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Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, and Ethical Climate of Higher Education
Administrators in Maryland Colleges and Universities

A dissertation

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

by

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May 2017

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Keywords: ethical climate, job satisfaction, higher education administrators

ABSTRACT

Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, and Ethical Climate of Higher Education

Administrators in Maryland Colleges and Universities

by

Brenda G. DiSorbo

A quantitative research project was conducted at all public and private colleges and universities in the state of Maryland to investigate the relationship between job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate among higher education administrators. An online survey was completed by 278 higher education administrators working in public and private colleges in Maryland during the 2016 fall semester. Survey results were analyzed in conjunction with participant characteristics, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climates. Data were analyzed using MANOVA, Chi-Square, and descriptive statistics.

Findings indicate that the perceptions of ethical climate differed significantly by job satisfaction, gender and administrative position. A median split was performed on the composite score of job satisfaction. The median was calculated at 69.00. Scores below the median indicate respondents have low job satisfaction and scores above the median indicate respondents have high job satisfaction. A benevolent ethical climate is significantly associated with job satisfaction. Egoism is significantly associated with organizational commitment. Respondents with high organizational commitment favored an egoistic ethical climate. A significant difference in ethical climate existed by gender with men reporting significantly more principled ethical climate responses than women. Ethical climate also significantly differed by administrative position where deans and directors favored a principled ethical climate compared to Vice Presidents.

The study is important because few researchers have evaluated job satisfaction through the lens of organizational commitment and ethical climate. Therefore, the study contributes to the existing literature related to job satisfaction among higher education administrators.

Organizational commitment and ethical climate may impact overall job satisfaction among higher education administrators.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the important family in my life.

I dedicate this study to my husband, Stefano, who is the person other than myself who is most happy that I am finally finished with this program. Thank you for your patience, your support, and your love.

I dedicate my work here to my mother, Heddy Cuthbertson, who will share with everyone that her daughter is a doctor. Thank you for your support and finding all those research articles.

I also dedicate this study to my children, Kristopher and Ashlee. Thank you for your patience and understanding during the last four years. I hope I have shown you that life rewards perseverance and determination.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	2
DEDICATION	4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	5
LIST OF TABLES	8
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	9
Challenges for Institutions	9
Statement of Purpose	13
Research Questions.....	13
Significance of the Study.....	14
Limitations and Delimitations of the Research.....	14
Definitions of Terms.....	15
Overview of the Study	15
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	17
Job Satisfaction	17
Organizational Commitment.....	19
Ethical Climate.....	22
Relationship of Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment.....	23
Job Satisfaction and Ethical Climate	27
Job Satisfaction and Gender.....	33
Organizational Commitment and Ethical Climate	37
Organizational Commitment and Gender	40
Summary	41
3. RESEACH METHOD	43

Research Design.....	43
Conceptual Framework.....	44
Research Questions and Null Hypotheses	45
Population and Sample Selection.....	46
Instrumentation	46
Data Collection	49
Data Analysis	50
4. DATA ANALYSIS	51
Survey Respondents	51
Summary of the Results	52
Analyses of Research Questions.....	52
Research Question 1	52
Research Question 2	54
Research Question 3	56
Research Question 4	59
Chapter Summary	62
5. DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS	63
Discussion of Results	63
Research Question 1	63
Research Question 2	64
Research Question 3	65
Research Question 4	66
Recommendations for Further Research.....	67
Conclusions.....	68
REFERENCES	69
APPENDIX: Survey Instruments	89
VITA	97

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Percentage Distribution of Participant Characteristics	52
2. Results of the MANOVA Comparing Higher Education Administrators' Job Satisfaction and Perception of Ethical Climate.	54
3. Means and Standard Deviations for Ethical Climates by Levels of Job Satisfaction.....	54
4. Results of the MANOVA Comparing Higher Education Administrators' Organizational Commitment and Perceptions of Ethical Climates.	56
5. Means and Standard Deviations for Ethical Climates by Levels of Organizational Commitment.....	56
6. Observed and Expected Frequencies by Principled and Gender	58
7. Observed and Expected Frequencies by Principled and Gender	59
8. Observed and Expected Frequencies by Principled and Gender	59
9. Observed and Expected Frequencies by Egoism and Position	61
10. Observed and Expected Frequencies by Benevolence and Position.....	61
11. Observed and Expected Frequencies by Principled and Position.....	62

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Challenges for Institutions

Higher education administrators are responsible for the leadership of two- and four-year colleges and universities and often seek to provide educational opportunities in new ways to differentiate their institutions from competing institutions (Agresto, 2011). Higher education administrators face strong competition for quality students and are challenged to find marketing techniques that bring attention to their institution. In addition to these challenges, decreased state and federal funding are other obstacles impacting higher education administrators (McLendon, Hearn, & Mokher, 2009; Tandberg, 2010). Furthermore, increased levels of accountability from accrediting agencies, students and parents, and the federal government present challenges to higher education administration (Cowan, 2013). Despite these challenges, institutional administrators must continue to find ways to engage students with fewer funds. As a result, higher education administrators work to make effective and efficient use of their resources. One way efficiency and effectiveness manifests on a college campus is through the use of assessments. The assessment process is a frequently used tool for higher education administrators for identifying areas of improvement (Wall, Hursh, & Rodgers, 2014). An area related to organizational assessment in higher education is assessments that involve faculty, staff, and administrators (Dennison, 2011; Desrochers & Kirshstein, 2014; Fuller, Hester, Barnett, Frey, & Relyea, 2006; Rosser, 2000; Rosser, 2004; Ryan, Healy, & Sullivan, 2012).

While the number of faculty has moderately grown in the last twenty years, the number of staff and administrators has rapidly increased. From 1993 to 2009, there was a 33% growth in college faculty (Smith, Tovar, & Garcia, 2012); since 2009, the growth of college faculty has

substantially slowed (College Board, 2012). The growth of professional staff increased from 9% of the total number of higher education employees in 1976 to 25% of all higher education employees in 2011 (College Board, 2012). Despite the increase in professional staffing levels in higher education, research and assessments of higher education settings are more often focused on faculty as the sample (Johnsrud, 2002; Johnsrud & Rosser, 1999). However, researchers are beginning to recognize the importance of non-faculty employees (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti & Xanthopoulou 2007; Llorens, Bakker, Schaufeli & Salanova 2006; Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova 2006; Volkwein & Zhou 2003).

Although studies have examined the growth of administrative and staff job duties at higher education institutions (Curtis & Thornton, 2014; Desrochers & Kirshstein, 2014;), and others have examined the influence administrators and staff have on the student learning experience (Rosser, 2000; Rosser, 2004), there is a short supply of recent research related to higher education administrator job satisfaction. While the direct impact of job satisfaction remains unclear, studies have revealed the importance of employee satisfaction in higher education (Brown & Sargeant, 2007; Robbins, 1998). Additionally, scholars have identified the effect that administrative behavior can have on employee behavior. Tull (2006) found a positive correlation between effective supervision and job satisfaction. Likewise, a lack of effective supervision among university administrators contributed to job dissatisfaction (Chun & Evans, 2011). These initial surveys indicate the importance of the administrator's role in the overall effectiveness of the college or university.

Job dissatisfaction among college and university employees is often associated with salary. Two prior surveys (Buck & Watson, 2002; Hogan, Carlson, & Dua, 2002) provided evidence that administrative support professionals who were largely unhappy with their salary

also displayed stronger levels of job dissatisfaction. Salary satisfaction studies offer contradictory findings; however, as Rosser (2008) discussed results of the 2007 Higher Education Support Professionals membership survey conducted by the National Education Association (NEA). Findings revealed that higher education support professionals were mostly satisfied with their job, their salaries, and benefits. Although salary is often included in the discussion of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction, another contributing factor to job satisfaction is organizational commitment.

Organizational commitment has been identified as a leading factor in understanding an employee's job performance and overall job satisfaction (Grdinovac & Yancey, 2012). Employees who display high levels of commitment to the organization are less likely to leave the organization than less committed employees (Koch & Steers, 1978; Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian 1974). Employees who believe their work efforts are valued by organizations and managers not only exhibit higher levels of commitment but are more involved with the organization, more productive, and more cognizant of their job duties (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vanderberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002). Further research has shown that when employees believed that organizations honestly care about their well-being, the employees were more likely to volunteer and contribute to the overall success of the organization (Collier & Esteban, 2007). Further, employees who are committed to the organization perform at higher levels, have fewer absences, and are less likely to quit their job (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Commitment is an important issue for higher education organizations to examine as a lack of organizational support and commitment was a leading cause of employee turnover (Brough & Frame, 2004). Organizational commitment can be defined in many ways. For the purpose of this

research study, organizational commitment was defined as the level of emotional and functional attachment to one's current place of employment (Elizur & Koslowsky, 2000).

During the last decade, the scholarship related to organizational behavior increased in studies involving ethical climate, work environments, and the impact of workplace climate on employee' attitudes and behaviors (DeConinck, 2010). In fact, one particular study uncovered that ethical climate is a contributing factor to job satisfaction, commitment, and attrition (Parker, et al., 2003). One way scholars have examined ethical climate is through the development and testing of an Ethical Climate Questionnaire (Victor & Cullen, 1988).

Institutions of higher education began examining ethical climate during the 1990's (Shenkle, Snyder, & Bauer, 1998; Tierney, 1990). College campus evaluations shifted toward a proactive approach through ongoing climate assessments as opposed to reactive approach of exit surveys to better understand current issues (Hurtado, Griffin, Arellano, & Cuellar, 2008). To help identify areas for improvement on college campuses, organizational climate assessments have become a priority (Ryder & Mitchell, 2013). Research related to ethical climate found that managerial values and behaviors in the workplace impact the image of the organization (Moore, 2005; Wright & Goodstein, 2007). Strategic planning in higher education focus on changing the institution by utilizing the results of staff surveys (Dooris, Kelley, & Trainer, 2004). Further, performance appraisals are often connected with strategic plans and help the institution determine goals (Aguinis, 2008). Each key person contributes to the success of a college or university (Wolverton & Gmelch, 2002). As more research is being conducted involving college campuses, assessments of ethical climate may be used to evaluate higher education personnel. For the purpose of this study, ethical climate was defined as values or norms that employees

perceive to be acceptable behavior in the workplace (Beeri, Dayan, Vigoda-Gadot, & Werner, 2013).

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore the relationship of perceived job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate for higher education administrators at all two-year and four-year, public and private, institutions of higher education located in the state of Maryland. For the purpose of this study, higher education administrators were defined as full-time, non-faculty, currently working in student affairs, business affairs, academic affairs (institutional research), or other (information technology). This study provides information to help higher education administrators better understand the factors involved in organizational commitment, job satisfaction and ethical commitment levels within higher education work environments.

Research Questions

The following questions will guide this quantitative study:

- RQ1: Is there a significant difference between job satisfaction of higher education administrators and their perception of ethical climate?
- RQ2: Is there a significant difference between organizational commitment of higher education administrators and their perception of ethical climate?
- RQ3: Is there a significant difference in job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate of higher education administrators by gender?
- RQ4: Is there a significant difference in job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate of higher education administrators by administrative position?

Significance of the Study

Employees working in a positive climate are more productive and create a campus culture that attracts prospective students (Szekeres, 2006). Colleges and universities rely on administrators to set the tone and tenor of organizational culture, lead change, and make decisions that impact future enrollment and services to students. In order to prevent a shortage of higher education administrators or frequent turnover, it is recommended that job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate surveys are used to inform institutional changes (Betts, Urias, Chavez, & Betts, 2009).

Limitations and Delimitations of the Research

There are limitations that can affect the results of this study, which may arise from a lack of participants, small sample sizes, and incorrect data collection or analysis (Creswell, 2009).

One limitation is the length of the survey; the survey took approximately six minutes to complete; thus, some participants with time limitations may not have responded fully to all questions. Another limitation related to the use of email addresses to send the survey invitation and link. The survey invitation email may not have reached all participants if e-mail servers filtered unknown or spam messages. This was a minimal limitation of the study since email is a commonly used medium for survey research (Tong, 2012) and generally yields widespread participation among sampled participants (Tong, 2012).

Finally, a delimitation of the research is the sample of all colleges and universities in the state of Maryland. Generalizability of the findings to other states may be delimited due to any regional cultural influences in the state. Future research might include higher education administrators in other areas of the United States in order to enhance the national generalizability of the findings.

Definition of Terms

The definitions of terms used in this study are provided as follows:

Job satisfaction refers to a sense of fulfillment, gratification, or contentment that develops as a result of working in a specific job (Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2012).

Organizational commitment refers to the attitude that leads an employee to feel connected to the organization (Eleswed & Mohammed, 2013; Zehir, Muceldili, & Zehir, 2012).

Organizational commitment implies that the individuals accepts the organization's goals and objectives as valid and worthy of the effort to attain (Sentuna, 2015). It also influences the quality of work and services (Farooq & Zia, 2013).

Ethical climate refers to the way the organization should address ethical situations (Unal, 2012; Wang & Hseih, 2012). Ethical climate in the workplace develops when employees believe there are certain standards and norms that the organization expects for behaviors and for resolving situations that develop in the workplace (Floyd, Yerby, & Santiago, 2011).

Overview of the Study

Chapter 1 introduces the study. Chapter 2 provides the background for this study through the synthesis and analysis of empirical research related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate. Chapter 3 provides an overview of the research design for the study including the methods, setting, sample, data collection, instrument, and Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for the study. Chapter 4 provides demographic information and other results from the survey data revealing differences of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate for higher education administrators. Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the results of this study, indicating how these results confirm or contradict findings

from prior research in this area. Additionally, this chapter includes recommendations for policy, practice, and future research. Chapter 5 also provides the conclusion for this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Societal trends show the need for job satisfaction in the workplace and organizations recognize the importance of positive work environments (AL-omari, 2013). Research has shown that organizational commitment also affects job satisfaction and ethical climate (Grdinovac & Yancey, 2012). The purpose of this literature review is to explore job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate research studies. Included in the literature review is the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment; job satisfaction and ethical climate; organizational commitment and ethical climate; and the role of gender as it relates to job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to a sense of fulfillment, gratification, or contentment that develops as a result of working in a specific job (Collie, et al., 2012). Job satisfaction is perceived as an emotional response to all of the factors that the individual experiences in the place of employment (Federici, & Skaalvik, 2012). Job satisfaction can range from extreme dissatisfaction to extreme satisfaction and involves the objective and subjective understanding of the employee about the job (Eleswed & Mohammed, 2013). The concept of job satisfaction is comprised of numerous variables such as perceptions of promotional opportunities, adequacy of compensation and benefits and relations with coworkers and supervisors (David, Gidwani, Birthare, & Singh, 2015; Sentuna, 2015; Singh & Jain, 2013). Job satisfaction variables are often categorized as intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Caricati, et al., 2014). Intrinsic factors involve higher order variables such as the desire for recognition and advancement. Extrinsic factors are elements of the external environment such as compensation, the comfort of the work

environment, or perceptions of the quality of leadership. Higher levels of job satisfaction is usually associated with the perceptions of the factors in the workplace that result in satisfying intrinsic needs (Nawab & Bhatti, 2011). Job satisfaction is continuously changing as employees respond to changing elements in the work environment (Suki & Suki, 2012).

The Job Characteristics Theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) emphasized that employees will be satisfied with their job if it includes a variety of work, independent thinking, and fosters feelings of responsibility. The Job Diagnostic Survey was developed to measure the Job Characteristics Theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) by having respondents answer questions or statements related to their perceptions of their job.

According to Federici and Skaalvik (2012), research examining job satisfaction can focus on the individual's satisfaction with the entire work experience or on satisfaction with a single or narrow aspect of the job. The focus of the research can have a significant effect on the findings because individuals place different levels of importance on the various elements of the job that contribute to satisfaction. For example, an employee can be highly dissatisfied with one aspect of the job but not dissatisfied with their job overall. Therefore, a finding of dissatisfaction with one or a small number of the elements of the job cannot be used to predict overall job satisfaction (Federici & Skaalvik, 2012).

There has been extensive research examining job satisfaction in institutions of higher education (Fairweather, 2002; Hermsen & Rosser, 2008; Smith & Courtenay, 1995). More recently, Tull (2006) conducted a study in an attempt to explain the impact of supervision as it relates to job satisfaction for student affairs personnel. Results indicated a positive correlation between effective supervision and overall job satisfaction. Additionally, a negative correlation was found between ineffective supervision and overall job satisfaction. Findings from a

qualitative study conducted of university administrators were similar to the Tull (2006) study; lack of effective supervision contributed to job dissatisfaction (Chun & Evans, 2011). Extrinsic factors such as stress created by the work environment also substantially reduced job satisfaction (Schermulu, et al., 2011). Maforah and Schulz (2012) approached job satisfaction among educators from the perspective of discrepancy theory, which proposes that job satisfaction exists when there is relatively little discrepancy between what an employee wants and what the employee receives in the workplace.

Suki and Suki (2012) suggest that the theoretical model involving job satisfaction used in research is critical for understanding the findings of various studies. Some research (Federici & Skaalvik, 2012; Nagar, 2012) assumes that job satisfaction is a dependent variable influenced by multiple independent variables. Other research (Schermulu, et al., 2011) presumes that job satisfaction is an independent variable that is a predictor of other behaviors in the organization. The variations in research may create confusion when assessing the effect of job satisfaction in the organization. To understand job satisfaction, researchers suggested that staff and administrators are motivated by organizational commitment, feeling appreciated or having a purpose (Fuller, et al., 2006).

Organizational Commitment

There is no general consensus in the literature concerning the definition of organizational commitment (Rusu, 2013). Scholars generally define organizational commitment as the attitude that leads an employee to feel connected to the organization (Eleswed & Mohammed, 2013; Zehir, et al., 2012). Organizational commitment has also been identified as a leading factor in understanding job performance and overall job satisfaction (Grdinovac & Yancey, 2012). Organizational commitment affects the relationship between an employee and an organization

and whether an employee will remain with the organization (Selamat, et al., 2013).

Organizational commitment has been defined as some type of attachment to the organization and its goals expressed by interactions with the other members of the organization (Rusu, 2013).

Employees who feel appreciated in their jobs tend to be more productive and perform at higher levels than those who are less appreciated (Grdinovac & Yancey, 2012). Organizational commitment also implies that the individual accepts the organization's goals and objectives as valid and worthy of the effort to attain. Consequently, individuals with high organizational commitment are willing to exert effort on behalf of the organization and are willing to accept the organization's goals and values (Sentuna, 2015). In addition, organizational commitment "strongly influences the quality of work and services and plays a major role in organizational development" (Farooq & Zia, 2013, p. 273). Thus, individuals committed to the organization are more likely to make an extra effort to achieve organizational objectives which may include creativity in the work process (David, et al., (2015). Suki and Suki (2012) propose that organizational commitment among employees is relatively stable and involves long-term responses to factors in the work environment.

Researchers have suggested organizational commitment is composed of three components: normative, affective, and continuance commitment (Aydogdu & Asikgil, 2011; Meyer, et al., 2012; Rusu, 2013; Zehir, et al., 2012). The normative component is the sense of obligation to remain in an organization which can have a moral or ethical aspect because it involves a sense of duty toward the organization. The affective component is the degree of liking for the organization which creates an emotional attachment and a greater degree of identification with the organization (Rusu, 2013). The continuance component is the perception of difficulties that could result from leaving an organization and the benefits or gains from remaining with the

organization (Nagar, 2012). Each of the three components of organizational commitment exists independently of each other and is influenced by different antecedent variables. When considered together, the three components lead to the overall commitment of the individual to the organization (Nawab & Bhatti, 2011).

Nayir (2012) noted the existence of a perspective of the components of organizational commitment that is based on the level of commitment of employees toward an organization. With compliance commitment, the level of commitment of the employee is minimal. The actions of the employee are to obtain wages and compensation with relatively little loyalty to the organization. With identification commitment, the employee interacts with other members of the organization and accepts the goals and values of the organization. The employee is content to be a member of the organization and has a moderate level of loyalty. With internalization-commitment, the employee adopts the organization's goals and, therefore, maximizes efforts on behalf of the organization. For internalization to occur, there must be alignment of personal goals with the goals and values of the company. Aydin, Sarier, and Uysal (2013) used the meta-analysis method to determine if leadership styles of a principal has any effect on the organizational commitment of teachers. The results indicated that teachers developed a stronger sense of organizational commitment when the principal was a transformational leader and motivated teachers by showing them close attention. Okcu (2014) added that school principals' transformational leadership skills could influence employees more easily and direct them to perform organizational goals leading to deeper commitment.

The generalization of commitment involves behavioral choices that lead to an attitude of loyalty or identification with an organization (Eslami & Gharakani, 2012). Behavioral choices made by the employee that lead to organizational commitment would be influenced by the career

opportunities available, investments they have made or the cost of leaving the organization. Sentuna (2015) noted that many demographic variables such as age, seniority and educational level can influence the various dimensions of organizational commitment. In general, younger individuals have less commitment while more senior and better-educated individuals have more organizational commitment.

There are a few empirical studies of organizational commitment that use the sample of higher education administrators (Dua, 1994; Johnsrud, 1996, 2002; Rosser, 2004; Rothmann & Essenko, 2007); however, recent research examined the level of organizational commitment among university faculty with a sample of 1,500 instructors (Rusu, 2013). The findings indicated that instructors reported a substantially higher level of affective commitment than normative or continuance commitment. The researcher concluded that teachers in colleges and universities possessed a high degree of emotional attachment to the specific institution and their role in the institution.

Ethical Climate

Throughout the last decade, organizations have been concerned with the lack of ethical behavior in the workplace. This has inspired researchers to investigate ethical climates in organizations. Recent literature on workplace ethical behavior has identified that organizations are creating workshops on acceptable workplace behavior and providing written policies (Al-omari, 2013). Ethical climates are described as practices in the organization that could portray an organization as positive or negative (Victor & Cullen, 1988).

Although colleges and universities are not known for unethical behavior, there is still a need for policies and procedures on acceptable work behavior (Grunewald, 2008; Kelley & Chang, 2007). Establishing a code of ethics may help institutions of higher education resolve

unacceptable behaviors only if the codes are enforced (Felicio & Pieniadz, 1999). However, research conducted found that organizations with ethical codes still have employees who display unacceptable behaviors (Marnburg, 2000).

It is recommended that institutions of higher education find ways to create policies and procedures that encompass the entire aspect of the institution (Moore, 2006). Institutions should consider leadership and culture of the organization when establishing policies and procedures as this helps shape the climate of the institution (Schein, 2004).

Scholars have defined ethical climate using three constructs; egoism, benevolence, and principled (Martin & Cullen, 2006). The first construct, egoism, focuses on self-interests and how one can maximize their own self-interest. The second construct, benevolence, focuses on what is beneficial for all groups, not just one's own self-interest. Lastly, the third construct, principled, focuses on behaviors that are guided by rules or policies and procedures and applies to all groups of people. Examining ethical climates may lead to identifying factors that relate to job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Relationship of Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment

Despite research examining the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, "the order of the causal relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment has not been clearly established" (Huang, You, & Tsai, 2012, p. 514). Some researchers propose that job satisfaction is the antecedent to organizational commitment (Anari, 2012; Aydogdu & Asikgil, 2011; Eslami & Gharakani, 2012; Zehir, et al., 2012), while other researchers propose that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are separate concepts that are independently influenced by various antecedent variables (Aghdasi, Kiamanesh, & Ebrahim, 2011; Bushra, Usman, & Naveed, 2011; De Gieter, Hofmans, & Peppermans, 2011).

Many researchers have connected job satisfaction to organizational commitment. Aydogdu and Asikgil (2011) identified a strong positive correlation between job satisfaction and organizational commitment with data from employees in both the industrial and the service sector. Findings from the study suggest that job satisfaction is a construct functioning as an antecedent variable for organizational commitment. Eslami and Gharakani (2012) also found that job satisfaction has a positive correlation with normative, affective, and continuance commitment. The research was an investigation of elements of job satisfaction related to promotions, personal relationships, and perception of favorable conditions in the workplace. Other studies have confirmed that there is a moderate to strong correlation between job satisfaction and affective commitment (Anari, 2012; Zehir, Erdogan, & Basar, 2011; Zehir, et al., 2012).

Researchers have established organizational commitment as an antecedent to job satisfaction. Imran, Arif, Cheema, and Azeem (2014) examined data from teachers concerning the relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction and determined that a change in organizational commitment led to a positive change in job satisfaction. Nafei's (2015) research found evidence to support the theory in which organizational commitment is the antecedent to job satisfaction. Indartono and Chen (2011) found organizational commitment affected job satisfaction by examining the influence of perceptions of organizational politics on both organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Nayir (2012) determined that job satisfaction is one of several predictor variables for organizational commitment which is also influenced by perceptions of organizational justice, the organizational reward system and the amount of support the organization provides to employees.

Recent research suggests that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are independent, endogenous constructs influenced by the same antecedent variables. A research study by De Gieter, et al., (2011) stated that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are independent predictors of turnover among nurses. The authors determined that there were significant individual differences in the roles of job satisfaction and organizational commitment in outcomes such as turnover or behavior in the workplace. The personality and demographic antecedent variables suggest that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are endogenous constructs. The research was based on the assumption that the dependent variable is the intention to leave the organization with both job satisfaction and organizational commitment independently predicting the intention. A study by Nawab and Bhatti (2011) examining university faculty found that job satisfaction and organizational commitment were endogenous variables dependent on similar antecedents such as compensation. The study found no interaction between job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Aghdasi, et al., (2011) also considered job satisfaction and organizational commitment as endogenous variables subject to the influence of the antecedent variable of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence involves the ability to self-regulate emotions and to understand the emotions of others. Emotional intelligence has a direct correlation with job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Aghdasi, et al., 2011). However, the relationship of emotional intelligence to job satisfaction and organizational commitment is subject to the effect of moderating variables such as stress. Findings suggest that the emotional intelligence of the individual moderates the degree of job satisfaction and organizational commitment among employees. The findings are similar to those of Akomolafe and Olatomide (2013) who determined that emotional intelligence is a predictor variable for organizational commitment

when considered in combination with job satisfaction. Consequently, the investigation of the effect of emotional intelligence does not resolve the issue of whether job satisfaction and organizational commitment are endogenous or exogenous variables.

Anari (2012) also determined that emotional intelligence influenced both job satisfaction and organizational commitment, but found that job satisfaction has a direct relationship with organizational commitment. In effect, job satisfaction is an antecedent variable that predicts organizational commitment. The influence of additional moderating variables such as emotional intelligence can affect the degree of the relationship between job satisfaction and emotional intelligence, but does not extinguish the relationship (Anari, 2012).

Research indicates that the use of transformational leadership by managers and supervisors has an independent effect on job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Bushra, et al., 2011). Further, the authors also conclude that the use of the transformational leadership style leads to internalizing the goals and objectives of the organization. Internalization is the highest level of organizational commitment as discussed by Nayir (2012). At the same time, the conclusions of Jackson, Albertis and Snipes (2014) suggest that variables unaccounted for in the research design such as gender of the leader and employee can have a significant effect on job satisfaction.

The lack of agreement concerning the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational considerations may be the result of differences in research methods. Nafei (2015), for example, found that job satisfaction functions as a predictor variable for organizational commitment. In contrast, De Gieter, et al., (2011) researched turnover intention as the dependent variable with job satisfaction and organizational commitment as the predictor variables. In the study by Nafei (2015), turnover intention was a component of organizational

commitment, which leads to significant differences in the findings. The research conducted by Nafei (2015) and De Gieter, et al., (2011) confirms there are differences in the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment but does not help determine why employees leave their organization.

Higher education staff reported lower levels of job satisfaction when no visible perception of organizational commitment existed in the organization (Johnsrud, 1996). A more recent study found the lack of organizational commitment in university staff resulted in higher levels of employee absenteeism and withdrawal from the institution (Gillespie, Walsh, Winefields, Dua, & Stough, 2001). Positive work environments made it desirable for employees to remain continue working (Johnsrud, 2002), therefore, administrators should also consider ethical climate as a factor of job satisfaction. Workplace practices that encourage positive employee attitudes may retain employees. For instance, positive work environments that provide support, employee development and advancement opportunities are less likely to lose employees (Swider, Boswell, & Zimmerman, 2011). Further research found that job satisfaction among university staff impacts student performance and the culture of the institution (Alonderiene & Majauskaite, 2016). A recent study on academic administrators found that interactive training increases job satisfaction and increases productivity (Morris & Laipple, 2015). Interaction among staff may create a more positive work environment (Morris & Laipple, 2015).

Job Satisfaction and Ethical Climate

Scholars have defined ethical climate as the shared perception of ethically correct behavior and the way the organization should address ethical situations (Unal, 2012; Wang & Hseih, 2012). Ethical climate in the workplace develops when employees believe there are certain standards and norms that the organization expects for behaviors and for resolving

situations that develop in the workplace (Floyd, et al., 2011). The ethical climate has been known to represent the social system in the organization as experienced by the individual members of the organization. To fit into the organization, there must be a similarity between the ethical orientation of the individual employee and the ethical orientation of the organization (Wang & Hsieh, 2012). The ethical climate of the organization also has a significant effect on the behaviors of the employees by establishing a threshold for determining whether a behavior is considered unethical in the social system of the organization (Mayer, 2014).

Colleges and universities are concerned about the development of students' personal and social responsibility. As a result, institutions have given attention to developing climate assessments that assess people's attitudes about, perceptions of, and experiences within a specified environment (Glission & James, 2002; Hart & Fellabaum, 2008; Peterson & Spencer, 1990; Rankin & Reason, 2008). Organizational climate studies began to change from being reactive in nature to more proactive assessment practices in order to understand issues on campus and within postsecondary education (Hurtado, et al., 2008). The advantages of using a climate assessment can inform decision making and identify areas where action can have the greatest effect.

A climate assessment can assist in determining how institutions move toward creating, maintaining, or improving opportunities that promote student development and learning (Ryder & Mitchell, 2013). It provides a "foundation for institutional change" (Hart & Fellabaum, 2008, p. 222)

Colleges and universities can learn about needed improvements by using assessments and evaluating data. For example, participating institutions that respond to the Global Perspective Inventory or the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) receive reports comparing

them to other institutions (Ryder & Mitchell, 2013). This information is crucial to making informed decisions and recognizing areas of needed improvement for the organizational climate and job satisfaction (O'Neill, 2012).

Mayer (2014) noted that framing ethical climate depended on a dimension that examined ethical criteria and a dimension that examined the locus of analysis. The ethical criteria are three basic approaches to an ethical system: egoism maximizes self-interest; benevolence maximizes common interests; and deontological fosters adherence to ethical principles. The locus of analysis is the focus of the individual for the analysis of ethical behaviors in the organization. The three loci are the individual, the organization, and the environment external to the organization. This study resulted in the development of the Ethical Climate Questionnaire (ECQ), an instrument used to measure perceptions of ethical climate in organizations. In a study of nurses' perceptions of ethical climate and organizational commitment, Cronbach's coefficients for egoism was reported as 0.70; benevolence was reported as .747, and principled was reported as .758 (Borhani, Jalali, Abbaszadeh, Haghdoost, 2013).

Researchers have tested the ECQ (Mayer, 2014) in an attempt to refine the accuracy of the ethical climate construct. Khasawneh (2014) mentions the five types of ethical climates among teachers that are described as (1) law and rules, (2) independence, (3) instrumental, (4) caring, and (5) efficiency. Each type presumably affecting job satisfaction in a different manner. In earlier research, it was suggested that moral developments affected the ethical climate of an organization.

Some researchers related ethical climate as part of developing cognitive morals. (Floyd, et al., 2011). The theory contains the proposition that there are three stages of moral development consisting of pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional development. Individuals in

the first two stages of development prefer an ethical climate of rules with sanctions for individuals who break the rules. The individuals in the post-conventional stage of development prefer organizations that offer principles rather than rules. The perceptions of the appropriateness of the ethical climate in the organization depend on the individual's stage of development.

Other researchers suggest that ethical climate is a subset of the organizational climate and places emphasis on the perceptions among employees of the ethical and moral behaviors of the organization (Schein, 2010; Zohar & Hofmann, 2012). The organizational climate is the way that the organization defines routine practices supported by the reward system. The perception of the employee concerning the organizational climate and the ethical climate subset develops based on their observation and experiences of the way the organization rewards different types of practices (Schneider, Ehrhart, & Macey, 2011). If the organization rewards actions that conform to an employee's ethical values and norms, the employee is likely to perceive the organization as having an ethical climate. Consequently, the ethical climate is a subjective construct consisting of the aggregate perceptions of the employees. The ethical climate of the organization is presumed to influence job satisfaction by reducing ambiguities in job roles when there is congruence between the ethics of the individual and the ethics of the organization (Unal, 2012).

In contrast to the perspective of Floyd, et al., (2011) that ethical climate is a component of employee behavior, some scholars suggest that ethical climate is a component of organizational culture (Schneider, et al., 2011; Tanner, et al., 2015). The culture of the organization involves the values, norms, and behaviors of the members of the organization with ethical issues a part of the general culture. The way members of the organization respond to

ethical issues depends on the culture that creates expectations for the treatment of employees, customers, and other stakeholders in the organization.

In a review of previous research concerning ethical climate in organizations, Tanner, et al., (2015) reported that there is substantial evidence to conclude that a relationship exists between ethical climate and job satisfaction. The authors also proposed that the mechanism by which ethical climate influences job satisfaction is through a reduction in stress when there is congruence between an employee's personal ethics and the ethical orientation communicated by the organization. Other research has determined that employees who perceive the organization as ethical will also believe that the organization is fair towards them and will have higher job satisfaction (Wang & Hseih, 2012). In addition, employees who perceive the ethical climate as unhelpful and emphasizing self-interest over group interests are likely to have lower job satisfaction (Parboteeah, Martin, & Cullen, 2011).

Overall, studies of ethical climate and job satisfaction vary in the way scholars define variables and relationships. Moore and Moore (2014) noted that researchers adopt either a cognitive approach or a shared-perception approach to assessing ethical climate which can create differences in findings. The cognitive approach solely examines perceptions of the work environment from a constructivist orientation. The shared-perception approach uses documents, observations, or other objective data to assess ethical climate from a positivist orientation. For the purpose of this study, the researcher used a cognitive orientation.

Research by Floyd, et al., (2011) identified a relationship between different ethical orientations in organizations and job satisfaction. A negative correlation existed between an egoistic ethical climate and job satisfaction with the egoistic climate characterized by efforts to maximize personal gain. In contrast, a positive correlation existed between a benevolent ethical

climate defined as a caring climate and job satisfaction. In addition, a positive correlation was found between a principled climate and job satisfaction with the organization adhering to a set of explicit principles. Khasawneh (2014) confirmed these findings and identified both positive and negative correlations between the types of ethical climate and job satisfaction.

The degree of importance of the various orientations of ethical climate for job satisfaction can vary (Bothrani, Jalali, Abbaszedah, Haghdoost, & Amiresmaili, 2012). In a study examining nurses, the caring ethical orientation for the organization had the strongest correlation with job satisfaction. The independence ethical orientation had the second largest correlation with job satisfaction. The authors concluded that the significance of different orientations in the ethical climate could vary across professions.

Wong and Li (2015) tested the theory that unethical behavior by senior managers establishes the ethical climate of the organization and has a negative effect on job satisfaction. Their findings indicate that the unethical treatment of employees had the greatest negative effect on job satisfaction and was the most significant factor in establishing the ethical climate of the organization. The research was conducted in the hospitality industry, but the authors argued that the findings were applicable to all industries.

Zehir, et al., (2011) considered ethical climate as an antecedent variable for both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The ethical climate influenced job satisfaction, which in turn influenced organizational commitment. At the same time, ethical climate directly affected organizational commitment. They also proposed that other variables such as leadership type can moderate the influence of ethical climate on job satisfaction. Nafei (2015) conducted research which validated the ethical climate exerted an independent influence on both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The research also identified positive correlations of

varying strength for sub-components of the ethical climate such as perceptions of caring and principled behavior.

There are conflicting results, however, as some scholars found that ethical climate does not have a significant effect on job satisfaction. Huang, et al., (2012) found no correlation between perceptions of ethical climate and job satisfaction. The findings contradict the results of Khasawneh (2014) who determined that ethical climate accounts for 28.7% of the variance in job satisfaction. In addition, research conducted by Mayer (2014) concerning the relationship between ethical climate and outcomes indicated that there is substantial evidence supporting the premise that a positive correlation exists between ethical climate and job satisfaction.

Parboteeah, et al., (2011) provided evidence from a review of previous research suggesting that culture may mediate the relationship between ethical climate and job satisfaction. Culture determines the values, norms, and beliefs of the individual with substantial variability in the types of behaviors that are considered ethical in the workplace (Glisson, 2007). For example, one culture may consider bribery an ethical practice while another culture may consider the practice unethical. The problem of cultural variation in organizations may impact an organization's outcomes and failures (Vallett, 2010). Another factor organizations must be aware is the relationship between gender and job satisfaction.

Job Satisfaction and Gender

The research concerning the relationship between gender and job satisfaction has produced inconsistent findings (Eleswed & Mohammed, 2013). A substantial amount of the research examining gender as a moderating variable for job satisfaction suggests no significant differences by gender in job satisfaction (Suki & Suki, 2012). Research by David et al. (2015) found that gender had no effect on sub-variables related to job satisfaction such as the

opportunity for promotion, job security, and relationship with coworkers. A study by Bonte and Krabel (2014) that included over 2,000 university graduates determined that females have slightly lower job satisfaction in the workplace, but the differences between males and females were not statistically significant. Using a sample of teachers, Mondal (2014) found that there were no statistically significant differences in job satisfaction between male and female teachers. Research examining job satisfaction among higher education administrators also found no statistically significant differences between gender and job satisfaction (Howard-Baldwin, Celik, & Kraska, 2012; Yacizi, & Atlun, 2012).

In contrast, other scholars have identified significant differences in job satisfaction between males and females. Aytac (2015) found higher job satisfaction levels among female teachers when compared to male teachers. Eleswed and Mohammed (2013) also determined that females tend to have higher job satisfaction with satisfaction increasing with age.

A limited amount of research has examined the interaction between the gender of a manager or supervisor and the job satisfaction of employees. Jackson, et al., (2014) found through a review of previous research that the gender of the manager may lead to differences among male and female employee level of job satisfaction. The research was based on a theoretical assumption where the demographic differences of managers or supervisors foster greater role ambiguity for employees because both the manager and employee filters information based on demographic biases. Gender congruence between managers and employees led to higher levels of job satisfaction. Thus, male employees reported greater job satisfaction when working for male supervisors while female employees reported greater job satisfaction when working for female managers.

Various factors may account for the differences in the findings concerning the effect of gender on job satisfaction. The findings of a study by Verma, Bhal, and Vrat (2013) imply that gender differences exist in job satisfaction because of variations in the type of practices that organizations use toward employees. In companies that use gender sensitive practices, women have higher levels of job satisfaction and are generally at the same levels as men. In companies that do not use gender sensitive practices, the level of job satisfaction for women is often lower than the job satisfaction of men. Gender-sensitive practices include family-friendly policies, flexible work schedules, and job sharing. The authors proposed that certain practices to assist female employees with meeting family responsibilities reduced stress which had a positive effect on job satisfaction. The research, however, was conducted in India where female employees may have different perceptions of family responsibility than in other nations.

A phenomenon that may contribute to gender differences in job satisfaction identified by Magee (2013) was the tendency of job satisfaction among females to decrease and increase at a faster rate than men in response to organizational practices. In general, both men and women who had negative experiences or perceptions about their jobs developed a negative affect. In response to the negative affect, women's level of job satisfaction decreased faster than men. The findings implied that differences in levels of job satisfaction between the genders was not static and changed over time in response to experiences in the workplace. Thus, the conclusion asserted that age interacted with gender and failure to control for age in the sample could skew findings (Eleswed & Mohammed, 2013).

Researchers (Bonte & Krabel, 2014) tested the theory that job satisfaction is often higher among women in various types of work situations because they have lower expectations for outcomes in the workplace, such as a lower expectation of promotion. At the same time, the

factors that influenced job satisfaction among women may vary significantly from the factors that influenced job satisfaction among men. The research found support that job satisfaction is often higher among women and the factors that influence job satisfaction among women vary from the factors that influence job satisfaction among men. This suggests that multiple factors can affect differences in job satisfaction between the genders (Bonte & Krabel, 2014).

A reason that inconsistencies of findings related to the level of job satisfaction between men and women may be the instrument used to assess job satisfaction. Zehir, et al., (2012) noted that there are numerous instruments to measure job satisfaction for which previous research has established reliability and validity. Some of these instruments include the Job Descriptive Index (Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969); the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967) and the Job Satisfaction Survey (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). The use of different scales to collect data concerning job satisfaction in various work environments often produce measurement errors that lead to differences in job satisfaction between gender.

In higher education, research suggests that the characteristics of the institution lead to differences in job satisfaction between gender. Kessler, Spector, and Gavin (2014) determined that a factor influencing differences between male and female university faculty is the orientation of the department. Female professors tend to have higher job satisfaction in departments with a teaching orientation and lower job satisfaction in departments with a research orientation. In addition, female professors have higher job satisfaction in educational specialties that are socially oriented while men have higher job satisfaction in educational specialties that are task oriented.

The differences in findings concerning the effect of gender on job satisfaction may be due to the variation created by the use of either the structural or a dispositional model (Howard-

Baldwin, et al., 2012). The structural model presumes that the workplace environment is the primary determinant of job satisfaction while the dispositional model postulates that the personal values and attributes determine job satisfaction. The various studies are often unclear as to the type of model used in the research. Yacizi and Atlun (2012) suggested that cultural factors may also account for differences in findings concerning the relationship of gender to job satisfaction. A study involving faculty members in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and faculty members in the social and behavioral sciences found that gender and salary do not affect job satisfaction, however, equitable salaries between men and women are factors of job satisfaction (Darrah, Hougland, & Prince, 2014). In addition, female faculty are more satisfied with their work and co-workers, while male faculty are more satisfied with salary and promotional opportunities (Darrah, et al., 2014; Machado-Taylor, White, & Gouveia, 2014). Research involving psychology faculty reported females having higher levels of job satisfaction in teaching-oriented positions while males reported higher levels of job satisfaction in research-oriented positions (Kessler, et al., 2014; Su, Rounds, & Armstrong, 2009).

Organizational Commitment and Ethical Climate

Some of the research examining the relationship between organizational commitment and ethical climate propose that ethical climate is an antecedent variable influencing the degree of commitment of the employee (Unal, 2012). Congruence must exist between the ethics of the individual employee and the ethics of the organization for the ethical climate to have a positive effect on organizational commitment. At the same time, moderating variables that include job satisfaction can influence the relationship between ethical climate and organizational commitment (Zehir, et al., 2011). Ethical climate presumes that the employee's perception of the ethics in the organization has an influence on organizational commitment (Moriarity, 2014).

Previous research has established that ethical climate has a positive correlation with organizational commitment (Nafir, 2015; Tanner, et al., 2015; Zehir, et al., 2011). The research also suggests that organizations with an expressed code of conduct and with the expectation that all employees will adhere to the code have stronger correlations between ethical climate and organizational behavior (Nafir, 2015). Perceptions of an ethical climate in the institution were associated with higher organizational commitment (Moore & Moore, 2014). In addition, faculty members who perceived the ethical climate as benevolent reported higher organizational commitment than faculty members who perceived the climate as principled. To some degree, the findings support the general conclusions of Celep and Yilmazturk (2012) concerning the importance of perceptions of fair treatment by the organization to create a level of trust necessary to support organizational commitment. Parboteeah, et al., (2011) noted that ethical climates characterized as principled and benevolent are positively related to higher levels of organizational commitment. Mayer (2014) discussed the findings of research indicating that an instrumental ethical climate was negatively correlated to organizational commitment and was likely to lead to greater employee turnover.

The component of ethical climate that is based on the perceptions of employees of the internal ethical behavior of the company has the most influence on organizational commitment (Chun, Sin, & Choi, 2013). The internal ethical behavior is the perception of the employees concerning the fairness of the treatment they receive from the company. The findings of the study also indicated that organizations with positive perceptions among employees of the ethical climate tend to have superior performance. A review of research determined that the ethical climate contributes to superior organizational performance (Parboteeah, et al., 2011). In contrast, a review of research by Tanner, et al., (2015) found that ethical climate does not contribute

directly to organizational performance, but may have an indirect effect by increasing general job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Additional research focuses on identifying the variables affecting ethical climate that subsequently influences organizational commitment, with ethical climate as an intermediate construct between the antecedent variable and organizational commitment. Research suggested that the effect of ethical climate on organizational commitment is best understood by examining the individual variables related to ethics that have an effect on a component of organizational commitment without considering ethical climate as a separate construct (Demitras & Akdogan, 2015). The study found that perceptions of ethical leadership correlate with affective commitment to the organization. Other researchers determined that perceptions of organizational justice correlate with perception of ethical climate, which in turn affects organizational commitment (Moon, Hur, Ko, Kim, & Yoon, 2014)

Some research has examined the role of ethical climate as a variable moderating the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Zehir, et al., (2012) determined that a positive perception among employees of the ethical climate in the organization has a weak correlation with continuance commitment, but with job satisfaction as a mediating variable. Consequently, the degree of job satisfaction can have a significant effect on the relationship between ethical climate and organizational commitment. The findings also indicate that ethical climate does not have a significant effect on normative or affective commitment. Other variables such as charismatic leadership can also account for some of the variances in organizational commitment which is consistent with previous research conducted by Zehir, et al., (2011). Research also revealed that organizations lead by transformational leadership (Liao & Chuang, 2007) or servant leadership (Walumba, Hartnell, & Oke, 2010) have higher performing

employees. However, Huang, et al., (2012) argued that job satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between ethical climate and organizational commitment.

Organizational Commitment and Gender

Eslami and Gharakhani (2012) noted that research investigating the relationship between gender and organization commitment produced conflicting results. Some research examining the relationship between organizational commitment and gender suggests that gender differences exist in the type of commitment and strength of commitment. Khalili and Asmawi (2012) determined that women have a lower level of normative organizational commitment than men. There was no difference between the genders, however, in affective or continuance commitment. In a study examining organizational commitment among physical education teachers, Sentuna (2015) found that males have higher organizational commitment than females.

Researchers found that women have different levels of organizational commitment than men (Verma, et al., 2013). The controlling factor for the difference in organizational commitment between the genders was whether the organization had policies and practices that allowed women greater flexibility to attend to family matters. Additionally, a study examining the factors leading to organizational commitment found significant differences between the genders (Major, Morganson, & Bolen, 2013). The factors of opportunity for growth and perceptions of work-family culture had greater predictive power for organizational commitment among women. The factor of perception of job stress was a more effective predictor of organizational commitment among men. In contrast, David et al. (2015) found that gender has no effect on various sub-variables associated with organizational commitment such as feelings of obligation or feelings of belonging. Other research also found no difference in organizational commitment between the genders (Suki & Suki, 2012).

Summary

Studying the organizational commitment, ethical climate and job satisfaction in the higher education environment is important because several factors have been positively correlated with job satisfaction and dissatisfaction, including recognition, advancement, compensation, and supervision (Caricati et al, 2014; Nawab & Bhatti, 2011; Tull, 2006). Research has correlated job satisfaction and organizational commitment indicating employees desire to be connected to the organization (Eleswed & Mohammed, 2013; Zehir, et al., 2012) and are more productive (Grdinovac & Yancey, 2012; Sentuna, 2015). Productive work environments are often a result of ethical climate (Unal, 2012; Wang & Hseih, 2012). Research related to ethical climate provides mixed definitions and different lines of inquiry, with some scholars examining egoism, benevolence, and principles (Mayer, 2014), and other scholars who examined the types of climates such as rules, independence, caring (Floyd, et al., 2011; Khasawneh, 2014).

Research findings related to gender and job satisfaction, and gender and organizational commitment are also mixed (Eleswed & Mohammed, 2013; Eslami & Gharakhani, 2012). Where some scholars found that gender has no significant relationship to job satisfaction (Suki & Suki, 2012; David et al., 2015); other scholars found that females have slightly lower job satisfaction (Galbraith, Fry, & Garrison, 2016; Bonte & Krabel, 2014) and as age increases, females have higher job satisfaction (Eleswed & Mohammed, 2013). Research on organizational commitment and gender found no difference between genders in affective or continuance commitment (Khalili & Asmawi, 2012). In contrast, two studies reported males have a higher organizational commitment (Sentuna, 2015; Farooq & Zia, 2013). The well-being of an institution of higher education should not just be measured on student success but also measured

by the job satisfaction of its employees (Wood, 1976). In general, there are inconsistent findings by gender, differing research methods and various definitions for organizational commitment. Additionally, there is an increasing emphasis placed on the importance of higher education strategic planning initiatives that include metrics to assess and track goals and objectives related to institutional climate. Thus, more research is needed to understand the perceptions of those who work in the higher education environment. The perceptions of higher education administrators toward their organizational environment can be solicited through a framework of ethical climate, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHOD

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore the relationship between perceived ethical climate, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction for higher education administrators at two-year and four-year, public and private, institutions of higher education located in the state of Maryland. This chapter includes the research questions, hypotheses and research design detailing the survey instrument, data collection procedures, sampling strategy, and data analyses.

Research Design

A comparative quantitative research design was selected to understand whether there are significant differences between perceived ethical climate, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction for higher education administrators. A quantitative approach is recommended when the researcher intends to identify factors that determine outcomes (Creswell, 2009). The data were collected via an electronic survey with Likert-type questions to assess the level of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and perceived ethical climate for higher education administrators at all two-year and four-year, public and private, institutions of higher education in the state of Maryland. The following illustration depicts the constructs of the study:

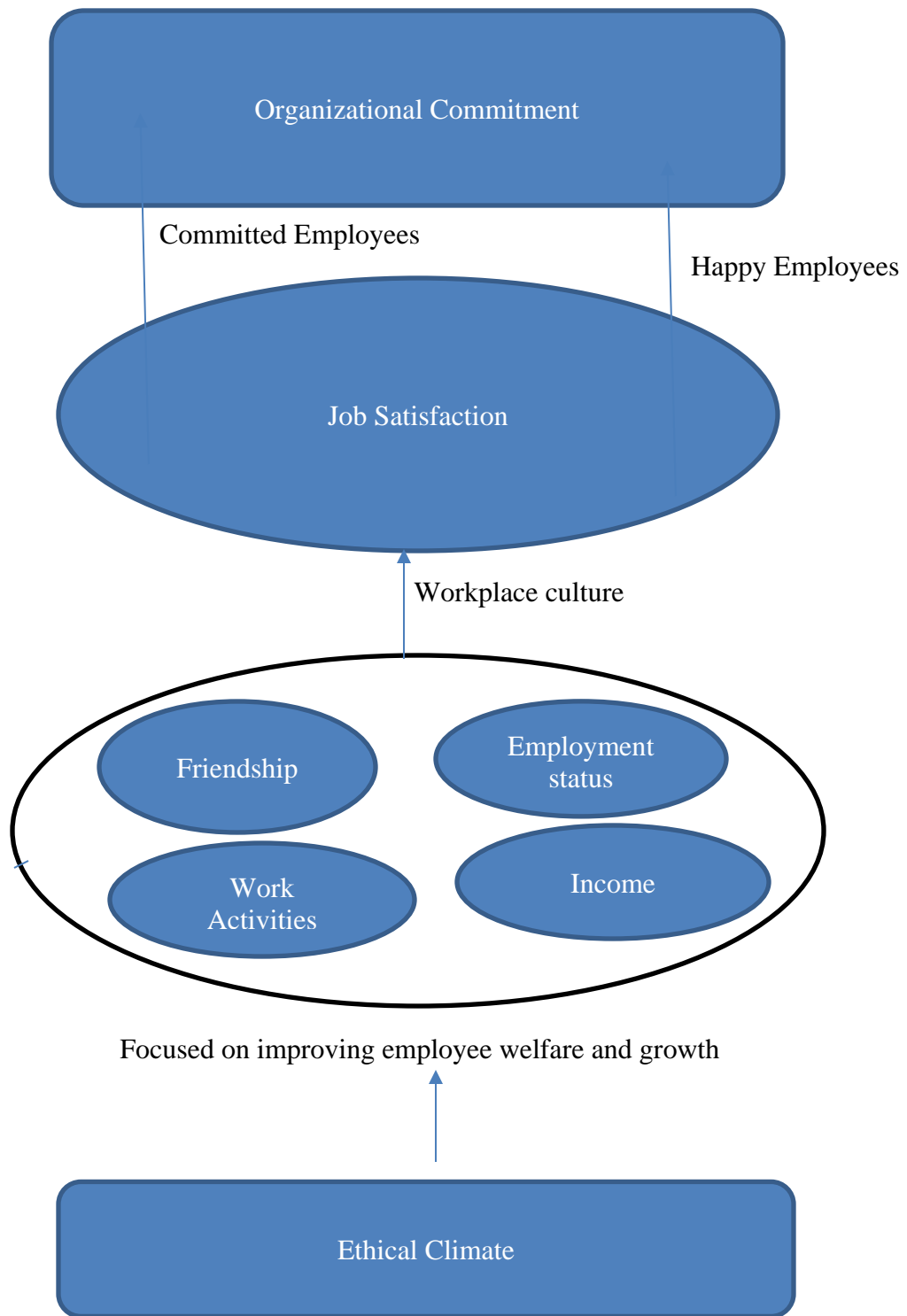


Figure 1: *Conceptual Framework*

Research Questions and Null Hypotheses

To frame the current study, the following research questions and null hypotheses were posited:

1. Is there a significant difference between job satisfaction of higher education administrators and their perception of ethical climate?

Ho1: There is no significant difference between job satisfaction of higher education administrators and their perception of ethical climate.

2. Is there a significant difference between organizational commitment of higher education administrators and their perception of ethical climate?

Ho2: There is no significant difference between organizational commitment of higher education administrators and their perception of ethical climate.

3. Is there a significant difference in job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate of higher education administrators by gender?

Ho3a: There is no significant difference in job satisfaction of higher education administrators by gender.

Ho3b: There is no significant difference in organizational commitment of higher education administrators by gender.

Ho3c: There is no significant difference in the ethical climate of higher education administrators by gender.

4. Is there a significant difference in job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate of higher education administrators by administrative position?

Ho4a: There is no significant difference in job satisfaction of higher education administrators by administrative position.

Ho4b: There is no significant difference in organizational commitment of higher education administrators by administrative position.

Ho4c: There is no significant difference in ethical climate of higher education administrators by administrative position.

Population and Sample Selection

For this study, the researcher chose all public and private institutions of higher education in the state of Maryland. A list of higher education administrators located in Maryland was obtained from the Higher Education Directory Online. The list provided names and email addresses of all administrators in higher education by state. A stratified sampling procedure was employed. Stratified sampling can be useful for researchers to include certain characteristics in the sample (Creswell, 2008). By using stratified sampling, the researcher is able to study the differences that may exist between the subgroups and guarantee the subgroups will be defined in the population (Arcy, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Walker, 2013). The strata were created by dividing the entire population into the two gender subgroups of male and female. A proportionate stratification would ensure that the sample selected had a proportional number of male and female administrators. Each stratum was assigned a consecutive number. As a result, the researcher ended up with two lists, one detailing all male administrators and one detailing all female administrators. A desired sample size of 100 was chosen and each stratum selected was proportionate to the number of males and females in the population. The researcher used a systematic random sampling, one out of every three, to include in the sample.

Instrumentation

The survey for this study included questions to elicit data related to the three categories of: (1) Organizational Commitment from the revised Three-Component Model (TCM) survey for

employee commitment (Meyer & Allen, 2004); (2) Job Satisfaction using the Job Diagnostic Survey (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), and (3) Ethical Climate by selecting items from the Revised Ethical Climate Questionnaire (RECQ) (Cullen, Parboteeah, & Victor, 2003).

The revised Three-Component Model (TCM) of employee commitment developed by Meyer and Allen (2004) measures three specific factors of organizational commitment including affective, normative, and continuance commitment; thus, each factor evaluates the overall commitment process. This approach to commitment reveals three general themes, “affective attachment to the organization, perceived costs associated with leaving the organization, and obligation to remain employed with the organization” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 63-64). The authors further explained that affective commitment refers to what one wants to do, whereas continuance commitment refers to what one must do. The three components, affective, normative, and continuance were measured by the responses to four questions on the revised TCM survey. A 7-point Likert-type scale was used with scores ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. The researcher requested and received permission to use the instrument.

The Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) was selected for this study based on its successful application for measuring levels of job satisfaction in a previous study involving higher education faculty (Moore, 2012). The JDS has been adapted to 13 questions in order to capture job satisfaction of participants. A modified version of the JDS was used in a study of ethical climate, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction of full-time faculty members (Moore, 2012). A 7-point Likert-type scale was used to assess the levels of satisfaction for each question with scores ranging from (1) extremely dissatisfied to (7) extremely satisfied. The JDS is in the public domain and does not require permission to use.

The Ethical Climate Questionnaire (ECQ), a common assessment tool of ethical climate in organizations, was originally developed in 1988 by Victor & Cullen and revised in 1993 by Cullen, Victor, and Bronson (1993). For this research, an adapted version of the Revised Ethical Climate Questionnaire (RECQ) was used to help define ethical climates. The revised instrument focused on three factors of ethical criteria: Egoism, Benevolence, and Principled (Putranta & Kingshott, 2011). Egoism was determined from questions 1-4; benevolence was determined from questions 5-8; and principled was determined from questions 9-12. Respondents were grouped into one of the three factors by their highest score. A 7-point Likert-type scale was used with scores ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. The researcher requested and received permission to use the instrument.

To improve instrument validity, a pilot study was conducted with students enrolled in a graduate level research course tested the clarity of survey instructions, the time required for completion, and performance of the online survey process. The researcher reviewed the pilot study feedback prior to developing the final survey instrument. No changes were made based upon feedback from the pilot study.

Instrument reliability was measured using Cronbach's alpha. A similar study was conducted and used the same instruments; however, the population in the 2012 study was full-time faculty members (Moore, 2012). Reliability of the TCM was previously reported using Cronbach's alpha value of .78 (Moore, 2012). Reliability of the JDS was previously reported using Cronbach's alpha value of .91 (Moore, 2012). Reliability of the RECQ was previously reported using Cronbach's alpha values of .87 for benevolence, .70 for egoism, and .74 for principled (Moore, 2012).

Data Collection

As required by East Tennessee State University, the researcher obtained IRB approval prior to data collection. Data were collected through a self-administered online survey. The survey was prepared and administered using an online survey platform called Survey Monkey. Online surveying can overcome geographic distance allowing access to diverse targets (Wouters, Maesschaek, Peeters, & Roosen, 2014). Data collection through Survey Monkey occurs in real-time. Once participants respond to questions, the results are ready for analysis. Survey Monkey offers several options for designing questions including multiple choice, rating scales, true or false, and open-ended.

During the 2016 spring semester, the sample of higher education administrators were sent an email request to participate in this research study. The email included a link to an online questionnaire. Each participant received informed consent information that explained protection of their rights as human subjects followed by instructions for completing the survey. Participants agreeing to the terms proceeded to the survey while those who did not agree were provided with a thank-you and exited from the survey. The researcher offered a summary of the overall research, upon request, as a follow-up procedure. Fourteen participants requested to receive the follow-up summary after completing the survey. Participants were able to access the survey 24 hours per day for 31 days. The researcher e-mailed a survey reminder one week after the initial email invitation. Additionally, the researcher emailed a final reminder five days before the ending date of the survey. The researcher summarized the overall research available to participants, upon request, as a follow-up procedure. Participants were given the researcher's contact information to request results and fourteen participants requested results.

All survey responses were stored on the Survey Monkey website and, once the survey closed, final responses were downloaded from the Survey Monkey website into an SPSS file. To protect anonymity, survey responses did not include the IP addresses of respondents. Survey Monkey provides instructions on this process.

Data Analysis

A statistical software package, SPSS v. 22, was used to conduct the data analysis. Descriptive statistics were provided from the data. The researcher ran individual ANOVA's, and MANOVA, to determine whether significant differences existed between perceptions of ethical climate, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. Analysis of variance was also conducted to assess differences between administrative position and job satisfaction and differences between administrative position and organizational commitment. An independent samples *t*-test was used to assess differences in job satisfaction by gender as well as differences in organizational commitment by gender. Chi-square analyses were conducted to explore the differences between ethical climate and gender and to explore the differences between ethical climate and administrative positions.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSES

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore the relationship between perceived ethical climate, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction for higher education administrators located in the state of Maryland. This chapter begins with a description of the sample characteristics. Next, a brief overview of the results is given, as well as a more detailed analysis of the results. These results are organized by research question, and are followed by a summary of the chapter.

Survey Respondents

The data for the study were gathered using an online survey instrument administered by SurveyMonkey in the Spring 2016 semester. A total of 1,459 administrators received the email. To establish participant eligibility, the first survey question was a required question to determine if the respondent was a non-faculty higher education administrator. Respondents who answered no were immediately disqualified and unable to proceed with the survey. This resulted in a final participant sample of 247. Of this final sample, the majority were women ($n = 143, 59.6\%$). Most participants indicated that their administrative position was as a Director ($n = 101, 42.1\%$) or as an Assistant Vice President ($n = 54, 22.5\%$). See Table 1 for the frequencies and percentages of the participant characteristics.

Table 1
Percentage Distribution of Participant Characteristics

Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Female	143	59.6
Male	97	40.4
Administrative Position		
Vice President	39	16.3
Associate or Assistant Vice President	54	22.5
Director	101	42.1
Associate or Assistant Director	7	2.9
Dean	19	7.9
Associate or Assistant Dean	6	2.5
Executive Director	14	5.8

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100.0 due to rounding error.

Summary of the Results

The results for Research Question 1 indicate that there are significant differences in benevolence ethical climate between those with high and low job satisfaction. The results for Research Question 2 indicate that there are significant differences in egoism ethical climate between those with high and low organizational commitment. The results for Research Question 3 indicate that principled ethical climate and gender are related. The results for Research Question 4 indicate that principled ethical climate and gender are related.

Analyses of Research Questions

Research Question 1. Is there a significant difference between job satisfaction of higher education administrators and their perception of ethical climate?

H₀₁. There is no significant difference between job satisfaction of higher education administrators and their perception of ethical climate.

This research question was assessed using a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to compare the differences between job satisfaction of higher education administrators and their perception of ethical climate. One MANOVA was chosen over

conducting multiple ANOVAs in order to control against Type 1 error (i.e., finding a significant result that is simply due to chance); MANOVAs are the more appropriate analysis to run when comparing the effect of one independent variable on more than one dependent variable (Weinfurt, 1995). In order for job satisfaction to be utilized as an independent grouping variable in this analysis, a median split was performed on the composite score of job satisfaction. The median was calculated as 69.00; everything above the median was classified as “high” satisfaction and everything below was classified as “low” satisfaction.

Prior to the analysis, the assumptions of the MANOVA were examined. The assumption of normality was assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test, and was violated at $p < .05$ for four out of five dependent variables. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was examined using Levene’s Test of Equality of Error Variances, and was violated for egoism ($p = .009$) and benevolence ($p = .001$). Finally, the assumption of homogeneity of covariances was assessed using Box’s Test, which was significant ($p = .014$), indicating that this assumption was also not met. However, the MANOVA is robust against stringent assumptions when the sample size is large ($n \geq 50$) (Stevens, 2009).

The results of the overall MANOVA were significant, $F(3, 168) = 19.42, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .257$. This indicates that there are significant differences in perceptions of ethical climate between those with high and low job satisfaction. The results of the individual ANOVAs were only significant for benevolence, $F(1, 172) = 56.85, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .251$. Those with low job satisfaction had an average benevolence ethical climate score of 16.62, and those with high job satisfaction scored an average of 21.00. The null hypothesis for Research Question 1 can be partially rejected. Table 2 presents the full results of this analysis. Table 3 presents the means and standard deviations of the variables.

Table 2

Results of the MANOVA Comparing Higher Education Administrators' Job Satisfaction and Perceptions of Ethical Climates

Source		SS	df	MS	F	p	η^2_{partial}
Job Satisfaction	Egoism	21.19	1	21.19	2.44	.120	.014
	Benevolence	819.75	1	819.75	56.85	.000	.251
	Principled	7.60	1	7.60	1.39	.240	.008
Error	Egoism	1478.97	170	8.70	-	-	-
	Benevolence	2451.30	170	14.42	-	-	-
	Principled	931.30	170	5.48	-	-	-

Note. Overall MANOVA: $F(3, 168) = 19.42, p < .001$

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations for Ethical Climates by Levels of Job Satisfaction

Ethical Climate	Job Satisfaction	M	SD
Egoism	Low	16.40	3.23
	High	17.10	2.96
Benevolence	Low	16.62	4.35
	High	21.00	3.06
Principled	Low	16.91	2.24
	High	17.33	2.34

Research Question 2. Is there a significant difference between organizational commitment of higher education administrators and their perception of ethical climate?

H₀₁. There is no significant difference between organizational commitment of higher education administrators and their perception of ethical climate.

This research question was assessed using a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to compare the differences between organizational commitment of higher education administrators and their perception of ethical climate. In order for organizational commitment to be utilized as an independent grouping variable in this analysis, a median split was performed on the composite score of organizational commitment. The median was calculated as 47.00;

everything above the median was classified as “high” organizational commitment and everything below was classified as “low” organizational commitment.

Prior to the analysis, the assumptions of the MANOVA were examined. The assumption of normality was assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test, and was violated at $p < .05$ for each variable. Although normality was not achieved, the MANOVA is robust against stringent assumptions when the sample size is large ($n \geq 50$) (Stevens, 2009). The assumption of homogeneity of variance was examined using Levene’s Test of Equality of Error Variances, and was not violated for any variable ($p = .378 - .795$). Finally, the assumption of homogeneity of covariances was assessed using Box’s Test, which was not significant ($p = .316$), indicating that this assumption was also met.

The results of the overall MANOVA were significant, $F(3, 168) = 2.80, p = .041$, partial $\eta^2 = .048$. This suggests that there are significant differences in perceptions of ethical climate between those with high and low job organizational commitment. The individual ANOVAs were only significant for egoism, $F(1, 170) = 4.95, p = .027$, partial $\eta^2 = .028$. Those with low organizational commitment had average egoism scores of 16.27; those with high organizational commitment had average egoism scores of 17.27. The null hypothesis for Research Question 2 can be partially rejected. Table 4 presents the results of this analysis. Table 5 presents the means and standard deviations for the variables.

Table 4

Results of the MANOVA Comparing Higher Education Administrators' Organizational Commitment and Perceptions of Ethical Climates

Source		SS	df	MS	F	p	η^2_{partial}
Organizational Commitment	Egoism	42.46	1	42.46	4.95	.027	.028
	Benevolence	8.28	1	8.28	0.43	.512	.003
	Principled	8.21	1	8.21	1.50	.222	.009
Error	Egoism	1457.70	170	8.58	-	-	-
	Benevolence	3262.77	170	19.19	-	-	-
	Principled	930.69	170	5.48	-	-	-

Note. Overall MANOVA: $F(3, 168) = 2.80, p = .041, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .048$

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations for Ethical Climates by Levels of Organizational Commitment

Ethical Climate	Organizational Commitment	M	SD
Egoism	Low	16.27	2.99
	High	17.27	2.85
Benevolence	Low	18.48	4.38
	High	18.92	4.38
Principled	Low	17.31	2.44
	High	17.33	2.34

Research Question 3. Is there a significant difference in job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate of higher education administrators by gender?

H_{03a}. There is no significant difference in job satisfaction of higher education administrators by gender.

H_{03b}. There is no significant difference in organizational commitment of higher education administrators by gender.

H_{03c}. There is no significant difference in ethical climate of higher education administrators by gender.

This research question was explored utilizing a variety of analyses in order to

individually assess each hypothesis. First, an independent samples *t*-test was used to assess differences in job satisfaction by gender. Next, a second independent samples *t*-test was used to assess differences in organizational commitment by gender. Finally, perceptions of ethical climate by gender was assessed using a Chi square analysis.

Hypothesis a. To assess this hypothesis, an independent samples *t*-test was utilized to assess differences in job satisfaction by gender. The normality assumption was violated at $p < .001$. However, the *t* test is quite robust against violations of normality (Morgan, Leech, Gloekner, & Barrentt, 2012). Levene's test was significant ($p = .046$), indicating that the assumption of equality of variances was not met. As such, the equal variances not assumed test statistic was reported. The results of the independent samples *t*-test were not significant, $t(164.77) = -0.35, p = .729$. This suggests that there are not significant differences in job satisfaction of higher education administrators between genders. As such, means were not examined. Null hypothesis a cannot be rejected.

Hypothesis b. In order to assess this hypothesis, an independent samples *t*-test was performed to assess differences in organizational commitment by gender. The normality assumption was violated ($p = .004$). Analysis was continued, as the *t* test is robust against violations of normality (Morgan, Leech, Gloekner, & Barrentt, 2012). Levene's test was not significant ($p = .410$), indicating that the assumption of equality of variances was met. The results of the independent samples *t*-test were not significant, $t(170) = -1.01, p = .316$. This suggests that there are not significant differences in organizational commitment of higher education administrators between genders. As there were no significant differences, means were not examined. Null hypothesis b cannot be rejected.

Hypothesis c. This hypothesis was assessed using three Chi-square analyses to explore the relationship between ethical climate and gender. Prior to conducting the first analysis between egoism climate and gender, the assumption of adequate cell size was assessed, which requires all cells to have expected values greater than zero and 80% of cells to have expected values of at least five (McHugh, 2013). All cells had expected values greater than zero, indicating the first condition was met. All cells had expected frequencies of at least five, indicating the second condition was met.

The results of the Chi-square test between egoism and gender were not significant, $\chi^2(1) = 0.18, p = .675$, suggesting that egoism and gender could be independent of one another. This implies that the observed frequencies of each category were not significantly different than the expected frequencies. Table 6 presents the results of the Chi-square test.

Table 6
Observed and Expected Frequencies by Egoism and Gender

Egoism	Gender	
	Female	Male
High	40 [41.32]	29 [27.68]
Low	63 [61.68]	40 [41.32]

Note. $\chi^2(1) = 0.18, p = .675$. Items in brackets represent expected cell frequencies.

Prior to conducting the second analysis, the assumption of adequate cell size was assessed. Both conditions of the assumption were met. The results of the Chi-square test between benevolence climate and gender were not significant, $\chi^2(1) = 2.53, p = .112$, suggesting that benevolence and gender could be independent of one another and that the observed frequencies were not significantly different than the expected frequencies. Table 7 presents the results of the Chi-square test.

Table 7
Observed and Expected Frequencies by Benevolence and Gender

Benevolence	Gender	
	Female	Male
High	44 [49.10]	38 [32.90]
Low	59 [53.90]	31 [36.10]

Note. $\chi^2(1) = 2.53, p = .112$. Items in brackets represent expected cell frequencies.

Prior to conducting the analysis between principled climate and gender, the assumption of adequate cell size was assessed. Both conditions of this assumption were met. The results of the Chi-square test were significant, $\chi^2(1) = 5.16, p = .023$, suggesting that principled and gender are related to one another. There were fewer women than expected in the high principled ethical climate category, but more men than expected. There were more women than expected in the low principled ethical climate category, but fewer men than expected. See Table 8 for all actual and expected counts. Null hypothesis c can be partially rejected.

Table 8
Observed and Expected Frequencies by Principled and Gender

Principled	Gender	
	Female	Male
High	33 [40.12]	34 [26.88]
Low	70 [62.88]	35 [42.12]

Note. $\chi^2(1) = 5.16, p = .023$. Items in brackets represent expected cell frequencies.

Research Question 4. Is there a significant difference in job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate of higher education administrators by administrative position?

H_{04a}. There is no significant difference in job satisfaction of higher education administrators by administrative position.

H_{04b}. There is no significant difference in organizational commitment of higher education administrators by administrative position.

H_{04c}. There is no significant difference in ethical climate of higher education administrators by administrative position.

This research question was assessed using a combination of analyses. First, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to assess differences between administrative position in job satisfaction. Next, a second ANOVA between organizational commitment by administrative positions was performed. Finally, three Chi-square analyses were conducted to assess administrative position differences between ethical climates.

Hypothesis a. An ANOVA was conducted to assess differences in job satisfaction between administrative positions. Prior to the analysis, the assumptions of the ANOVA were assessed. A Kolmogorov-Smirnov test indicated that job satisfaction was not normally distributed ($p < .001$). Levene's test indicated that there was not equality of error variances ($p = .039$). However, the F family of tests is generally robust against violations of assumptions (Stevens, 2009). The ANOVA was not significant, $F(2, 169) = 3.04, p = .051, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .035$. This suggests that there are not significant differences between administrative positions in job satisfaction. As such, means were not examined. Null hypothesis a cannot be rejected.

Hypothesis b. A second ANOVA was performed to assess differences in organizational commitment between administrative positions. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was significant ($p = .004$) indicating non-normality. Levene's test was not significant ($p = .333$), indicating that error variances were equal. The results of the ANOVA were not significant, $F(2, 169) = 0.06, p = .946, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .001$. This suggests that there are not significant differences in organizational commitment between administrative positions. Because there were no significant differences, means were not examined further. Null hypothesis b cannot be rejected.

Hypothesis c. Three Chi-squares were performed to assess differences in ethical climates by administrative position. Each analysis satisfied both conditions of the assumption of adequate cell size.

The results of the Chi-square test between egoism and administrative position were not significant, $\chi^2(2) = 5.59, p = .061$, suggesting that the observed frequencies were not significantly different than the expected frequencies. Table 9 presents the results of the Chi-square test.

Table 9
Observed and Expected Frequencies by Egoism and Position

Egoism	Position		
	Deans	Directors	VPs
High	9 [6.82]	29 [36.51]	31 [25.67]
Low	8 [10.18]	62 [54.49]	33 [38.33]

Note. $\chi^2(2) = 5.59, p = .061$. Items in brackets represent expected cell frequencies.

The results of the Chi-square test between benevolence and administrative position were not significant, $\chi^2(2) = 5.23, p = .073$, indicating that the observed frequencies were not significantly different from the expected frequencies. Table 10 presents the results of the Chi-square test.

Table 10
Observed and Expected Frequencies by Benevolence and Position

Benevolence	Position		
	Deans	Directors	VPs
High	9 [8.10]	36 [43.38]	37 [30.51]
Low	8 [8.90]	55 [47.62]	27 [33.49]

Note. $\chi^2(2) = 5.23, p = .073$. Items in brackets represent expected cell frequencies.

The results of the Chi-square test between principled climate and administrative position were significant, $\chi^2(2) = 11.35, p = .003$, suggesting that principled climate and position are related to one another. In the high principled category, there were more than expected deans, fewer than expected directors, and fewer than expected vice presidents. In the low principled category, there were fewer than expected deans, but more directors and vice presidents than

expected. As such, null hypothesis c can be partially rejected. Table 11 presents the results of the Chi-square test.

Table 11
Observed and Expected Frequencies by Principled and Position

Principled	Position		
	Deans	Directors	Vice Presidents
High	13 [6.62]	33 [35.45]	21 [24.93]
Low	4 [10.38]	58 [55.55]	43 [39.07]

Note. $\chi^2(2) = 11.35, p = .003$. Items in brackets represent expected cell frequencies.

Chapter Summary

This chapter began with a restatement of the research purpose, as well as a description of the participant sample. This was followed by a brief summary as well as a more detailed analysis of the results. The results for Research Question 1 indicate that the null hypothesis may be partially rejected; there are significant differences in benevolence ethical climate between those with high and low job satisfaction—those with high job satisfaction reported higher benevolence climates. The results for Research Question 2 indicate that the null hypothesis can be partially rejected; there are significant differences in egoism ethical climate between those with high and low organizational commitment—those with high organizational commitment reported higher egoism climates. The results for Research Question 3 suggests that only null hypothesis C may be partially rejected; principled ethical climate and gender are related. The results for Research Question 4 indicate that only null hypothesis c can be partially rejected; principled ethical climate and administrative position are related. The next chapter will discuss these results in terms of the existing literature. The next chapter will also discuss the strengths and limitations of the study, as well as directions for future research.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter will review the data collected in Chapter 4 and discuss their meaning in relation to the overall study of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate for higher education administrators. As stated in Chapter 2, job satisfaction is defined by a general sense of fulfillment, gratification, or contentment. Organizational commitment is defined as attachment to an organization and the probability that one will stay with that organization. The generally accepted definition of an institution's ethical climate is based on a shared perception of how ethically an institution behaves and addresses ethical situations.

Discussion of Results

Research Question 1: Is there a significant difference between job satisfaction of higher education administrators and their perception of ethical climate?

The survey data from the overall MANOVA revealed significant differences in perceptions of ethical climate between respondents with high and low job satisfaction. Individual ANOVAs revealed significant differences for benevolence. Institutions that favor the common good over personal self-interest created a more satisfying environment. Interestingly, having a principled climate had little to no influence over the job satisfaction of the survey respondents.

These findings appear to confirm the findings of Floyd, et al., (2011) who found a positive correlation between job satisfaction and benevolence and a negative correlation between job satisfaction and egoistic climates (Floyd, et al., 2011). Prior research also found significant differences between job satisfaction and principled (Floyd, et al., 2011) whereas this study found no significant differences between job satisfaction and principled ethical climate.

Research Question 2: Is there a significant difference between organizational commitment of higher education administrators and their perception of ethical climate?

Where job satisfaction was associated more with group interests, organizational commitment was solely influenced by egoism. The perception that the institution was benevolent or principled did not significantly correlate with whether or not an administrator chose to remain in their position.

These findings contradict previous research. Many of the researchers (Moore & Moore, 2014; Nafir, 2015) found that benevolence played a greater role in organizational commitment. Chun, et al., (2013) however, found that employees who feel that they are treated fairly were likely to stay with an organization. They also found that employees who feel their individual needs are valued are more productive.

Again, this discrepancy may be explained by the differences in positions being measured. Moore and Moore (2014) specifically surveyed faculty members not administrators. A faculty member may draw job satisfaction from personal goals like getting an article published, but their primary reason for staying at an institution could possibly be linked to their ability to reach a large number of people through their teaching and research, a more outwardly focused goal. Whereas an administrator would find job satisfaction in the whole of their institution functioning well but find a reason to stay if they know they can advance professionally, a more inwardly focused goal.

Research Question 3: Is there a significant difference in job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate of higher education administrators by gender?

This research question was explored utilizing a variety of analyses in order to individually assess each hypothesis. An independent samples *t*-test was used to assess differences in job satisfaction by gender. The results of the independent *t*-test were not significant indicating there are not significant differences in job satisfaction of higher education administrators between genders. This finding confirms previous research (Howard-Baldwin, et al., 2012; Mondal, 2014; Suki & Suki, 2012) that gender does not affect job satisfaction, however, it contradicts previous research (Aytac, 2015; Elsewed & Mohammed, 2013) where significant differences were found. The discrepancy may be related to the types of survey questions being measured or the demographics of the participants. In previous research, the age of female respondents were positively correlated with job satisfaction (Elsewed & Mohammed, 2013).

An independent samples *t*-test was also performed to assess the differences in organizational commitment by gender. The results of the independent *t*-test were not significant suggesting that there are not significant differences in organizational commitment of higher education administrators between genders.

To explore the relationship between ethical climate and gender, three Chi-square analyses were performed. The results found no significant differences between egoism and gender and no significant differences between benevolence and gender. However, the results of the Chi-square found significant differences between principled ethical climate and gender. The tests indicated men favored a principled ethical climate compared to women. Prior research found that

organizations with clear policies on codes of conduct are more favorable (Nafir, 2015).

However, this contradicts previous research that found faculty members preferred a benevolent climate over a principled climate (Moore & Moore, 2014). Again, the discrepancy may be explained by the positions being measured.

Research Question 4: Is there a significant difference in job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate of higher education administrators by administrative position?

This research question was assessed by using a combination of analyses. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to assess the differences between administrative positions in job satisfaction. The results of the ANOVA were not significant suggesting that there are not significant differences between administrative positions in job satisfaction.

A second ANOVA was performed to evaluate differences in organizational commitment between administrative positions. The results of the ANOVA were not significant suggesting there are not significant differences in organizational commitment between administrative positions.

Three Chi-squares were performed to assess differences in ethical climates by administrative position. There were no significant differences between egoism and administrative position and no significant differences between benevolence and administrative position. Prior research found that benevolence impacts job satisfaction (Floyd, et al., 2011; Parboteeah, et al., 2011). Interestingly, the results were significant for principled ethical climate and administrative position. The results indicated Deans and Directors favored a principled ethical climate compared to Vice Presidents. The results of this study confirms prior findings

that ethical climate does have an indirect effect on increasing job satisfaction (Nafei, 2015; Tanner, et al., 2015).

Recommendations for Further Research

This researcher recommends two areas of further research. A more in-depth qualitative study is recommended and the development of a way to measure the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

A qualitative study that includes interviews and open-ended questions would allow a researcher to obtain a greater understanding of how each ethical component influences one's job satisfaction and organizational commitment. It would also allow the researcher to explore how and why one's position (and possibly gender and age) influence their perceptions of their institutions and their role in that institution. Especially since the data from this study conflicts with previous research, a qualitative study is needed to pinpoint the factors causing these discrepancies.

As stated in Chapter 2, there is much discussion on whether or not job satisfaction and organizational commitment are in fact two differing concepts. Some state they might even have a causal relationship but it is not clear which influences the other. The data in this study does suggest they are in fact two differing factors in one's job and that they are also influenced by differing ethical priorities. For the higher education administrators surveyed, job satisfaction was influenced by the perceived benevolence of the institution while organizational commitment was influenced by egoism.

Again, this data differs greatly from other studies done in other areas of employment. Some type of measure needs to be developed that could account for the differences. It would be helpful to know if these differences are a factor of one's position, the type of job, or even the

personality of the person. This researcher assumes that it may be a combination of the three and the understanding of the relationship may be helpful for those working in the field of human resources.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to find those factors that create a positive work environment for higher education administrators. The hope was that, by pinpointing these factors, institutions can work with their staff to bring job satisfaction and organizational commitment with the understanding that these two lead to greater productivity and a healthier institution overall.

By recognizing the need for administrators to trust their institutions to not only meet their own individual needs but to value the needs of others connected to the institution, higher education will benefit overall from a staff that is focused and positive in their goals.

As indicated by the results of this study and supported by numerous other scholars, the ethical climate of an organization and organizational commitment are important factors of job satisfaction among employees. This study has found that gender differences do exist among the types of ethical climates as well as job satisfaction by type of position. Additional research is recommended to delve further into ethical climates relative to job satisfaction.

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Appendix – Survey Instruments

This survey is intended only for full-time non-faculty higher education administrators. You are being asked to participate in a survey of higher education administrators' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ethical climate. This survey is the basis for a doctoral dissertation. Your response is anonymous, and you may omit any question(s) that you choose not to answer other than Questions 1 and 2, which confirms your eligibility for the study. However, incomplete responses may not be used for research purposes. This survey is designed to take 10-12 minutes to complete.

1. Are you a non-faculty higher education administrator?
 - Yes
 - No

2. What is your current employment status?
 - Full-time
 - Part-time

3. Please indicate your professional non-faculty higher education administrator status
 - Vice President
 - Associate or Assistant Vice President
 - Director
 - Associate or Assistant Director
 - Dean
 - Associate or Assistant Dean

Executive Director

4. What is your gender?

Female

Male

Job Satisfaction Survey

Instructions: Consider your overall level of satisfaction with your job. Please indicate the degree of your agreement with each of the following statements from 1 to 7 with the following scale:

1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = undecided, 5 = slightly agree, 6 = agree, 7 strongly agree

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Generally speaking I am very satisfied with this job.							
2	The work I do on this job is very meaningful to me.							
3	I frequently think of quitting this job							

Instructions: Please rate your *level of satisfaction* with the following aspects of your job using a scale from 1 to 7 where:

1 = extremely dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = slightly dissatisfied, 4 = neutral, 5 = slightly satisfied, 6 = satisfied, 7 = extremely satisfied

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	The amount of job security I have.							
2	The amount of pay and fringe benefits I receive.							

3	The amount of personal growth and development I get in doing my job.							
4	The people I talk to and work with on my job.							
5	The degree of respect and fair treatment I receive from my administration.							
6	The feeling of worthwhile accomplishment I get from doing my job.							
7	The fairness of our promotion process.							
8	The amount of support and guidance I received from my administration.							
9	The degree to which I am fairly paid for what I contribute to this organization.							
10	The amount of independent thought and action I can exercise in my job.							

TCM Employee Commitment Survey

Instructions: Listed below is a series of statements that represent feelings that individuals might have about the organization for which they work. With respect to your own feelings about the particular organization for which you are now working, please indicate the degree of your agreement with each statement from 1 to 7 with the following scale:

1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = undecided, 5 = slightly agree, 6 = agree, 7 strongly agree

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.							
2	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.							
3	I do not feel “emotionally attached” to this organization							
4	I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer							
5	Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.							

6	I do not feel a sense of belonging to my organization.							
7	It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.							
8	I owe a great deal to my organization.							
9	One of the few negatives consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.							
10	I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it							
11	Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.							
12	Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization.							

Revised Ethical Climate Questionnaire

Instructions: Consider the culture of the organization for which you are currently working.

Please indicate the degree of your agreement with each of the following statements from 1 to 7 with the following scale:

1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = undecided, 5 = slightly agree, 6 = agree, 7 strongly agree

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	What is best for everyone in the institution is the major consideration here							
2	In this institution, people protect their own interests above all else.							
3	In this institution, the ethical code of their profession is the major consideration.							
4	The major responsibility of people in this institution is to control costs.							
5	In this institution, people are expected to strictly follow professional standards.							

6	In this institution, the greatest good for all affected by their decision is primarily sought.								
7	In this institution, people are guided by their own ethics.								
8	In this institution, a respect for the rights of others is a primary concern.								
9	In this institution, people are mostly out for themselves.								
10	It is important to follow the institution's rules and procedures here.								
11	People in this institution are expected to seek just and fair resolutions in their decision.								
12	People here are concerned with the institution's interests, to the exclusion of all else.								

VITA

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