high internal item consistency and test-retest reliability.

While the SCS was a carefully constructed measure, the scale was not suitable for this study. The SCS did not measure one's size and strength of social support nor did it measure one's benefits received from social resources; it only measured whether or not one felt close in relationships. Therefore, the SCS was not a valid instrument to use in this study.

Social Provisions Scale. The unpublished Social Provisions Scale ([SPS]; Russell & Cutrona, 1984) measured social support as theorized by Weiss (1974). Weiss reasoned that people experience general well-being and life satisfaction when relationships meet six fundamental needs. The purpose of the scale was to measure the fulfillment of six social provisions: (a) attachment, (b) reliable alliance, (c) opportunity for nurturance, (d) guidance, (e) social integration, and (f) reassurance of worth. In addition, the scale measured the extent to which the participant's current work relationships provide for six important relational provisions (Kruger, 1997). Each provision was operationalized, and

six subscales consisting of four questions measured each social provision. A total score reflected the participant's overall level of social support.

The researcher chose the SPS (Russell & Cutrona, 1984) to measure the variable social support. The researcher chose the SPS because of its demonstrated validity and reliability, economic value, ease of administration, and brevity of scale. In addition, the scale has been used in many studies concerning social support (Caron, Tempier, Mercier, & Leouffre, 1998; Kraus, Bazzini, Davis, Church, & Kirchman, 1993; Kruger, 1997).

The unpublished SPS measured the scope of a participant's social relationships and the extent to which the participant felt supported by social relationships (Kruger, 1997). The scale consisted of 24 statements, and participants rated each statement on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *agree*, 4 = *strongly agree*). Also, the SPS had six subscales that measure six social provisions: (a) attachment, (b) nurturance, (c) social integration, (d) reassurance of worth, (e) reliable alliance, and (f) guidance. The SPS reported a total social support score and scores for each subscale. After the researcher contacted the author to gain permission to use the SPS in this study, the author Russell provided the scale and instructions for calculating the scores for each subscale. A copy of the request to use the SPS in this study and permission to use are located in Appendix A.

The scale has been used on a wide variety of populations and in many settings. The scale has also been used in a variety of studies that measure different outcomes of social support.

1. Caron et al. (1998) administered the scale to a sample of French psychiatric welfare and general subjects to measure satisfaction with social support and satisfaction with life.

2. Wenzel (1993) gave the SPS to 115 homeless and nonhomeless disadvantaged persons who sought assistance from state employment agencies located in a southwestern city in the United States.
3. Older adult populations completed the scale in studies measuring life satisfaction, close relationships, and social support (Aquino, Russell, Cutrona, & Altmaier, 1996; Mancini & Bliesner, 1993).
4. Ross et al. (1989) used the SPS in a sample of 257 doctoral-level counselors employed at a university counseling center to measure job burnout and quality of social support.
5. While studying the experience of loneliness, Kraus et al. administered the SPS to a sample of 1,200 college students enrolled in a small southern college.
6. The scale has been used in studies involved with teacher job satisfaction (Kruger, 1997) and teacher assistance teams (Kruger, Struzziero, Watts, & Vacca, 1995).

Cutrona and Russell (1987) supported the validity and reliability of the SPS from studies of (a) college students ($N=1,183$), (b) public school teachers ($N=303$), (c) nurses ($N=306$), and (d) older adults ($N=301$). Evidence also supported that the scale was not related to measures of social desirability, a bias that often plagues measures of social support (Cutrona & Russell). The overall reliability of the scale is .915.

In addition, Cutrona and Russell (1987) provided support for the criterion-related validity, the convergent validity, and the discriminate validity. The authors of the scale found support for the internal reliability of the subscales. The reliabilities of the individual subscales ranged from .655 to .760, which indicated that each item adequately to strongly represents the construct that it was designed to measure (Russell, Cutrona, Rose, & Yurko, 1984). The reliabilities provided by Cutrona and Russell are depicted in Table 1.

Table 1

SPS Subscale Reliabilities

<i>Social Provisions Subscale</i>	<i>Reliability</i>
Attachment	.747
Social integration	.673
Reliable alliance	.653
Guidance	.760
Opportunity for nurturance	.655
Reassurance of worth	2.020

Overall, the SPS was an efficient, reliable, valid, and economic tool to measure social support. The researcher obtained a copy of the scale and permission to use the scale by e-mailing the author Russell. In return for using the scale, the researcher will send results of this study to the author Russell. A copy of the scale has not been placed in the Appendices because the researcher did not obtain permission to place it in the final copy of this paper.

Job Satisfaction Instruments

Job Descriptive Index. The Job Descriptive Index ([JDI]; Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969) was a very carefully constructed and validated measure that assessed one's satisfaction with work and retirement. Organizational psychologists contend that this was the most frequently used instrument to measure job satisfaction (O'Reilly, 1991).

Consisting of 72 short phrase items, the JDI measured five facets of job satisfaction: (a) work, (b) pay, (c) promotion, (d) supervision, and (e) coworkers. Some of the strengths of the scale were its reliability and validity as well as ease of use (Smith et al., 1969). While the scale has been regarded as popular, critics argued that its biggest

disadvantage was the fact that it measured only five facets of job satisfaction and that these facets may not be applicable to all employee groups (Spector, 1997).

Job in General Scale. The Job in General Scale ([JIG]; Ironson, Smith, Bannick, Gibson, & Paul, 1989) consisted of 18 items that assessed emotional reactions of people to their jobs. Constructed of descriptive phrases, the scale measured job satisfaction on a 3-point Likert scale. The statements were worded for variable reading abilities to comprehend the statements. The JIG measured overall job satisfaction instead of satisfaction in particular facets of a job. Ironson et al. reported high construct and criterion-related validity. An internal consistency of .90 made this scale a potential instrument to use to measure job satisfaction (Ironson et al.). However, the scale has been copyrighted; the scale was too expensive to use in the present study.

Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. Another popular scale that measured job satisfaction was the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire ([MSQ]; Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967). The long form contained 100 items and the short form contained 20 items. Overall, the MSQ measured 20 facets of job satisfaction, some of which are moral values, security, and creativity (Weiss et al.). It also assessed intrinsic satisfaction, external satisfaction, and overall job satisfaction (Spector, 1997). The internal consistency has been reported as acceptable; however, researchers have found high correlations between subscales (Spector). The researcher chose not to use this scale because it was not appropriate for the goals of this study. Also, it was copyrighted and expensive to use.

Job Attitude Scale. The Job Attitude Scale ([JAS]; Saleh, 1975) was a 120-item survey measuring one's satisfaction with 16 facets of a job. The 16 facets measured were (a) praise and recognition, (b) growth in skill, (c) creative work, (d) responsibility, (e)

advancement, (f) achievement, (g) salary, (h) security, (i) personnel policies, (j) competent supervision, (k) relations-peers, (l) relations-subordinates, (m) relations-supervisor, (n) working conditions, (o) status, and (p) family needs-salary.

Although this scale appears to be a thorough measurement of job satisfaction, the scale has been criticized for being redundant and narrowly measuring a construct (Boyle, 1991). In addition, the general reliability and validity have been difficult to assess (Boyle). Boyle also commented that the JAS has typographical errors, the manual lacks descriptive information about testing groups, and the references are dated from the 1960s. In view of this information, the researcher determined the JAS would not be appropriate for this study.

Job Satisfaction Survey. Spector designed the Job Satisfaction Survey ([JSS]; Spector, 1997) to measure nine facets of job satisfaction and overall job satisfaction. Spector noted that the scale is a summated rating scale format, which is the most popular format to use for job satisfaction scales. The JSS consisted of 36 items arranged on a 6-point Likert scale that gives a score for each of the nine facets: (a) promotion, (b) supervision, (c) fringe benefits, (d) contingent rewards, (e) operating conditions, (f) coworkers, (g) nature of work, (h) communication, and (i) pay. High scores on the scale represent job satisfaction.

Spector (1997) commented the validity of the JSS scale lies in its high correlation with other job satisfaction scales such as the JDI. Data analyses reveal that the total internal consistency reliability is .91, which is well above the accepted minimum of .70 (Nunnally & Kotsch, 1983). The internal consistency refers to how well the scores on one test relate to another test. The test-retest validity is .71, which reveals that the test is relatively stable over time (Spector). The researcher chose this measure for use in the

present study because the JSS was (a) valid, (b) reliable, (c) easy to administer, and (e) cost-efficient. Spector also noted that the JSS is applicable to use on people in all organizations.

The researcher obtained a copy of Spector's (1997) scale, which is located in the book for reproduction. In addition, the researcher accessed Spector's personal website on the Internet (Spector, 1998) to gain survey norms and additional information about the survey. Although the scale is copyrighted, Spector provides the scale free of charge for noncommercial educational and research purposes. In return for using the scale in this research, the researcher will send Spector a summary of the results. A copy of the JSS has not been placed in the Appendices because the researcher did not obtain permission to place it in the final copy of this paper.

Demographic Questionnaire

The demographic questionnaire, developed by Brewer, collected information on participants' demographics. The characteristics collected by the questionnaire were (a) age, (b) gender, (c) ethnicity, (d) marital status, (e) job title, (f) length of employment, and (g) status of employment, either full-time or part-time. The demographic variables of gender, ethnicity, age, and length of employment were analyzed with both social support and job satisfaction to decide whether a significant difference existed between these variables. However, the remaining demographic variables were collected only to gain a sharper image of the characteristics of student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association and were not addressed in the null hypotheses.

To describe the demographic questionnaire, participants indicated whether they worked full-time or part-time. Participants also indicated the title of their position: (a) administrative, (b) program coordinator, (c) counselor, (d) program director, (e) teacher,

and (f) other. Participants specified how long they have been employed with student support services programs (see Appendix C).

The age categories the participants were to check were (a) 21-30, (b) 31-40, (c) 41-50, (d) 51-60, and (e) 60 and over. Participants were to select ethnicity from the following: (a) African American, (b) Asian-Pacific Islander, (c) Hispanic, (d) Native American, (e) White, and (f) Other. Participants selected marital status from the following: (a) married, (b) divorced, (c) separated, (d) single, and (e) widow.

Summary of Instruments

To reiterate, the SPS measured the social support variable. The SPS provided a total social support score and scores for six facets of social support. The researcher chose to use the SPS because it was (a) easy to administer, (b) economical, (c) easy to obtain, (d) valid and (e) reliable. The JSS measured the job satisfaction variable. The JSS provided a total job satisfaction score as well as scores for nine facets of job satisfaction. Much like the SPS, the JSS was simple to administer, economical, and easy to obtain. The JSS also was a valid and reliable tool for measuring job satisfaction. The demographic questionnaire assessed the independent variables (a) age, (b) ethnicity, (c) gender, and (d) length of employment. The questionnaire collected other demographic data that were not used as part of the statistical analysis; this information was used only to describe the characteristics of the sample.

Population and Sample

The population under investigation was student support services program personnel. The researcher's goal was to discover a significant correlation between job satisfaction and social support among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association. The majority of SAEOPP members are people who work for TRIO. Another

goal of this research was to discover any significant differences existed between (a) age, (b) ethnicity, (c) gender, and (d) length of employment with respect to the dependent variables.

Description of Population

The Higher Education Act of 1965 appropriated funds for student support service programs (Hewitt, 1998). Student support service programs serve an underrepresented, disadvantaged population who is at risk for school dropout and perpetual low-wage employment. Student support services personnel work with legislators, community leaders, and local schools in an effort to promote the principles of academics and achievement.

Historically, clients of student support services come from low-income, first-generation families, and are at risk for not pursuing postsecondary education (Beavers, 1996). Student support services personnel consist of (a) advisors, (b) counselors, (c) coordinators, (d) project directors, (e) assistant directors, (f) teachers, and (g) tutors. These professionals assist clients with educational services and personal support services. Student support services personnel teach and tutor on academic matters as well as advise and support clients in choosing appropriate postsecondary institutions.

Student support service programs typically serve economically depressed areas and disadvantaged clients (Hewitt, 1998). However, student support services personnel work under the threat of reduced funding or elimination by Congress. In addition to questionable funding, student support services personnel also work under the stress of teaching and community service (Beavers, 1996). It is for this reason that it was significant to study job satisfaction among student support services personnel.

Sampling Frame

The researcher randomly chose student support services personnel to participate in this study from the *2002-2003 Directory of the Southeastern Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel* (SAEOPP). SAEOPP is one of ten regional associations of student support services, and serves the southeastern states. The states that are part of SAEOPP are: (a) Alabama, (b) Florida, (c) Georgia, (d) Kentucky, (e) Mississippi, (f) North Carolina, (g) South Carolina, and (h) Tennessee.

The researcher chose the sample from the *2002-2003 Directory of the Southeastern Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel* because the directory was the most current and convenient tool available. The directory listed the names and addresses of all 731 members. The researcher used systematic random sampling by selecting every third name listed until 300 names had been selected. An advantage of systematic random sampling is that it is not time consuming. However, a disadvantage is that one has to assume that position on a list does not influence randomness (Taylor, 1972).

For a population of 800, Dillman (2000) suggested that a sample should contain 260 participants, thereby allowing the researcher to be 95% confident that the sample is within ± 5 percentage points of the true population, assuming that half of the participants will be interested in the survey. Dillman suggested that the sample contain 458 participants for one to be 95% confident that the sample will be ± 3 percentage points of the true population. However, Dillman stated that financial constraints could limit the number of participants chosen, as was the case in this study.

Therefore, the researcher chose 300 participants from the population because that number is slightly higher than the recommended 260 participants for a ± 5 sampling error.

The researcher chose not to select more than 300 participants because of time and financial constraints. For each participant, the researcher assigned identification number from 001-300. The researcher then wrote the identification number on questionnaire packets sent to the participants as a method to track survey returns. All names of the chosen participants remained in strict confidence while the research was underway.

The sample size was ($N = 300$) 41.4% of the SAEOPP population. Gay and Airasian (2000) indicated that the use of a large sample renders it more generalizable to the population than does a small sample. Undersampling could result in sample means that are not approximate to the population. In addition, the *central limit theorem* states that as sample size increases, the means of the sample become normal regardless whether or not the population is normal (Lehman, 1995).

Procedures

After the sample had been chosen and recorded, the researcher employed methods outlined by Dillman (2000) to collect data from the sample. Dillman outlined specific strategies for researchers to use when sending surveys that should harvest good response rates. The methods of data collection are described in the following section.

Data Collection

According to Dillman (2000) multiple contacts with participants are an effective way to maximize their response to surveys. Therefore, he advised that each participant receive an introductory letter prior to receiving the surveys. The introductory letter explains that the person was chosen to be a part of the project, provides a brief description of the project, and records appreciation for their participation. However, because of time and cost restraints, this procedure was not utilized for this research.

Instead, the coded questionnaire packet was mailed to each participant at the outset. The packet consisted of a detailed cover letter explaining (a) the purpose of the project, (b) why the individual's response was highly regarded, and (c) that all answers would be held in the strictest confidence. The cover letter was also personalized to each participant as Dillman (2000) suggested that personalization may encourage higher response rates. A copy of the cover letter is located in Appendix B.

A questionnaire cover sheet separated the cover letter from the questionnaires. Using directions provided by Dillman (2000), the front cover page was memorable to the reader by (a) the use of colored paper, (b) using a title of the project that was easy to identify, (c) using a simple, neutral graphic design, and (d) supplying the name and address of the sponsor. A copy of the cover sheet also is provided in Appendix C.

The demographic questionnaire was placed after the cover sheet. The JSS was placed after the demographic questionnaire, and the SPS placed last. Following the ordering principles offered by Dillman (2000), a questionnaire back cover completed the questionnaire packet. The back cover was a simple sheet of white paper that thanked the participant for their participation and allowed room for additional comments. Copies of the demographic questionnaire and back cover page are located in the Appendix C.

In addition to the questionnaire packet, each participant received a self-addressed return envelope with a first-class stamp affixed. Dillman (2000) suggested that the use of a postage stamp rather than a postal meter discourages the participant from throwing the questionnaire packet away. As an additional incentive to complete and return the questionnaires, the participants were entered into a drawing to win a new DVD player by simply returning the questionnaire packet by a given date.

The researcher created an electronic spreadsheet to track responses. The spreadsheet listed participants' survey code and their respective responses to the instrument questions. The paper questionnaires were filed in a locked cabinet until the data analysis was complete. Then, the researcher destroyed the paper questionnaires and only kept the electronic spreadsheet.

A month after the questionnaire packets were sent, the researcher mailed follow-up letters to participants who had not responded. The nonrespondents received a second letter and a replacement questionnaire packet with a self-addressed stamped return envelope. The letter voiced that the participant had yet to return the questionnaires, reiterated why a response was so valued, and urged the participant to return the questionnaires. Although Dillman (2000) recommended the use of more than one follow-up method, this study employed only one method because of time and financial constraints. A copy of the follow-up letter is located in Appendix B.

After collection of all possible questionnaires from participants, the researcher took the completed electronic spreadsheet via floppy disk to the Statistical Computing Center located on university campus. The data from the spreadsheet was then imported by a statistical consultant into the SPSS computer program. Statistical analysis of the data was utilized to determine whether or not a significant relationship exists between (a) age, (b) ethnicity, (c) gender, and (d) length of employment with respect to the dependent variables of social support and job satisfaction. An additional analysis determined whether or not social support and job satisfaction were correlated. Finally, an analysis was utilized to determine the demographics of the sample as well as the means and standard deviations of the JSS and the SPS. A description of the data analysis is included in the following section.

Data Analysis

Analyses of the data consisted of descriptive and inferential statistics. The data analyses answered the follow null hypotheses:

- H₀₁: There was no significant difference between gender and social support among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀₂: There was no significant difference between gender and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀₃: There was a significant difference between ethnicity and social support among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀₄: There was no significant difference between ethnicity and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀₅: There was no significant difference between age and social support among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀₆: There was no significant difference between age and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀₇: There was no significant difference between length of employment and social support among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀₈: There was no significant difference between length of employment and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.
- H₀₉: There was no significant relationship between social support and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.

Frequencies and percentages were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the participants. Also, means and standard deviations were used to illustrate subscale scores on the JSS and the SPS. To answer null hypotheses one through eight, multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) were used as the omnibus test to discern whether or not the data were meaningful at the .05 level of significance ($p = .05$). An omnibus test gives a general indication about the means of the variables (Lehman, 1995). If the MANOVA did not reveal significance differences in the means, the researcher did not perform a post hoc test. A post hoc test is performed after the omnibus

test to locate where the differences are in the means (Lehman, 1995). If the MANOVA revealed significance ($p < .05$), then an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to determine which of the independent variables was significant with the dependent variable. Finally, Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (r) was used to address research question nine.

Descriptive Statistics. The researcher used descriptive statistics to depict the profile of the participants. The information collected from the demographic questionnaire reflected a nominal level of measurement. The nominal level categorizes data that can be counted for frequency. As previously mentioned, the researcher calculated the means and standard deviations for the SPS and the JSS. These descriptive statistics illustrate overall group tendencies but a researcher cannot decide whether to accept or reject the null hypothesis using descriptive statistics: Inferential statistics are used to make a decision concerning the rejection or acceptance of the null hypothesis.

Significance. To determine whether a significance is a true significant or one attributed to chance because of sampling error, a researcher selects a confidence (significance) level. The confidence levels are usually between $p = .05$ and $p = .01$. Typically, $p = .05$ is the level of choice for social researchers (Taylor, 1972). The confidence level of $p = .05$ is the level at which researchers are willing to reject the null hypothesis if sample differences occur by chance only five out of one hundred times. A researcher can make a conclusion or prediction with 95% accuracy. The researcher used the .05 level of confidence for the statistical tests of this study.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The Pearson product moment correlational coefficient is a parametric test. It is appropriate for use when the variables are interval or ratio and the sample size is larger than 30. It is also appropriate to use

when the data are normal distributed. In addition, Gay and Airasian (2000) suggest that the Pearson r is the most precise and preferred tool used to measure correlation. Since the variables in this study were interval, the Pearson r was the best test to use to determine whether or not there are significant correlations between variables of job satisfaction and social support. The researcher used confidence levels of $p = .05$ to decided significant relationships between the variables.

ANOVA. The ANOVA is utilized to decide whether or not there is a significant difference between two or more means at a selected probability level. The ANOVA is preferred over the independent samples t test because the ANOVA can make a single overall decision as to whether a significant relationship is present among three or more sample means (Iman, 1994). The t test is used for comparison of two means from independent samples or single samples in a before and after research design (Iman). Therefore, the ANOVA was the most appropriate inferential test to use because the data were normally distributed, interval, and more than three means were compared. The researcher used a confidence level of $p = .05$ to decide if there were significant differences among the means.

MANOVA. The MANOVA is analogous to the ANOVA. The difference between the two is that the MANOVA compares groups of multiple independent and dependent variables simultaneously while keeping the confidence level constant whereas the ANOVA compares multiple independent variables and one dependent variable (Iman, 1994). The advantage of the MANOVA is reduced probability of obtained a Type I error. When a researcher conducts many statistical tests for one group, the chances of rejecting true null hypothesis increase; the findings could be significant because of sampling error (Iman). For this study, the F statistic was compared with the Wilks' Lambda (Λ) value

for the .05 confidence level and the appropriate degrees of freedom. If the MANOVA revealed that the means were significantly different at $p = .05$, then the ANOVA was performed to decide which specific variables were significant.

Summary of Methodology

To summarize, this study determined whether or not social support significantly correlated with job satisfaction and if there were differences in age, ethnicity, gender, and length of employment with respect to social support and job satisfaction. The population for this study was student support services program personnel who are members of the SAEOPP association. The researcher chose a random sample of 300 student support services personnel from the *2002-2003 Directory of Southeastern Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel*, and sent each participant a survey questionnaire packet.

The MANOVA statistical test was utilized to address null hypotheses two through eight. The Pearson product moment was utilized to address null hypothesis nine. Frequencies and percentages were utilized to describe the demographics of the participants, and means and standard deviations illustrated the overall scores of the JSS and the SPS. Data are presented and analyzed in Chapter IV as they relate to the instruments used in this study. In addition, nine null hypotheses are addressed.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to find any significant correlations between job satisfaction and social support among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association. A secondary purpose was to find any differences between (a) age, (b) gender, (c) ethnicity, (d) length of employment and the dependent variables of job satisfaction and social support. Chapter III addressed the population, sample, instruments, procedures, and data analysis. In this chapter, the results of data analysis pertaining to each null hypothesis are addressed.

Response Rate

The researcher selected 300 student support services personnel from a population of 731 SAEOPP association members. The researcher initially mailed a packet containing a (a) personalized letter explaining the purpose of the study, (b) the demographic questionnaire, (c) the Job Satisfaction Survey, and (d) the Social Provisions Scale. After a follow-up mailing, a total of 150 usable questionnaires were returned, yielding an overall response rate of 50.3%. Two surveys were returned marked undeliverable, and four surveys were returned incomplete.

Description of Sample

The demographic data describing this study's participants are presented in Table 2 as frequencies and percentages. One hundred and five (70.0%) participants were women and 45 participants (30.0%) were men. All of the participants answered this item on the demographic questionnaire.

The analysis of the demographic questionnaire revealed that 28.0% of the participants were 41 to 50 years of age, 32.7% were 51 years of age and over, and 24.7%

were between the ages of 31 and 40. Approximately 15% of the participants were between the ages of 21 and 30. Again, all the participants answered this item.

With respect to ethnicity, 72 participants (48.0%) described themselves as African American. Whites represented the second largest category of participants at a frequency of 69 (46.0%). Nine (6.0%) described themselves as Other (Hispanic, Native American, Asian-Pacific Islander, and Other). All participants answered this item.

Of all participants, 149 participants answered the marital status item on the demographic questionnaire. Eighty-nine participants were married (59.3%), and 60 participants (40.0%) were not married. As noted in Table 2, one value is missing (0.7%).

One hundred forty-five (145) participants answered the employment status item. With respect to employment status, 144 participants (96.0%) worked full-time for student support services. One participant (0.7%) worked part-time. As noted in Table 2, five values are missing for this item (3.3%).

All participants answered the employment position item. Category I represented program directors and administrative positions. With respect to employment, 66 participants described themselves as Category I (44.0%). Category II represented program coordinators, counselors, teachers, and all other positions. Seventy-six (76) participants described themselves as Category II (50.7%).

The last question on the demographic questionnaire assessed participants' length of employment with student support services. Eighteen (18) participants (12.0%) have worked 2 years or less. Fifty-three (53) participants (35.3%) have worked 2 to 5 years for student support services, 31 participants (20.7%) have worked 6 to 10 years, and 28 participants (18.7%) have worked 11 to 15 years. Twenty participants (13.3%) have worked 16 or more years.

Table 2***Demographic Data of Participants***

Variable	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Age			
21 to 30	22	14.7	14.7
31 to 40	37	24.7	39.3
41 to 50	42	28.0	67.3
51 +	49	32.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	
Gender			
Male	45	30.0	30.0
Female	105	70.0	100.0
Total	150	100.0	
Ethnicity			
African American	72	48.0	48.0
White	69	46.0	94.0
Other	9	6.0	100.0
Total	150	100.0	
Marital Status			
Married	89	59.3	59.7
Not Married	60	40.0	100.0
Missing Values	1	0.7	
Total	150	100.0	
Employment Position			
Category I	66	44.0	46.5
Category II	76	50.7	100.0
Missing Values	8	5.3	
Total	150	100.0	
Length of Employment			
2 Years or Less	18	12.0	12.0
2-5 Years	53	35.3	47.3
6-10 Years	31	20.7	68.0
11-15 Years	28	18.7	86.7
16 Years or More	20	13.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	
Employment Status			
Full-time	144	96.0	99.3
Part-time	1	0.7	100.0
Missing Values	5	3.3	
Total	150	100.0	

Because the distribution of frequencies was not equal for (a) age, (b) marital status, (c) employment position, and (d) length of employment, data were compressed into fewer categories for these independent variables. This was done to avoid skewing data and not obtaining an accurate statistical figure. Marital status was categorized as either married or not married. Employment position was separated into two categories, Category I and Category II. Category I represented administrative positions and program directors. Category II represented (a) program coordinators, (b) counselors, (c) teachers, and (d) all other positions. The categories for age were (a) 21-30 years of age, (b) 31-40 years of age, (c) 41-50 years of age, and (d) 51+. The compressed categories for length of employment were (a) 2 years or less, (b) 2-5 years, (c) 6-10 years, (d) 11-15 years, and (d) 16 years or more.

Table 2 illustrates the frequencies and percentages of the participants' demographics. The independent variables of age, marital status, employment position, and length of employment reflect the compressed data used for analysis. The following sections discuss data relevant to the null hypotheses for this study.

Null Hypothesis One

H₀1: There was no significant difference between gender and social support among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.

To determine if differences existed between men and women in their reported levels of social support, a MANOVA was utilized to test null hypothesis one. This test was the most appropriate statistical test to use because the MANOVA is used when there are two or more independent variables. The MANOVA is similar to the *t* test: Both tests measure the distance between the means (Lehman, 1995). The ANOVA was another appropriate test to use. However by using the one-way ANOVA, many tests would have

been required for all variables of this hypothesis, thus increasing a risk of Type I error (Lehman). To avoid gaining a Type I error, a one-way MANOVA was used before the ANOVA to test for significant differences among the means. Wilks' Lambda value was used to test the hypothesis, and a confidence level of less than .05 ($p < .05$) was needed for a significant difference. A small Wilks' Lambda value compared to the mean value indicates a significant difference (Lehman). Since there is no table of critical values for Wilks' Lambda, the value is transformed into an F value (Lehman). The MANOVA revealed that the F statistic was .643 with 6 and 143 degrees of freedom and a significance of .696. The researcher concluded that the sample means were not significantly different from one another at the .05 confidence level.

With 95% confidence, there were no significant differences in gender with respect to the dependent variables of (a) guidance, (b) reassurance of worth, (c) social integration, (d) attachment, (e) nurturance, and (f) reliable alliance. Therefore, an ANOVA was not warranted to pursue the differences further, and the researcher failed to reject null hypothesis one. Table 3 depicts the Wilks' Lambda, the F statistic, and the significance for gender and the dependent variables of social support.

Table 3

Multivariate Test of Means for Gender and Social Support Variables

	Wilks' Lambda	F	df	Level of Significance*
Gender	.974	.643	6, 143	.696

* $p = .05$

Null Hypothesis Two

H₀2: There was no significant difference between gender and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.

To determine if differences existed between men and women in their reported levels of job satisfaction, a MANOVA was utilized to test null hypothesis two. Similar to null hypothesis one, the MANOVA was the most appropriate test to use because the researcher desired to know if there were significant differences between the means for more than two variables (Lehman, 1995). To avoid a Type I error, the MANOVA was used before the ANOVA analysis to test for significant differences. A confidence level of less than .05 ($p < .05$) was needed for the differences to be significant. The MANOVA revealed that the F statistic was 1.617 with 9 and 140 degrees of freedom and a significance level of .116. The researcher concluded that the sample means were not significantly different from one another at the .05 confidence level.

With 95% confidence, there were no significant differences in gender with respect to the dependent variables of (a) pay, (b) promotion, (c) supervision, (d) fringe benefits, (e) contingent rewards, (f) operating conditions, (g) coworkers, (h) nature of work, and (i) communication. Therefore, the ANOVA was not warranted to pursue differences further, and the researcher failed to reject null hypothesis two. Table 4 depicts the Wilks' Lambda, the F statistic, and the significance for gender and the dependent variables of job satisfaction.

Null Hypothesis Three

H₀3: There was a significant difference between ethnicity and social support among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.

To determine if differences existed between African Americans in their reported

Table 4***Multivariate Test of Means for Gender and Job Satisfaction Variables***

	Wilks' Lambda	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	Level of Significance*
Gender	.906	1.617	9, 140	.116

* $p = .05$

levels of social support, a MANOVA was utilized to test null hypothesis three. Once again, the best test for calculating the difference between means for more than two variables is the one-way MANOVA. An advantage of using the MANOVA is that this test keeps the probability level constant (Lehman, 1995). To reduce the potential for Type I error, the MANOVA was used before the ANOVA analysis to test for significant differences among the means. A confidence level of less than .05 ($p < .05$) was needed for the means to be significantly different. The MANOVA revealed that the *F* statistic was 3.165 with 6 and 134 degrees of freedom and a significance of .006. This result proved significant at the .05 confidence level. Therefore, the ANOVA analysis was employed to further test the significance of these variables.

The ANOVA is similar to the independent samples *t* test except the ANOVA can test for significant difference between means for multiple variables of interval or ratio data (Iman, 1994). The ANOVA is also preferred over other statistical tests such as multiple regression or the Chi square test. Multiple regression measures correlation between predictor and criterion variables (Lehman, 1995) and is used for predictive purposes in research. The Chi square test (also called goodness-of-fit) is a nonparametric test that can be used with ordinal data. This test is used for calculating whether a significant difference exists between an observed variable and an expected variable.

Table 5***Analysis of Variance Test of Means for Ethnicity and Social Support***

Variable	<i>df</i>	Sum of Squares	<i>F</i> value	Level of Significance*
Guidance	1	.340	1.009	.317
Reassurance of Worth	1	1.359	5.011	.027
Social Integration	1	.247	.732	.394
Attachment	1	.019	.061	.806
Nurturance	1	.033	.104	.748
Reliable Alliance	1	.466	1.873	.173

* $p = .05$

The ANOVA revealed a significant difference of the means for reassurance of worth and ethnicity. The mean of squares (*MS*) was 1.359 with a significance of .027 ($p < .05$). The means (*M*) of (a) guidance, (b) social integration, (c) attachment, (d) nurturance, and (e) reliable alliance were not significantly different with respect to ethnicity. As a result, the researcher rejected null hypothesis three. Table 5 depicts the *F* value and means of the ANOVA for ethnicity and social support.

Null Hypothesis Four

H₀4: There was no significant difference between ethnicity and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.

To determine if differences existed between African Americans and Whites in their reported levels of job satisfaction, a MANOVA was utilized to test null hypothesis four. Concurrent with previous analyses, the MANOVA was used before the ANOVA analysis to test for significant differences among the means. A confidence level of less than .05 ($p < .05$) was needed for the differences to be significant. The MANOVA

Table 6***Multivariate Test of Means for Ethnicity and Job Satisfaction Variables***

	Wilks' Lambda	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	Level of Significance
Ethnicity	.940	.932	9, 131	.500

* $p = .05$

revealed that the F statistic was .932 with 9 and 131 degrees of freedom and a significance of .50.

Therefore, the researcher concluded that the sample means were not significantly different at the .05 confidence level. With 95% confidence, there were no significant differences between African Americans and Whites with respect to the dependent variables of (a) pay, (b) promotion, (c) supervision, (d) fringe benefits, (e) contingent rewards, (f) operating conditions, (g) coworkers, (h) nature of work, and (i) communication. As a result, the ANOVA was not warranted to pursue the differences further, and the researcher failed to reject null hypothesis four. Table 6 depicts the Wilks' Lambda, the F statistic, and the significance of ethnicity and the dependent variables.

Null Hypothesis Five

H₀5: There was no significant difference between age and social support among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.

To determine if differences existed between ages in their reported levels of social support, a MANOVA was utilized to test null hypothesis five. The researcher selected the one-way MANOVA to use because the MANOVA can analyze multiple variables at one time while keeping the probability level constant. By using one procedure to test to significant differences, the risk of gaining a Type I error is reduced.

Similar to statistical analyses for the previous hypotheses, the MANOVA was used before the ANOVA to test for significant differences among the means. A confidence level of less than .05 ($p < .05$) was needed for the means to be significantly different. The MANOVA revealed that the F statistic was .694 with 18 and 399 degrees of freedom and a significance of .818.

Therefore, the researcher concluded that the sample means were not significantly different from one another at the .05 confidence level. Specifically, there were no significant differences in age with respect to the dependent variables of (a) guidance, (b) reassurance of worth, (c) social integration, (d) attachment, (e) nurturance, and (f) reliable alliance. Consequently, an ANOVA was not warranted to pursue the significance of differences further, and the researcher failed to reject null hypothesis five.

However, one interesting trend surfaced in the data analysis. The researcher discovered a slight decreasing trend for age and the dependent variables (a) reassurance of worth, (b) social integration, and (c) attachment. As age increased, these three social support variables decreased. Table 7 depicts the Wilks' Lambda, the F statistic, and the significance for age and the dependent variables.

Null Hypothesis Six

H₀6: There was no significant difference between age and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.

To determine if differences existed between ages in their reported levels of job satisfaction, a MANOVA was utilized to test null hypothesis six. The MANOVA was used before the ANOVA analysis to test for significant differences among the means. A confidence level of less than .05 ($p < .05$) was needed for the means to be significantly

Table 7***Multivariate Test of Means for Age and Social Support Variables***

	Wilks' Lambda	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	Level of Significance*
Age	.917	.694	18, 399	.818

**p* = .05

Means for Comparison

Dependent Variable	Age	Mean	Standard Error (SE)
Reassurance of Worth	21-30	3.602	.111
	31-40	3.514	.086
	41-50	3.446	.080
	51 +	3.449	.074
Social Integration	21-30	3.580	.127
	31-40	3.453	.098
	41-50	3.411	.092
	51 +	3.444	.085
Attachment	21-30	3.716	.117
	31-40	3.514	.090
	41-50	3.518	.084
	51 +	3.515	.078

different. The MANOVA revealed that the F statistic was 1.238 with 27 and 403 degrees of freedom and a significance of .194.

Therefore, the researcher concluded that the sample means were not significantly different from one another at the .05 confidence level. Specifically, there were no significant differences between the four age categories with respect to the dependent variables of (a) pay, (b) promotion, (c) supervision, (d) fringe benefits, (e) contingent rewards, (f) operating conditions, (g) coworkers, (h) nature of work, and (i) communication. As a result, the researcher failed to reject null hypothesis six. Table 8 depicts the Wilks' Lambda, the F statistic, and significance for age and the dependent variables.

Null Hypothesis Seven

H₀7: There was no significant difference between length of employment and social support among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.

To determine if differences existed between lengths of employment and reported social support levels, a MANOVA was utilized to test null hypothesis seven. Consistent with the previous analyses, the MANOVA was used before the ANOVA analysis to test for significant differences among the means. A confidence level of less than .05 ($p < .05$) was needed for the means to be significantly different. The MANOVA revealed that the F statistic was 1.213 with 24 and 489 degrees of freedom and a significance of .223.

Therefore, the researcher concluded that the sample means were not significantly different at the .05 level of confidence. Specifically, there were no significant differences in age with respect to the dependent variables of (a) guidance, (b) reassurance of worth, (c) social integration, (d) attachment, (e) nurturance, and (f) reliable alliance. An

Table 8***Multivariate Test of Means for Age and Job Satisfaction***

	Wilks' Lambda	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	Level of Significance*
Age	.793	1.238	27, 403	.194

* $p = .05$

ANOVA was not warranted to pursue the significance of differences, and the researcher failed to reject null hypothesis seven.

However, another interesting trend surfaced in the data analysis. The research discovered a slight decreasing trend of means for length of employment and the dependent variables of guidance and reassurance of worth. As length of employment increased, guidance and reassurance of worth decreased. Table 9 depicts the Wilks' Lambda, the *F* statistic, and the significance for length of employment and the dependent variables.

Null Hypothesis Eight

H₀8: There was no significant difference between length of employment and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.

To determine if differences existed between length of employment and reported job satisfaction levels, a MANOVA was utilized to test null hypothesis eight. Once again, the MANOVA was used before the ANOVA to test for significant differences among the means. A confidence level of less than .05 ($p < .05$) was needed for the means to be significantly different. The MANOVA revealed that the *F* statistic was 1.091 with 36 and 515 degrees of freedom and a significance of .333. Therefore, the researcher concluded that the sample means were not significantly different at the .05 confidence level.

Table 9***Multivariate Test for Length of Employment and Social Support***

	Wilks' Lambda	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	Level of Significance*
Length of Employment	.817	1.213	24, 489	.223

p* = .05*Means for Comparison***

Dependent Variable	Length	Mean	Standard Error (<i>SE</i>)
Guidance	2 or less	3.681	.135
	2-5	3.637	.079
	6-10	3.500	.103
	11-15	3.554	.108
	16 +	3.325	.128
Reassurance of Worth	2 or less	3.569	.122
	2-5	3.547	.071
	6-10	3.524	.093
	11-15	3.366	.098
	16 +	3.363	.116

With 95% confidence, there were no significant differences between length of employment with respect to the dependent variables of (a) pay, (b) promotion, (c) supervision, (d) fringe benefits, (e) contingent rewards, (f) operating conditions, (g) coworkers, (h) nature of work, and (i) communication. As a result, the ANOVA was not warranted to pursue the significance of differences further, and the researcher failed to reject null hypothesis eight. Table 10 depicts the Wilks' Lambda, the F statistic, and the significance for length of employment and the dependent variables.

Null Hypothesis Nine

H₀₉: There was a significant relationship between social support and job satisfaction among student support services personnel in the SAEOPP association.

To assess the significance of the relationship between the dependent variables social support and job satisfaction, Pearson's product moment (r) was employed to test null hypothesis nine. Other tests available to test correlation were Spearman's Rho and Kendall's Tau. Multiple regression also tests correlation but is only used to predictive purposes (Iman, 1994). Spearman's Rho is a nonparametric test and ranks nominal or ordinal data. Kendall's Tau is appropriate to use when one variable is ordinal and the other is interval or ration (Iman). Pearson's product moment is a parametric test and is appropriate to use when assessing the correlation for interval or ratio data (Iman).

The nine dependent variables of job satisfaction were correlated with each dependent variable of social support. Table 11 illustrates the correlational coefficients for the dependent variables of job satisfaction and social support. Figure 4 illustrates the linear relationship of the scores for job satisfaction and social support. The correlations that were significant at $p < .05$ are as follows:

Table 10***Multivariate Test for Length of Employment and Job Satisfaction***

	Wilks' Lambda	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	Level of Significance*
Length of Employment	.759	1.091	36, 515	.333

**p* = .05

Table 11***Pearson Product Moment Correlations***

Variables	Guidance	Reassurance of Worth	Social Integration	Attachment	Nurturance	Reliable Alliance
Pay	.079	.012	.053	.047	-.005	.157
Promotion	.057	.151	.133	.053	.003	.163*
Supervision	.301**	.322**	.239**	.276**	.074	.327**
Fringe Benefits	.106	.079	.149	.054	-.007	.123
Contingent Rewards	.177*	.250**	.198*	.163*	.044	.291**
Operating Conditions	.017	-.002	.038	.000	.010	.168*
Coworkers	.070	.175*	.100	.063	-.084	.155
Nature of Work	.305**	.411**	.301**	.297**	.165*	.296**
Communication	.258**	.245**	.223**	.264**	.060	.348**

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

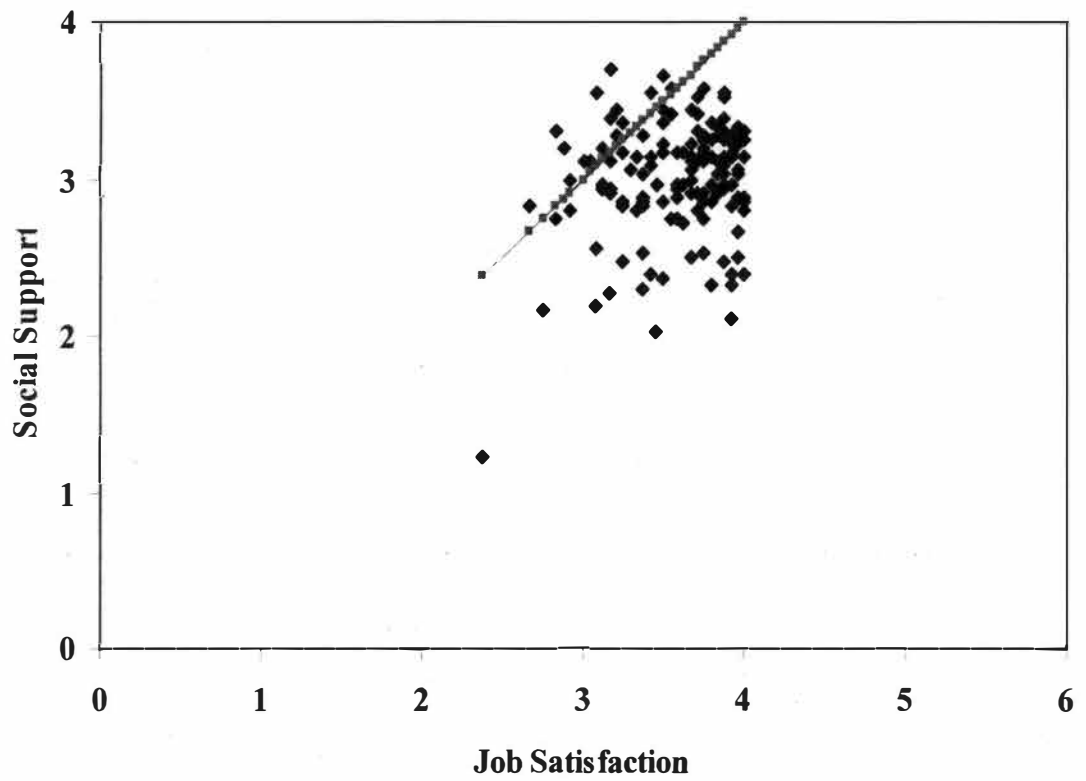


Figure 4. Scatter Plot of Job Satisfaction and Social Support Scores.

1. The job satisfaction variable contingent rewards correlated positively with the social support variables guidance (.177), social integration (.198), attachment (.163), reassurance of worth (.250), and reliable alliance (.291).
2. The job satisfaction variable coworkers correlated positively with the social support variable reassurance of worth (.175).
3. The job satisfaction variable supervision correlated positively with the social support variables of guidance (.301), reassurance of worth (.322), social integration (.239), attachment (.276), and reliable alliance (.327).
4. The job satisfaction variable contingent rewards correlated positively with the social support variables of reassurance of worth (.250) and reliable alliance (.291).
5. The job satisfaction variable nature of work correlated positively with the social support variables guidance (.305), reassurance of worth (.411), social integration (.301), attachment (.297), reliable alliance (.296), and nurturance (.165).
6. The job satisfaction variable communication correlated positively with the social support variable guidance (.258), reassurance of worth (.245), social integration (.233), attachment (.264), and reliable alliance (.348).
7. The job satisfaction variable operating conditions correlated positively with the social support variable reliable alliance (.168).
8. The job satisfaction variable pay did not correlate with any of the six social support variables.

As a result of these findings, the researcher rejected null hypothesis nine.

Findings Not Related to Hypotheses

The demographic variable of marital status was not included in this study's research questions and null hypotheses. However, the researcher discovered that marital status and social support may have a significance difference. The MANOVA revealed the *F* statistic to be 2.076 with 6 and 142 degrees of freedom and a significance of .060. Even though the significance was slightly greater than .05, the researcher conducted an ANOVA to determine which subscales were significant with marital status.

For nurturance, the ANOVA revealed a Mean Square of 2.212, an F value of 7.568, and a significance of .007 ($p < .05$). Participants who were married had a mean of 3.486, and non-married participants had a mean of 3.238. For reliable alliance, the ANOVA revealed a Mean Square of 1.269, an F value of 5.073, and a significance of .026 ($p < .05$). Married participants had a mean of 3.688, and non-married participants had a mean of 3.500.

Means and Standard Deviations

Means and standard deviations were computed for each subscale of the Social Provisions Scale and the Job Satisfaction Survey. Table 12 depicts the means and standard deviations (rounded to the third decimal point) for the social support and job satisfaction subscales. The mean for the job satisfaction subscale, nature of work, was 5.297 with a standard deviation of .848. This indicated that student support services personnel rated themselves highest in this subscale compared with the other subscales.

The mean for the job satisfaction subscale, promotion, was 2.868 with a standard deviation of 1.169. This figure indicated that student support services personnel rated themselves lowest in this subscale compared with the other subscales. The means and standard deviation for the remaining subscales include (a) a mean of 3.175 and standard deviation of 1.250 for pay, (b) a mean of 4.777 and a standard deviation of 1.167 for supervision, (c) a mean of 4.032 and a standard deviation of 1.180 for fringe benefits, (d) a mean of 3.755 and a standard deviation of 1.224 for contingent rewards, (e) a mean of 3.620 and a standard deviation of .826 for operating conditions, (f) a mean of 4.781 and a standard deviation of 1.068 for coworkers, and (g) a mean of 4.433 and a standard deviation of 1.106 for communication.

Table 12***Means and Standard Deviations for Job Satisfaction and Social Support***

Job Satisfaction Instrument Subscales	Means	Standard Deviations
Nature of Work	5.297	.848
Coworkers	4.781	1.068
Supervision	4.777	1.167
Communication	4.433	1.106
Fringe Benefits	4.032	1.180
Contingent Rewards	3.755	1.224
Operating Conditions	3.620	.826
Pay	3.175	1.250
Promotion	2.868	1.169

Social Support Instrument Subscales	Means	Standard Deviations
Reliable Alliance	3.600	.508
Guidance	3.557	.576
Attachment	3.545	.547
Reassurance of Worth	3.487	.519
Social Integration	3.457	.593
Nurturance	3.382	.553

The social support subscale, reliable alliance, had the highest mean ($M = 3.610$, $SD = .508$), which indicates that the participants rated themselves the highest on reliable alliance compared to the other subscales. The social support subscale, nurturance, had the lowest mean ($M = 3.382$, $SD = .553$), which indicates that the participants rated themselves the lowest on nurturance compared to the other subscales. The means and standard deviation for the remaining subscales include (a) a mean of .3.557 and standard deviation of .576 for guidance, (b) a mean of 3.487 and a standard deviation of .519 for reassurance of worth, (c) a mean of 3.457 and a standard deviation of .593 for social integration, and (d) a mean of 3.545 and a standard deviation of .547 for attachment.

Summary of Findings and Results

Chapter IV described the statistical procedures used to test the nine null hypotheses of this study. The researcher used frequencies and percentages to describe the common characteristics of the participants. The MANOVA was the procedure of choice for null hypotheses one through eight because there were multiple variables to test. The MANOVA found no significant difference for null hypotheses 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

However, the MANOVA found a significant difference between ethnicity and social support. Therefore, an ANOVA was executed to pinpoint the exact location of difference for these variables. The ANOVA revealed significance for reassurance of worth and African Americans but not for Whites. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used to test null hypothesis nine. This test revealed that there were multiple correlations at the $p < .05$ confidence level between variables of job satisfaction and variables of social support. Promotion and operating conditions correlated with reliable alliance, nature of work correlated with nurturance, contingent rewards correlated

with guidance, coworkers and contingent rewards correlated with reassurance of worth, and contingent rewards also correlated with social integration and attachment.

Also, at the .05 confidence level, reliable alliance correlated with contingent rewards, supervision, nature of work, and communication. The social support variable guidance correlated with supervision, nature of work, and communication. Reassurance of worth correlated with supervision, nature of work, and communication. Finally, social integration and attachment correlated with the job satisfaction variables of supervision, nature of work, and communication.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The previous chapter listed the results obtained by statistical analysis for the nine null hypotheses formulated for this study. Data were presented in Chapter IV as they related to the Job Satisfaction Survey, the Social Provisions Scale, and the demographic questionnaire, and the results for each hypothesis were addressed. Findings and conclusions are discussed in this chapter. In addition, implications for practitioners and recommendations for further research are expressed.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to measure the degree to which job satisfaction and social support were related among student support services personnel. A secondary purpose of the study was to determine if differences existed between (a) age, (b) ethnicity, (c) gender, and (d) length of employment and the dependent variables measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) and the Social Provisions Scales (SPS). The researcher developed nine research questions and null hypotheses to test the relationships among the variables. This study yielded a contribution to the literature that suggested a significant relationship exists between social support and job satisfaction.

The population of this study consisted of 731 student support services personnel who are members of the SAEOPP association for 2002-2003. The researcher chose the sample from the *2002-2003 Directory of Southeastern Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel*, which lists each member's name, title, contact information, institutional affiliation, and program of employment (Educational Talent Search, Upward Bound, Student Support Services.). Approximately 41.4% of the

population, or 300 participants, were selected by systematic random sampling to receive a questionnaire packet containing the JSS, the SPS, and the demographic questionnaire. In addition, on the back page of the questionnaire packet, the researcher thanked the participants for completing the surveys and asked for any comments about the study. Because some participants chose to write comments on this page, a summary of their comments is located in Appendix D. All names and institutional affiliation have been left out of the copy for confidentiality concerns. Most of the comments involved issues of the nature of student support services, pay and benefits, and coworkers. The researcher received 150 surveys after the initial mailing and a follow-up mailing, yielding a response rate of 50.3%.

Developed by Russell and Cutrona (1984), the SPS measured the extent to which social relationships fulfilled six specific social provisions, which are fundamental needs in life. The fulfillment of social provisions contributes to feeling satisfied and content with life. The SPS was comprised of 24 items, which yield six subscale scores and an overall score. The scale is valid and the reliability is acceptable. The internal reliabilities of the subscales range from a low of .653 (reliable alliance) to a high of 2.02 (reassurance of worth).

Overall, participants reported a strong sense of social support ($M = 3.512$) with little variance in mean scores ($SD = .556$). As indicated by a mean subscale score of 3.610 ($SD = .508$), the reliable alliance dimension had the greatest statistical influence upon total SPS score. The nurturance dimension had the least statistical influence ($M = 3.382$, $SD = .553$) upon total SPS score. Essentially, student support services personnel reported strong social relationships as indicated by the fulfillment of social provisions.

The JSS measured dimensions that could promote or hinder feeling satisfied with an occupation (Spector, 1997). The JSS was comprised of 36 items that yield nine subscale scores and an overall score. Spector noted that the scale was valid to use for measuring job satisfaction in any occupation, and the reliabilities of the subscales ranged from .60 (coworkers) to .82 (supervision). The overall reliability of the scale was .91, which is an acceptable level.

The participants reported moderate job satisfaction as indicated by an overall mean of 4.08 ($SD = 1.082$). The dimension of nature of work contributed most to the overall SPS score by a mean of 5.297 ($SD = .848$). Coworkers ($M = 4.781$, $SD = 1.068$) rated second highest. The dimension of pay ($M = 3.175$, $SD = 1.250$) and promotion ($M = 2.868$, $SD = 1.169$) rated the lowest. Student support services personnel reported feeling most satisfied with their coworkers and the nature of the work. However, the dimensions of pay and promotion kept student support services personnel from reporting higher levels of job satisfaction.

These findings seem reasonable because student support services personnel have fulfilling and rewarding occupations. Socioeconomic factors could keep the clients served by student support services from reaching their academic and vocational potential. Much personal reward can be gained by helping disadvantaged students learn new subjects, discover new careers, and plan for higher education. On the other hand, a student support service program does not have the hierarchical levels that a traditional organization has. For example, in a student support services program, the positions of program director and assistant program director are a few of the management positions. Moreover, student support services functions under a limited budget; a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Education supplies fiscal support for student support services

such as TRIO, and an institution is not guaranteed renewal of their grant. These are a few of the possible reasons why the participants of this study did not report high satisfaction with promotion and pay.

To describe the student support services personnel who participated in this study, African Americans comprised 48% of the sample, and Whites comprised 46% of the sample. Other minority groups such as Hispanics represented only a small portion of the sample (5.0%). An interesting discovery was that the participants were mostly women (70%). This finding is concurrent with social role theory that states more women than men enter into the teaching and counseling fields because it is the cultural norm for women to assume these roles (Mason, 1995). According to socialization theory, women are satisfied with these jobs because the teaching and counseling professions offer rewards that women value (Mason). Mason explained that women would be satisfied with jobs because they can form a supportive, cooperative community with their coworkers or clients the sample was African American (48%) and White (46%).

The ages of the participants were distributed evenly across the categories. Most of the participants were between the ages of 41 and 50 (28.0%) or the ages of 51 and 60 (27.3%). The ages of 60 and over represented the least participants (5.3%). In addition, over half of the participants were married (59.3). There were more single participants (24.7%) than divorced participants (14.7%). There was only one widowed participant (0.7%). The participants worked full-time for student support services, with the exception of one participant who worked part-time.

Interestingly, program directors (36.7%) responded the most of the student support services personnel. Counselors comprised 31.3% of the participants. Only two teachers responded to the questionnaire packet. Of all participants, 68.0% have worked

ten years or less for student support services. Only one participant had worked 26 or more years for student support services.

For null hypotheses 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) were utilized to test whether or not differences in the means existed for (a) age, (b) ethnicity, (c) gender, and (d) length of employment and the dependent variables. The MANOVA failed to find a significant difference between the means at the .05 confidence level ($p = .05$). Therefore, a post hoc test was not performed, and the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis.

The results of this study cast light on the ambiguity surrounding whether there are differences in job satisfaction and social support according to age. In this study, job satisfaction and social support did not significantly differ for age. However, one interesting trend emerged: as age increased, social support decreased. Also, as age increased, the job satisfaction dimension, promotion, slightly decreased. This result corroborates Finegold et al. (2002), in which participants aged 31 and under reported satisfaction with pay. In addition, this result contradicts Bernal et al.'s (1998) assertion that the age-job satisfaction relationship is a positive linear relationship, meaning that job satisfaction increases as a person ages. This study reported a negative linear relationship.

There were no differences in social support and job satisfaction for gender at the .05 confidence level. In this case, women reported slightly higher satisfaction with nature of work than men. Once more, this discovery supports Mason's (1995) socialization theory, which states that women are satisfied with jobs that offer opportunities to form communities. In addition, there were little differences in reported social support. This result supports Lee and Robbins (2000) assertion that men and women equally share a need for social support and connectedness.

At the .05 confidence level, there were no differences in job satisfaction for ethnicity among student support services personnel, and little variance occurred between the means for each subscale of the JSS. This study confirms previous research in which job satisfaction did not related to ethnicity (Omundson et al., 1996). However, these findings do not confirm Kaye et al.'s (1999) study that discovered Whites reported less job satisfaction than African Americans and Hispanics.

In addition, no significant differences ($p = .05$) existed for length of employment and both job satisfaction and social support. Although, as length of employment increased, satisfaction with guidance and reassurance of worth decreased. According to Weiss' (1974) social provisions theory, coworkers provide one with reassurance of worth. Perhaps mentors who provided one with reassurance of worth either retired or found different work, which could explain why social support did not relate to length of employment. Or perhaps as length of employment increases, the rewards offered by coworkers loose value. There has been little research examining the relationship between social support and length of employment.

In this study, although there were no significant differences in length of employment and job satisfaction ($p = .05$), a slight decreasing trend surfaced for length of employment and the dimensions of supervision and nature of work. To explain this result, perhaps the rewards for helping students lost value overtime for student support services personnel or changing institutional and governmental regulations affected satisfaction. Perchance noticing some students not succeeding in postsecondary education or vocations affects a student support services personnel's satisfaction with work. Previous research has contributed ambiguous conclusions for the relationship between job satisfaction and length of employment. Whereas Traut et al. (2000) discovered that new

employees felt more job satisfaction than long-term employees, Burke (1996) found no significant relationship between length of employment and job satisfaction.

To test null hypothesis 3 (there were no significant differences between ethnicity and social support) the researcher utilized a MANOVA, which revealed a significant difference between the means. To pinpoint the exact location of difference, the researcher executed an ANOVA on the data. The analysis revealed that African Americans report higher levels of reassurance of worth than Whites. According to the literature, African Americans report higher levels of social connectedness than any other ethnic group (Snowden, 2001). But this finding challenges Snowden's study: Snowden found that home support was not a significant factor for reducing job tension among African American women.

Finally, the researcher utilized Pearson's product moment correlational coefficient (r) to test null hypothesis 9, which stated that there would be no relationship between social support and job satisfaction. The analysis revealed several significant relationships at the .05 and .01 confidence level. As a result, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis.

At the .05 confidence level, promotion and operating conditions correlated with reliable alliance, nature of work correlated with nurturance, contingent rewards correlated with guidance, coworkers and contingent rewards correlated with reassurance of worth, and contingent rewards also correlated with social integration and attachment.

Additionally, at $p = .05$, reliable alliance correlated with contingent rewards, supervision, nature of work, and communication. The social support variable guidance correlated with supervision, nature of work, and communication. Reassurance of worth correlated with supervision, nature of work, and communication. Finally, social

integration and attachment correlated with the job satisfaction variables of supervision, nature of work, and communication.

Communication related to many social support variables in this study. From Starnaman & Miller's (1992) perspective, communication is considered a crucial variable to combat burnout. Since the nature of the helping professions leaves one highly susceptible to stress, a teacher or other helping profession may burnout and either leave the job or continue working at low levels of commitment and productivity. Starnaman & Miller discovered that social support lessened the impact of job stress among teachers. Communication played a crucial role in teachers' reported stress and satisfaction levels.

Interestingly, reliable alliance correlated with many job satisfaction variables. Weiss (1974) theorized that family members would provide a sense of reliable alliance. Without a sense of reliable alliance, one feels threatened and abandoned; the participants in this study felt a strong sense of reliable alliance.

Perhaps in this study, participants have strong family relationships that afford them opportunities to seek solace from job stress; the family members offer advice about problems at work. Another plausible explanation for the correlation of reliable alliance with job satisfaction variables is that the participants regard their coworkers as an extended family and seek advice from them.

It is interesting that guidance correlated with the job satisfaction variables of (a) contingent rewards, (b) supervision, (c) nature of work, and (d) communication. According to the social provisions theory, providing guidance to people when they are in stressful situations is important (Weiss, 1974). People seek a trustworthy and authoritative colleague who provides them with emotional support in times of high stress. This colleague also helps develop a plan of action for reducing stress. A program director

or coordinator would be an obvious trustworthy, authoritative colleague. The director or coordinator can assist student support services personnel if they are having difficulty teaching a class or counseling a student; moreover, the director or coordinator can offer support about the benefits and other rewards of student support services or helping in another stressful situation at work.

Reassurance of worth also strongly correlated with the job satisfaction variables of supervision, nature of work, and communication. In addition, reassurance of worth correlated with coworkers and contingent rewards, although not as strongly as the aforementioned variables. This finding strengthens Weiss' (1974) suggestion that reassurance of worth is provided by coworkers and other colleagues who attest to an individual's work capability. Reassurance of worth is a valuable provision student support services personnel offer to each other, especially since their work is demanding.

Additionally, both social integration and attachment correlated strongly with supervision, nature of work, and communication. Relationships that allow a person to gain a sense of security and also give that person comfort contribute to the fulfillment of attachment. Weiss (1974) theorized that marriage or close friendships provide attachment. Perhaps for this study, the participants have developed close friendships at work, which provide security and comfort. These friendships allow for open communication about job processes and issues.

A network of relationships, Weiss (1974) theorized, provides social integration. He described that

membership in a network of common-concern relationships permits the development of pooled information and ideas and a shared interpretation of experience. It provides, in addition, a source of companionship and opportunities for exchange of services, especially in the area of common interest. The network offers a base for social events and happenings, for

social engagement and social activity. In the absence of such relationships life becomes dull, perhaps painfully so. (p. 23).

Weiss' description of social integration explains why this variable was correlated with supervision, nature of work, and communication. It is possible that student support services personnel in this study have developed networks from the relationships at work. Student support services personnel use this network share ideas, experiences, and activities. Also, the nature of the work student support services personnel perform allows them to develop networks of different kinds of relationships (e.g. teachers, parents, community leaders). Possibly the breadth of the networks contributes to feeling a sense of social integration.

Finally, it is interesting that opportunity for nurturance correlated with nature of the work in this study. Opportunity for nurturance is provided by relationships in which an adult cares for a child; therefore, a sense of being needed is developed by this relationship. The role of parent usually contributes to opportunity for nurturance. Nonetheless, in this study, perhaps meeting the academic and vocational needs of a disadvantaged client fulfills this sense of being needed.

In terms of mechanisms, it seems that social support acted as a buffer against job stress to promote job satisfaction among the participants. The social support variables of (a) guidance, (b) reassurance of worth, (c) social integration, and (d) attachment had the strongest relationship with job satisfaction variables. But theoretical views differ about the relative importance of social support and the degree to which this variable could be related to job satisfaction. By finding significant relationships between social support and job satisfaction, this study provided evidence to support the theory that social support contributes to job satisfaction by buffering stress.

Major Findings

As previously stated, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between social support and job satisfaction. Three research questions discussed in Chapter I guided the design and execution of the study. To answer research question one, descriptive statistics of the demographics exposed common features of the participants. The results revealed that (a) student support services personnel are predominantly female, (b) have worked ten years or less, (c) are married, and (d) are either African American or White.

Multivariate analyses of variance answered research questions two through nine and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient answered research question ten. Based on analyses, the researcher failed to reject null hypotheses 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 at the $p = .05$ level of confidence. There were no significant differences among the means for the independent variables and the dependent variables. Conversely, null hypotheses 3 and 9 were rejected at the $p = .05$ confidence level. A summary of the major findings is presented in relation to each research question.

1. The overall mean for the JSS was 4.1 out of 6.0. This indicated that participants felt moderately satisfied working for student support services. Particularly, participants felt most satisfied with the nature of the work and least satisfied with promotion. There was little deviation from the mean for promotion ($SD = 1.17$), meaning that all the participants felt the same towards promotion.
2. The overall mean for the SPS was 3.5 out of 4.0, indicating that participants felt a strong sense of social support. As measured by the SPS, the participants have relationships that fulfill six social provisions. In addition, there was little variance in the distribution of means.
3. Age of student support services personnel was not related to social support as measured by the SPS. However, a pattern emerged in the data: as age increased, the sense of strong social support slightly decreased.

4. Job satisfaction did not relate to age among student support services personnel. In addition, personnel age 21 to 30 felt the most satisfaction with each dimension of job satisfaction than any other age group.
5. The social support dimension, reassurance of worth, significantly related to social support for African Americans but not for Whites. No other social support dimension significantly related to ethnicity for student support services personnel.
6. The ethnicity of student support services personnel did not significantly relate to job satisfaction. However, Whites reported slightly higher satisfaction with fringe benefits and coworkers.
7. Gender did not significantly relate to social support among student support services personnel. In addition, a clear pattern for satisfaction with the dimensions of social support did not emerge between men and women.
8. Gender also did not significantly relate to job satisfaction. Nevertheless, females reported more satisfaction with nature of work than males.
9. Although a significant difference did not emerge for length of employment and social support, a slight decreasing trend did emerge in the data. As length of employment increased for student support services personnel, satisfaction with guidance and reassurance of worth decreased. Personnel who had worked 16 or more years for student support services reported the least satisfaction with each dimension of social support than any other group.
10. Job satisfaction did not significantly relate to length of employment among student support services personnel. Those who had worked for student support services 16 or more years were as likely as other lengths to be satisfied with (a) pay, (b) fringe benefits, (c) contingent rewards, (d) operating conditions, and (e) communication. Conversely, satisfaction with coworkers was highest among personnel who had worked 6 to 10 years for student support services. For the dimensions of promotion, supervision, and nature of work, no clear pattern of satisfaction emerged for length of employment.
11. For student support services personnel, social support positively correlated with job satisfaction. The only job satisfaction variable that did not correlate with the social support variables was pay.

Conclusions

This study was designed to evaluate further the proposition that moderate to high levels of social support would be correlated with moderate to high levels of job satisfaction. In addition, this study was designed also to evaluate further the ambiguity

surrounding the relationship of (a) age, (b) ethnicity, (c) gender, and (d) length of employment to both social support and job satisfaction. The relationships were assessed using the JSS and the SPS, which are both reliable and valid survey.

However, the conclusions for this study are colored by the limitations and delimitations discussed in Chapter I. The limitations and delimitations restrict to a certain degree the validity of the conclusions, and recommendations for avenues of future research are discussed in the next section. Nevertheless, this study provided evidence to support the linkages suggested by literature, and the conclusions of this study are presented in the current section.

1. Student support services personnel who participated in this study are mostly female and are moderately satisfied with their jobs.
2. The participants are most satisfied with the nature of the work they do and with their coworkers.
3. The participants are least satisfied with promotion opportunities in their program and with their salary.
4. Age does not contribute to overall job satisfaction but younger participants feel more satisfied with the variables of their work than any other age group. Also, mature participants feel less satisfaction with promotion opportunities than their younger colleagues.
5. Although gender also does not relate to job satisfaction among participants, women report more satisfaction with the nature of the work than do men.
6. Likewise, ethnicity does not contribute to overall job satisfaction but White participants feel more satisfaction with contingent rewards and coworkers than their African American counterparts.
7. The length of time participants work does not relate to how satisfied they are with their jobs. But respondents who have worked for student support services a long time feel less satisfaction with supervision and the nature of the work than relatively new student support services personnel.
8. Overall, participants feel a strong sense of social support. They feel a strong sense of reliable alliance in their relationships. To a lesser degree, they report fulfillment of nurturance in their relationships.

9. Ethnicity does correlate with social support. Specifically, African Americans feel a stronger sense of reassurance of worth in their relationships than White.
10. Length of employment does not relate to strength of social support. Although, as length of employment increases, they feel least satisfied with guidance and reassurance of worth.
11. There are no differences in social support for men and women participants.
12. Older participants feel less social support than younger participants but age does not relate to social support.

Because the limitations and delimitations of research can affect the outcomes of a study, it is important to consider the avenues future research should address. Perhaps different instruments, data collection methods, or research design could contribute a strong conclusion about the relationship between social support and job satisfaction. Some recommendations for future research are discussed in the following section.

Recommendations

Based upon the limitations and delimitations of this study, future research should consider the following recommendations for investigating social support and job satisfaction. By no means is this a complete list of recommendations but the following may improve upon the range and scope of this study.

1. The use of self-report methodology has been tainted as problematic (Fox & Spector, 1999). There is ongoing concern by scholars that the use of a single source of data may result in an exaggeration of the relationships between the variables. Possibly, a more creative research design could be utilized. Fox, Spector, and Miles (2001) suggest using research designs that include employee self-report measures and coworker reports of that employee.
2. A comparative study between student support services personnel and other service organization personnel who help disadvantaged and at-risk students prepare for their future would allow researchers to determine if there are any similarities between these helping professions with respect to job satisfaction and social support. Possibly, the satisfaction outcomes of one group could assist in promoting positive outcomes of the other group.

3. A longitudinal study of student support services personnel would allow researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issues that affect job satisfaction and how employee involvement impacts those issues. The longitudinal study could also determine how important coworker relationships are to student support services personnel.
4. A qualitative measure of satisfaction with social support may produce a stronger, more reliable relationship with job satisfaction than the measure used in this study.
5. Likewise, a qualitative measure of job satisfaction may produce a stronger relationship to social support.
6. Future research should determine job satisfaction differences between student support services at public universities or colleges, private universities or colleges, and nonprofit organizations. Perhaps satisfaction outcomes are largely based on the college administration that regulates a student support service program.
7. A large, nationally representative, and randomly selected sample of student support services personnel would broaden the generalizability of the results to the student support services population.
8. Future research should also include more demographics of student support services personnel than those considered for this study in the analysis of job satisfaction and social support. Possible demographics would include educational level and salary.
9. Researchers should consider personality traits (anger, positive affect, negative affect) when investigating satisfaction with social support and with student support services employment.
10. Different statistical tests such as multiple regression would allow researchers to decide if variables of social support (e.g. reassurance of worth) significantly predict variables of job satisfaction (e.g. supervision).

Implications

The following suggestions are for practitioners of student support services programs to consider as ways to possibly improve their programs. These suggestions are based upon the conclusions of this study, and the interpretation of the suggestions is at the discretion of the reader.

1. Because social support and job satisfaction were significantly related in this study, program directors, assistant directors, and program coordinators should

make every effort to communicate with their employees in a regular manner and also should make every effort to encourage and verbally reward their employees for a job well done.

2. One plausible explanation for the lack of significant differences in this study may be the homogeneity of the sample. Directors of student support services should recruit and hire more males and more underrepresented ethnic groups such as Hispanics and Asian Americans.
3. Directors of student support services should make efforts to retain employees for a longer time since average tenure was 10 years or less. Perhaps promotion from within could be awarded to qualified, long tenure employees rather than hiring for a position from outside of student support services. In addition, rewards for longevity could be awarded to employees who stay for more than 10 years.
4. Supportive relationships could provide a type of emotion management for student support services personnel. Emotional energy received in informal or formal support groups could protect student support services personnel against the stress and hassles of working with disadvantaged and at-risk students. Support from experienced peers could build confidence and reaffirm one's competence as a teacher, counselor, or helper.
5. Support groups could also help older student support services personnel develop quality relationships. An opportunity to serve on a committee or project such as grant writing may reaffirm the employ's sense of worth and promote interaction among other staff members. Perhaps personnel could form special interest groups outside of work to meet at a designated time and location close to the workplace to discuss topics of interest such as books. Also, personnel may form a walking club or an exercise club and involve as many staff members as possible.
6. Since student support services personnel work under a limited budget, pay increases are not always an option for program directors to use as a way to increase job satisfaction. Perhaps career development and training could serve as a tool to meet employees' vocational needs. One way to implement low-cost career development for student support services personnel would be to establish a relationship with college career centers that the personnel could use free of charge or for a small fee. Training for computer skills or grant writing skills could be offered by college courses free of charge or for a small fee.
7. Many businesses have established Employee Assistance Programs to help employees cope with problems that afflict their vocational and personal lives. These businesses have done so because of the convictions that personal problems interfere with satisfactory job performance and vice versa. It may be plausible for student support services to establish a relationship with college

counseling centers. Student support services personnel could be able to use the counseling services free of charge or for a small fee as an added benefit.

If future research adheres to the recommendations listed in the previous section, researchers could accurately verify that social support does relate to job satisfaction, which would enrich the existing literature about this subject. By enacting the recommendations presented in this section, student support services personnel may realize an improvement in job satisfaction thereby strengthening the motivation of employees to successfully carry out the ideals and goals of student support services.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

PERMISSION TO USE THE SPS INSTRUMENT

>Dear Sir:

>

>My name is Lori Simpson and I am currently a Master's student at The
>University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Currently, I am studying the
>relationship between social provisions and job satisfaction among
>secondary education teachers in the East Tennessee region. For my thesis,
>I would like to use the Social Provisions Scale. I would like a copy of
>the scale as well data for the measure to use in my research. I would be
>glad to send a summary of my results; the research should be complete by
>April, 2002.

>

>I also would like reprints of these papers:

>

>Cutrona, C. E. (1990). Stress and social support- In search of optimal
>matching. Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 9, 3-14.

>

>Russell, D., Altmaier, E., & Van Velzen, D. (1987). Job-related stress,
>social support, and burnout among classroom teachers. Journal of Applied
>Psychology, 72, 269-274.

>

>Cutrona, C. E., & Russell, D. (1987) The provisions of social
>relationships and adaptation to stress. In W. H. Jones & D. Perlman
>(Eds.), Advances in personal relationships (Vol. 1, pp. 37-67). Greenwich,
>Conn.: JAI Press.

>

>My mailing address is:

>

>Lori Simpson
>UT Federal Programs
>1914 Andy Holt Ave., 25 HPER Building
>Knoxville, TN 37996-2745
>(865)974-4466; Fax: (865)-974-3961

>

>

>Thank you for your generous cooperation. Should you have any questions
>please contact my advisor: Dr. Ernest Brewer (865) 974-4466 or (865)
>974-8924. Dr. Brewer may also be reached at the above address.

>

>Again, thank you.

>

> Lori Simpson
> <mailto:lorisimpson@earthlink.net>lorisimpson@earthlink.net

Lori:

Believe it or not, I just returned from a meeting at your university, with Warren Jones and his graduate students in Psychology. You should talk with Warren about your interests.

Attached to this message is a paper on the scale, that includes a copy of the measure at the end. I will also arrange for the other papers to be mailed to you; I am unable to e-mail them to you.

Dan

At 10:22 AM 10/19/01 -0400, you wrote:

APPENDIX B
INITIAL AND FOLLOW UP LETTERS SENT TO PARTICIPANTS

November 15, 2002

John Doe
1234 West Street
Knoxville TN 37771

Dear Mr. Doe:

I am writing to ask your help in a study of social support and job satisfaction being conducted among TRIO professionals in the southeast region. This study is part of an effort to learn how satisfied TRIO professionals are with their jobs, and whether coworker relationships contribute to feelings of job satisfaction.

It's my understanding that you are employed with TRIO and are working in the southeast region. We are contacting a random sample of TRIO employees to ask how satisfied they are with their jobs and how strong their relationships are with coworkers.

Results of this survey will be used to gain an in-depth comprehension of job satisfaction among TRIO professionals. By determining whether supportive relationships contribute to job satisfaction, we seek to understand the many facets of job satisfaction. The more we know about job satisfaction, the more we can structure the job to improve satisfaction.

Your answers are completely **CONFIDENTIAL** and will only be recorded under a numerical code. Your answers will only be released as a summary of responses. The survey is voluntary. However, you can help us very much by taking a few minutes to tell us about yourself and your satisfaction with your job and your relationships. If you prefer not to respond, please return the blank survey in the stamped envelope provided.

We have enclosed a small token of appreciation as a way of saying thanks for your time and help. Simply return the completed surveys and you will be registered to win a Sony DVD player. Please return your surveys by December 16, 2002.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, we would be happy to speak with you. Our number is 865-974-4466 or you can write to us at the address on the letterhead. If you prefer email, please submit questions to lorisimpson@earthlink.net.

Thank you for your help regarding this important study.

Sincerely,

Lori Simpson Wilkerson
Masters Candidate- The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Cc: Dr. Ernest W. Brewer, Professor and TRIO Director, University of Tennessee

January 8, 2003

John Doe
University
123 South Street
Anywhere, TN 11111

Dear Mr. Doe:

Awhile ago, I sent a questionnaire packet to you that asked how satisfied TRIO professionals are with their jobs, and whether coworker relationships contribute to feelings of job satisfaction. Your name was randomly drawn from the Southeastern Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel (SAEOPP) directory.

If you have returned your completed surveys, please accept my sincere thanks. I appreciate your time and your responses. If you have not returned the surveys, please do so today. For your convenience, I have included the surveys in this packet in case the original surveys have been lost or misplaced.

To date, the comments from people who have already returned the surveys are honest and thought-provoking. With your help, the study can gain an in-depth look at how satisfied people are with their jobs and their TRIO coworkers. I believe the results are going to be very interesting and useful to anyone involved in TRIO.

I hope that you will fill out and return the enclosed surveys. Please remember that your responses are completely CONFIDENTIAL. If for any reason you prefer not to fill out the surveys, simply return the blank surveys in the provided stamped envelope. Please respond by **February 1, 2003**.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, we would be happy to speak with you. Our number is 865-974-4466 or you can write to us at the address on the letterhead. If you prefer email, please submit questions to lorisimpson@earthlink.net.

Thank you for your help regarding this important study.

Sincerely,

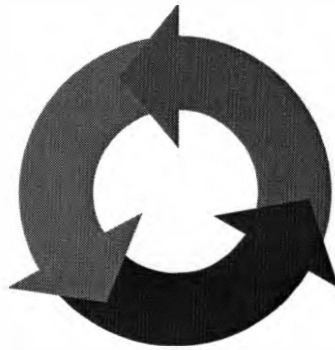
Lori Simpson Wilkerson
Masters Candidate- The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Cc: Dr. Ernest W. Brewer, Professor and TRIO Director, University of Tennessee

APPENDIX C

**COVER PAGE, DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE,
AND BACK PAGE OF QUESTIONNAIRE PACKET**

Job Satisfaction and Social Support Survey



Contact Information

Lori Simpson Wilkerson
Dr. Ernest W. Brewer, Professor
The University of Tennessee
College of Education, Health, and Human Services
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Knoxville, TN 37996-2745
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Federal TRIO Program Personnel Demographic Questionnaire

Please check the answers that are appropriate to your situation

Age ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ 60+

Ethnicity ☐ African-American ☐ Asian-Pacific Islander
 ☐ Hispanic ☐ Native American
 ☐ White ☐ Other

Employment Status ☐ Full-Time ☐ Part-Time

Employment Position

☐ Administrative ☐ Program Director
☐ Program Coordinator ☐ Teacher
☐ Counselor ☐ Other

Gender ☐ Male ☐ Female

Marital Status ☐ Married ☐ Separated
 ☐ Divorced ☐ Single
 ☐ Widow

Length of Employment in TRIO

☐ 2 years or less ☐ 16-20 years
☐ 2-5 years ☐ 21-25 years
☐ 6-10 years ☐ 26 years or more
☐ 11-15 years

Thank you for your participation!

Please feel free to write any additional comments on this page:

APPENDIX D

**ACTUAL COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS WRITTEN
ON BACK PAGE OF QUESTIONNAIRE PACET**

Comments

To protect the confidentiality of the participants, any references to actual people or institutions that have student support service programs have been changed. Instead, “ABC” refers to names of people and “DEF” refers to institutions. All comments have been recorded exactly as they appeared on the back page of the questionnaire packet. Most of the comments revolve around the nature of the work, supervisors and coworkers, and pay and benefits.

Nature of the Work

1. I enjoy my job because of the students I assist. I come from a low-income, first generation home, so I realize the difficult struggles students face. And I enjoy knowing they're comfortable coming to me for help. I also feel men move up quicker (and who are less qualified or experienced) so my chances for promotion are reduced. Furthermore, I have learned that TRIO (like other places) is very political. And because of this we sometimes fall short of doing as good of a job as we can for students.
2. I feel TRIO people are not respected outside of TRIO circles. I feel the U.S. Department of Ed. causes undue stress and paranoia by not having more standard procedures.
3. I enjoy working for TRIO, but it is economically challenging and frustrating as far as dealing with “red-tape” and unfriendly host-institution relationships.
4. The Department of Education should become more instrumental in determining how college administrations affect the policies and procedures of TRIO programs. Often times administrators are not abreast of the rules and policies of TRIO programs. Therefore, Directors are sometimes placed in situations where it is difficult to do their jobs effectively based on lack of information. This is crucial.
5. There are two things that bother me about my job. The first is that ETS has too many students to serve. Sometimes I feel like we are an assembly line and mass produce students. Most of my time is spent recruiting so my program can reach its numbers. The second concern I have is that my director does not allow the students to do fun activities on summer trips. Cultural activities are wonderful, but I feel that amusement parks, baseball games, etc. are also vital for student participation.

6. My first introduction to TRIO was with EOC while working with this program I became more aware of the services it offered as well as Upward Bound. I began to learn more and more about Upward Bound and was able to get my ABC accepted as a participant. I can't begin to say how his participation has prepared him for the next level of his education after high school. I have been fortunate to become Program Coordinator with the Educational Talent Search Program and despite the large number of participants this program deals with I have enjoyed the networking with other TRIO personnel, getting together and sharing ideas. Unfortunately, there are those in TRIO who have often become complacent with their jobs. I often feel that ETS is the step child of all of the TRIO programs. In attending training seminars I feel more emphasis should be placed on innovative way to create a renewed interest in the valuable services ETS has to offer in the same manner as Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math and Science.
7. Have any job openings? Very dissatisfied worker.
8. Gaining recognition at the institutional level for innovativeness continues to be an on-going problem. The institutional climate places TRIO as a peripheral entity!
9. I find the biggest problem with personnel lies in the position of administrative assistant. All counselors are masters level educated while the administrative assistant has an Associates degree, ABC is not well-suited to this position and her inability to provide supportive services cause the counselors to spend valuable time doing mailing and letters, etc. That position should also be on a professional level. Salaries are low based on educational level. Many in our institution have no idea what we do. It would be nice to have same schedule as faculty members since we are in local middle and high schools on a weekly/daily basis. But because we are not college faculty members we are omitted from off days between semesters, spring breaks, etc.

Supervisors and Coworkers

1. I rely on God and my family for support! On the job I get very little support and that's okay. But I would like a supervisor who is fair and exhibits better leadership skills. One who knows how to communicate with all staff members and not just one or two individuals in the office. A supervisor should not be petty or partial to certain individuals in an office setting.
2. There are a lot of good TRIO people out there who do wonders and get little recognition. We must support and work with others to show them we care.
3. I work for a wonderful Director that supports, motivates, and encourages me. Working for this type of environment makes working here at DEF and in TRIO truly a wonderful experience. Short of leaving my husband and son, I look forward to coming to work as a TRIO professional and serving my

students! It is a nice feeling to have and to know that I am acquiring great leadership abilities from my Director...I hope one day I will be able to fill ABC's shoes!

Pay and Benefits

1. I really feel that we are being mistreated when it comes to getting raises. I don't think that our raises should be in line with state raises. We cannot get a raise unless the state employees get one. We have not gotten a raise in the past four (4) years because the state employees have not gotten one. We only got a 2% raise beginning in January 2002, which only put me in another income tax bracket without seeing a difference in payroll. There are lots of time in the past state employees have gotten raises and we were unable to because we did not have the funds available. This is unfair to persons in TRIO working under federal grants. WE NEED TO CHANGE THIS RULE/GUIDELINE. What you have to realize is that our jobs, as federal grant recipient, could end at any time; therefore, we should be able to get raises as our funds allow us to. PLEASE LOOK INTO THIS MATTER. Help TRIO get out from under the guidelines of state employees concerning pay raises. Also, our state insurance is not worth a plug nickel. It is getting worse. We as federal employees should be able to get a better insurance plan for our workers/families. It is almost impossible to continue with this state healthcare plan. It is hurting us more so than helping us. Please help us!!!
2. I really like my coworkers and enjoy coming to work. I like my job and the students I get to work with. I feel that I am treated very fairly and that my supervisor respects me and thanks me constantly. I feel very lucky to have a job I love and feel that I do well. However, I feel an immense amount of stress because I constantly have financial difficulties, but I consider myself to be a very loyal employee and don't really want to leave. I keep telling myself that if the program to afford to pay me more, they would. I just never imagined that I would be this financially unstable after getting a college degree. To be honest it is pretty embarrassing and can be really depressing at times. My friends and family constantly hound me about looking for a better paying job. The benefits package is really good and I know it would be hard to find elsewhere. The only thing I cold think to add to the benefits would be a payback for college loans. I stay because I love the kids and the people.
3. Generally speaking, I really enjoy working in TRIO. While the likelihood of either a raise or promotion is slim, the job is quite rewarding. It is frustrating, however, to have a job that requires a Master's degree, but doesn't pay well. Sometimes I wonder why I spent two years earning a Master's, just to make less \$\$ than friends who quit postsecondary education to work in a factor. Would you mind sharing the results of this survey with those to complete it? This should be quite interesting.

4. I've worked in TRIO 10 years. I really like the work, esp. working with students. The staff + directors of my current program are wonderful. The only drawback, when I look at my salary vs. how many years I work it is a little discouraging. Still, I would not want to work most other places.
5. It is my opinion that the University is unfair when it comes to salary increases. Their decision to give increases are often based on personalized issues and favoritism. I believe that the salaries of TRIO personnel is lower than other employees at the University with less years of experience and their credentials are no higher than employees in TRIO. I think that the Dept. of Education should not give the University administrators the sole power to approve salary increases of TRIO personnel.
6. Overall, I enjoy working for TRIO here at my campus. I strongly support the proposal for Loan Forgiveness for TRIO employees. The Loan Forgiveness Program will increase recruitment for younger TRIO personnel. This program will be a great incentive for TRIO.
7. I currently am employed with a private university. Therefore, some of the benefits I receive are different from that of a state school. For instance, my institution does not allow raises for further education. I'm about to complete my Masters degree and will not receive a raise. This is just one example of why I have some complaints about my job with a TRIO program. You may want to consider this. Some of my answers might be different if I were employed at a state school (as I know most TRIO programs are).
8. My salary is higher because I supervise additional programs other than TRIO. My position at the college is still the lowest paid entry position for that title. Politics rule. Doing a great job is not rewarded at my college. TRIO programs and staff are very under-appreciated and supported.

Comments about the Surveys

1. I didn't mind completing this survey because I understand its importance. However, the questions in both surveys seemed redundant and repetitive. Unless there is a particular reason for asking the same question in a different way several times, this instrument should not be used. The redundancy is annoying and could distract some participants.

VITA

Lori Simpson Wilkerson was born in Knoxville, Tennessee on May 9, 1974. She attended Farragut High School in Knoxville and graduated in 1992. Following high school, Lori began working on a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in psychology at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. At The University of Tennessee, she joined Psi Chi, Golden Key, and Phi Eta Sigma. She graduated in May of 1997. After taking some time off to work, Lori began a Master of Science degree program during Fall semester of 2000 at The University of Tennessee, majoring in Human Resource Development.

Previously, Lori has worked as a retail store assistant manager and as a manager. This position afforded her many valuable experiences and lessons in leadership. After working as a customer service manager for a large service company in Atlanta, Lori decided on a career in human resources, especially in training and development, was the path she wanted to pursue. While studying for her Master's degree, Lori became involved in a TRIO program (Educational Talent Search). The experiences she had as an ETS counselor sparked her interest in studying for her thesis job satisfaction among TRIO personnel. Currently, Lori is a human resource intern at Kimberly-Clark, a paper mill located in Loudon, Tennessee.

