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THE INFLUENCES OF COVID-19 ON THE JOB SATISFACTION OF STUDENT CONDUCT ADMINISTRATORS AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA

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THE INFLUENCES OF COVID-19 ON THE JOB SATISFACTION OF STUDENT

CONDUCT ADMINISTRATORS AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA

By

KENNETH L. MADDOX

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THE INFLUENCES OF COVID-19 ON THE JOB SATISFACTION OF STUDENT

CONDUCT ADMINISTRATORS AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

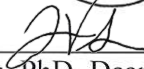IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA

by

KENNETH L. MADDOX

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the beautiful women of my life. My wife, Aisha, for loving

me unconditionally and believing in me even when I forgot how to believe in myself. To my

mother, Brenda; grandmother, Vera; and great-grandmother, Frenzie; thank you for being the

strong matriarchs God blessed you to be. I will continue to honor, praise, and thank God for

bringing me to you. To my earthly village, for 50 years of light, life, love, and support, I thank

you. To my ancestors…the roots of our family tree and upon whose shoulders I stand, I say

Thank You! May the branches from your humble beginnings continue to bear fruit. My prayer

is that I make you all proud!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the job satisfaction of student conduct administrators (SCAs) at institutions of higher education in the state of Florida during times of COVID-19. Student conduct issues constantly change on college campuses, and the demands for SCAs to evolve with the changes take a toll on their mental and physical health. SCAs are responsible for maintaining ethical, academic, and social integrity by providing oversight and enforcement of codes of student conduct at institutions of higher education. In times of crisis, like the COVID-19 pandemic, the role of the SCA increases to take on additional responsibilities beyond the traditional scope of the job. This can lead to role ambiguity and conflict that create dissatisfaction in the work.   Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene theory, which looks at job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction on disparate continuums, was used as the theoretical framework for the study. Nine SCAs participated in semi-structured interviews using Zoom video and Otter AI transcription to gather rich and robust information about their lived experiences. Findings of the study revealed four themes: communication, support, well-being, and transition. The transition theme consisted of three sub-themes: before the transition; working remotely; and transition back to campus. The findings from this study suggested that SCAs are overall satisfied with their job, even in the face of COVID-19. However, conflicting satisfaction results for administrative policies and factors for work-life led to an inconclusive finding.

*Keyword*s: Covid-19, extrinsic hygiene factors, intrinsic motivators, job satisfaction

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I. INTRODUCTION

This dissertation was a phenomenological study on the job satisfaction of student conduct administrators, following the outbreak of COVID-19. The study was based primarily on face-to-face interviews with administrators from public, private, and community college higher education systems within the state of Florida. This chapter presents the background of the study, states the problem of the study, describes its significance, and presents a synopsis of the methodology.

Background of the Study

Since the founding of colleges and universities in the United States, student behavior has been a matter of concern for administrators. The Colonial Period in America (1636–1789) bore witness to the structured and punitive lifestyle that was infused into the college student experience. Controlling systems were devised and implemented to instill a culture built on morals, character, and a disciplined college life (Cohen & Kisker, 2010, p. 27). However, attempts to curb the enthusiasm of mischievous students proved to be an arduous task for the leadership. In 1822, Thomas Jefferson, founder of the University of Virginia, wrote to a colleague explaining that student discipline in American education is difficult due to students' independence and a spirit of insubordination that was not stifled by parents (Jefferson, 1822). Approaching two centuries since Jefferson's letter, the trials and tribulations related to student behavior remain relevant (Nagel-Bennett, 2010). The enforcement of student conduct standards

is critical to the success of any educational organization. Within institutions of higher education (IHEs), student conduct administrators (SCAs) maintain ethical, academic, and social integrity by providing oversight and enforcement of an institution's codes of student conduct (CAS, 2019; Nagel-Bennett, 2010). In times of crisis, the role of a SCA can be challenging, as need-based responses may lead to role ambiguity and conflict that create dissatisfaction in the work (Tull, 2014).

One such crisis occurred on March 11, 2020, when the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the SARS-CoV-2 Disease (COVID-19) a worldwide pandemic. The WHO, founded in 1948, is an agency of the United Nations responsible for connecting nations and the people towards the goal of a safe and healthy world (AJMC, 2021; WHO, 2021). In the United States of America, President Donald Trump moved swiftly to declare COVID-19 a national emergency, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) leveraged their understanding of disease and past pandemics to release safety protocols, including sheltering in place and social distancing. Institutions of higher education, led by their presidents' leadership teams, trustees, and local and state governments, took heed of the CDC concerns to reduce risk and flatten the curve of increasing infection, pivoting in March from face-to-face (F2F) classes to online instruction (Hathaway et al., 2021; Ramlo, 2021).

The transition of colleges and universities to online instruction was necessary to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. Unfortunately, minimized in the COVID response was a focus on the well-being of faculty and staff. Less than one month after institutions closed, the American Council of Education surveyed 192 university presidents and learned that 25% ranked

the "mental health of faculty and staff" in their top five pressing concerns due to COVID-19 (Turk, Soler, & Vigil, 2020). Forty-four percent of university presidents ranked "laying off faculty and/or staff" in their top five concerns (Turk et al., 2020, p.1). Areas that the university presidents ranked higher in importance were "fall or summer enrollment," "long-term financial viability," and "sustaining an online learning environment" (Turk et al., 2020, p.1). Furthermore, when asked about financial actions taken or considered by university presidents, 6% decided on staff layoffs, while 57% were anticipating staff layoffs. The number of faculty was 1% and 32% respectively (Turk et al., 2020). The data from the survey were supported by statistics from the U.S. Labor Department that showed the higher education workforce lost 650,000 jobs between February and December 2020 (Bauman, 2021). Not knowing if employees would remain employed from one day to the next was a stressor that could induce anxiety, mental fatigue, and ultimately lead to dissatisfaction.

As the fall 2020 school year approached, many IHEs across the country developed and implemented response plans for COVID-19. According to a study on response strategies at large IHEs in the United States, Freeman et al. (2021) reported reopening strategies that included face-to-face classes and online/remote learning, as well as hybrid deliveries (a combination of face-to-face and online/remote methodologies). Institutions that returned to some form of face-to-face learning implemented safety protocols to minimize close contact between students, faculty, and staff, such as reduced classroom sizes, face masks, social (physical) distancing, reduced housing guest policies, and the elimination of intercollegiate competition and university travel. With new safety protocols in place, student conduct administrators were forced to shift their codes of

student conduct to support the changes. Behavior compacts were implemented, and in some cases, suspension clauses were introduced (Freeman et al., 2021). These factors were instrumental in the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of SCAs during the time of COVID.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study on job satisfaction was developed from Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman's (1959) motivation-hygiene theory, also referred to as two-factor theory, which was used to understand the motivation to work. Herzberg et al. theory suggested that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are two separate factors, with intrinsic motivators being on one continuum and extrinsic hygiene factors on another continuum. Herzberg et al. identified factors he termed *motivators* that contributed to job satisfaction: achievement, growth, advancement, recognition, responsibility, and the work itself. Herzberg et al. also identified hygiene factors that affected job dissatisfaction: administrative policies, work/life balance, compensation, job security, supervision, job status, relationships with colleagues, and working conditions.

Nagel-Bennett (2010) suggested that Herzberg identified intrinsic motivation and extrinsic hygiene factors and tied intrinsic to the satisfaction continua. At one end of the spectrum is satisfaction and at the other end is no satisfaction, signifying that intrinsic motivators add to job satisfaction, but a dearth of them did not lead to dissatisfaction. They led to what Herzberg called no satisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). That means extrinsic hygiene factors are tied to the dissatisfaction continua. At one end of the spectrum is dissatisfaction and at the other end is no dissatisfaction, signifying that extrinsic hygiene factors lead to job dissatisfaction, but a

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lack of them did not lead to job satisfaction. They led to what Herzberg called no job

dissatisfaction (Nagel-Bennett, 2010). In more simplistic terms, the opposite of satisfaction is no

satisfaction, and the opposite of dissatisfaction is no dissatisfaction. According to Giese (2018)

"hygiene factors were found by Herzberg (1966) to be linked to the prevention of job

dissatisfaction" (p. 24), and they include factors, such as low wages or coworker relationship

challenges. Conversely, Herzberg found that the motivation factors were intrinsic and satisfied

an employee's need for growth and self-actualization, such as a promotion or praise. (Geise,

2018).

<div align="center">**Problem Statement**</div>

Student conduct issues constantly change on college campuses, and the demands for

student conduct administrators (SCA) to evolve with changes take a toll on their mental and

physical health. Today's institutions of higher education (IHE) are a reflection of society, and as

such, SCAs are faced with a myriad of issues that require an understanding of global norms;

student development; legal requirements of due processes; and a knowledge of local, state, and

federal laws (Waller, 2013).

Though there is an abundance of intrigue in the study of job satisfaction, research on

student affairs professionals within higher education comprises only a small share. Even fewer

studies specifically link satisfaction to the work of student conduct administrators (Waller,

2013). Some research exists that addresses the job satisfaction of SCAs, highlighting concepts,

such as restorative justice, decision-making, and their intent to stay or leave the position (Maxie,

2019; Nagel-Bennett, 2010; and Waller, 2013). Other studies measured mental health topics

within the workplace, such as moral distress and compassion fatigue (Bernstein Chernoff, 2016; Haug, 2018). This research is valuable to the profession, but no known research to date has focused on the job satisfaction of student conduct administrators influenced by COVID-19. This study helped inform the student conduct profession and addressed a gap in the literature regarding the influences of COVID-19 on the job satisfaction of student conduct administrators.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the job satisfaction of student conduct administrators at institutions of higher education in the state of Florida during times of COVID-19.

Overview of Methodology

The study is a qualitative, phenomenological research design aimed at describing the influences of COVID-19 on the job satisfaction of student conduct administrators at institutions of higher education within the state of Florida. A qualitative study was utilized as means for "collecting data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study" (Creswell, 2013, p.44). The phenomenological approach was used because it focuses on the testimony of participants who have experienced the same phenomenon; in this case, COVID-19.

Research Questions

The overarching research question used to support this study was: What are the lived experiences involved in the job satisfaction of student conduct administrators in the times of COVID-19?

Research Design

Qualitative research stems from the knowledge that is developed by people as they engage in an activity, experience, or phenomenon (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 23). In the case of this study, that phenomenon is COVID-19. Qualitative research seeks to study phenomenon in their natural setting, drawing on the data sensitive to people and places (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, this study was of a qualitative design.

For the purpose of this study, attention was given to the participants and their lived experiences, rather than a focus on the narrative of the researcher. Because of this, a transcendental phenomenological type was employed. According to Moustakas's (1994) "transcendental or psychological phenomenology is focused less on the interpretations of the researcher and more on the description of the experiences of the participants" (as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 80). Furthermore, the transcendental type minimizes the emphases of the interpretations of the investigator by bracketing, or setting aside the investigator's personal experiences. A phenomenological study describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon. Therefore, the phenomenological design was used to gather data from participants who have experienced the same phenomenon, preferably in a natural setting.

Data Collection

A qualitative, phenomenological study addressed a gap in the literature regarding job satisfaction of student conduct administrators at IHE in the state of Florida, particularly in times of crisis. Structured interviews, conducted remotely via Zoom, were the intended approach to

collecting data. Nine participants were asked eight open-ended questions, and each interview was audio-recorded and transcribed.

Procedures

The initial step in this study was to solicit the Association of Student Conduct Administrators (ASCA) for access to their state of Florida membership (see Appendix D). Upon approval, ASCA sent no more than three emails to the respective membership soliciting participation in a qualitative study (ASCA, 2021) (see Appendix F). The next step was to determine the participants and how many would provide data. Per Creswell (2013), five to 25 participants are sufficient for a phenomenological study.

Representatives from public, private, and community colleges within the state of Florida were selected to provide a robust response to a shared phenomenon. The participants were asked eight open-ended interview questions; two of which were sub-questions (see Appendix B). Several data collection methods were utilized, including face-to-face interviews, observations, documents, and audio-visual materials (Creswell, 2013).

Limitations

This qualitative, phenomenological study presented a few limitations, including a singular focus on student conduct administrators within the state of Florida, eliminating perspectives from student conduct administrators in other states throughout the country. An emphasis on non-faculty personnel at institutions of higher education expands the limitations within the study. The number of participants was small to maintain a cohesive cohort and eliminate broad perspectives that may result from a large group.

Definition of Key Terms

The following key terms were used in this study:

- **COVID-19**: According to the World Health Organization (2021), COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

- **extrinsic hygiene factors**: Work to reduce job dissatisfaction and include the following work-related variables: company policies and administration, relationship with supervisors, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, and salary (Herzberg et al., 1959).

- **intrinsic motivators:** Operate only to increase and improve job satisfaction and include the following work-related variables: achievement, recognition, and the work itself (Herzberg et al., 1959).

- **job satisfaction**: "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (Locke, 1976, p. 1304).

Significance of the Study

A qualitative, phenomenological study was an initial step to help fill the gap in the literature regarding job satisfaction of student conduct administrators at IHE in the state of Florida, particularly in times of crisis. This study produced useful information for student conduct administrators and those that supervise them. The information obtained prepared student conduct administrators when leading students, faculty, and staff through a pandemic crisis.

Summary

The role of the student conduct administrator is critical to the success of institutions of higher education. Responsible for the promotion of community standards, safety, and student learning (CAS, 2018), SCAs reinforce ethical behavior, academic integrity, and fair treatment of others in an attempt to maintain an academic setting conducive to success. SCAs, particularly chief student conduct officers, find satisfaction in their work, but how do they view their satisfaction following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic? Fraught with pressure from upper administration, parents, and students, SCAs had to transition to a remote work environment at the start of the pandemic and maintain their status quo. SCAs were required to establish conduct-related COVID-19 protocol for students who refused to abide by newly minted university mandates. In the face of these new job requirements, SCAs were also expected to maintain traditional honor codes, such as academic integrity, social misbehavior, and in some cases implement new Federal Title IX mandates. Based on this demanding work, it is critical to understand the factors associated with the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of SCAs in the face of COVID-19.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the job satisfaction of student conduct administrators at institutions of higher education in the state of Florida, particularly in times of COVID-19. In Chapter 1, the role of the SCA was discussed, as well as student misbehavior at the onset of American higher education. The chapter presented job satisfaction as a concept of worker motivation as offered by Herzberg, et al. (1959). An introduction of COVID-19 and the influences on higher education concluded the chapter. In addition, this chapter includes relevant literature and research on the history of student conduct, a historical view of job satisfaction, and a discussion of Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene theory.

A Brief History of Student Conduct

Most colleges established during the colonial period were created under the auspices of religious denominations, to educate mostly men to become religious and civic leaders (Maxie, 2019; Nagel-Bennett, 2010; Lancaster & Waryold, 2008). With this education came strict rules that were administered by the university president, faculty, and staff (Maxie, 2019; Nagel-Bennett, 2010). The period of the Emergent Nation (1790 – 1869) brought about an increase of small colleges as access to the Western part of the United States began to open. The westward expansion allowed the number of colleges to increase, providing access for a more diverse student population (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). These populations included groups of young women, African Americans, and other individuals leaving their rural towns and farms, heading to

the city for education and/or employment. Cohen and Kisker (2010) suggested that students were becoming more independent and their actions more belligerent. The behavior pattern of student life was becoming the norm, and colleges were responsible for holding students accountable for their poor behavior. As offered by Cohen and Kisker (2010), issues of norm included upperclassmen hazing freshmen students in the dormitories, and students playing pranks on their faculty. These behaviors were "all the elements of adolescence displayed by boys living in isolated communities" (Cohen & Kisker, 2010, p.29).

The Morrill Land-Grant College Act of 1862, known simply as the Morrill Act, is a federal act that ushered in a time of change for the American college system. The goal of the Morrill Act was to provide grants of land to states to finance the establishment of colleges and universities specializing in agriculture and mechanical arts; breaking away from the traditional Liberal Arts educational model (Maxie, 2019; Morrill Act, 1862). The federal government provided states with tracts of land that opened up opportunities for the working class to pursue an education that once was beyond their financial means. A diverse student population was the beneficiary of an influx of teacher's colleges, technical schools, and junior colleges (Maxie, 2019; Lancaster & Waryold, 2008); but issues of discrimination kept people of color from benefitting from this opportunity, until 1890. According to the Morrill Act National Archives (2022):

> People of color were often excluded from these educational opportunities due to their race. The Second Morrill Act of 1890 was aimed at the former Confederate states and sought to rectify this discrimination. It required states to establish separate land-grant

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institutions for Black students or demonstrate that admission was not restricted by race. The act granted money instead of land and resulted in the establishment of several Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) (p.1).

Issues of student discipline were daunting and manifested throughout the Emergent Nation Era well into the University Transformation Era (1870 – 1944) (Cohen & Kisker, 2010).

The birth of student affairs coincides with the start of the University Transformation Era, created as a means of discharging top university leadership acting *in loco parentis* (in place of the parents) of the daily oversight and responsibilities of managing students and advising them of things, such as their "moral life and intellectual habits" (Lancaster & Waryold, 2008, p.10). The inaugural dean of men at Harvard University is viewed as the first professional student affairs position in the United States of America. In 1891, LeBaron Russell Briggs was appointed to relieve the university president and faculty of student disciplinary matters (Maxie, 2019). The first dean of women was appointed by the University of Chicago, several years after Briggs. Alice Freeman Palmer, former president at Wellesley College, filled that role (Lancaster & Waryold, 2008). By the early 1900s, the deans of men and women became common positions on American college campuses, providing a philosophical and programmatic aspect to student discipline (Nagel-Bennett, 2010).

The Mass Higher Education Era (1945 – 1975) is considered by Cohen and Kisker (2010) as the golden age of higher education, due to increases in enrollment and finances, including the implementation of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, also known as the G.I. Bill. Student conduct also experienced tremendous growth throughout this era. During the 1960s and

1970s, college campuses across the United States were inundated with student activism, in part

due to the Civil Rights Movement and the anti-Vietnam War movement (Horrigan, 2016; Nagel-

Bennett, 2010). One instance of student activism led to a major change in due process of student

conduct on college campuses, *Dixon v. Alabama State Board of Education* (1961). In 1960,

Alabama State College, a designated Historically Black College and University (HBCU),

expelled six African American students due to their involvement in a sit-in at the lunchroom of

the Montgomery County, Alabama Courthouse (Lee, 2014). While attempting to order food, the

students were denied service and instructed to leave. They departed the lunchroom and staged a

protest inside the courthouse due to the lunchroom's refusal to serve African Americans

(Horrigan, 2016). The subsequent expulsion of the students by the college was done without

proper notification or a student conduct hearing where the students would have been able to

challenge the charges before them. According to Lee (2014), the students took the Alabama

State Board of Education to court, challenging their expulsion for violation of their due process

rights. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals rejected the idea of *in loco parentis* and determined

that students at public colleges have due process protections under the fourteenth amendment of

the constitution (Nagel-Bennett, 2010). Public colleges and universities must provide notice and

a hearing before expelling a student for misconduct. The outcome of the case immediately

created a change in how universities viewed students and how they must address student

misconduct. The outcome of *Dixon v. Alabama Board of Education* eliminated *in loco parentis*

within U.S. higher education (Waryold & Lancaster, 2020).

The end of this era saw the advent of conduct boards that included students. "It was during this period that institutions started to include students on hearing panels" (Waryold & Lancaster, 2020, p. 9). In 1968, the University of Georgia was one of the first institutions to recognize student conduct boards, and soon after other institutions installed similar panels in their process, catapulting the evolution of the modern student conduct system.

Present-day student conduct looks very different than it did during its humble beginnings. Today there are many legalistic mandates combined with philosophical ideologies tied together in a complex web of the student experience that supports the 'beyond classroom learning' that students receive (Waryold & Lancaster, 2020). A few ideologies include "Restorative justice practices that can include shuttle diplomacy, facilitated dialogue, and mediation" (Schrage & Giacommini, 2009; as cited in Waryold & Lancaster, 2020, p.10); Title IX protections of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989; and the supportive nature of the work by Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation/Behavior Intervention Teams (CARE/BIT).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a complex construct that is frequently studied in the fields of education, organizational psychology, and industrial psychology. Since the early 1900s, employers have been interested in the job satisfaction of the workforce. A century later, the interest in job satisfaction still holds true. According to Spector (1997),

> Employers understand how important it is to have workers who are dedicated to their role, effective in their labor, and productive with their time. In addition, supervisors and

organizations have a moral responsibility to care about the welfare and health of their

employees. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs are better performers, go beyond

the assigned responsibilities and expectations of their role, and have better overall well-

being. In contrast, employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs are more likely to

experience burnout, look for alternative employment, experience increased absenteeism,

and other withdrawal behaviors (as cited by Giese, 2018, p. 15).

In the first approach to employee behavior, Frederick W. Taylor (1911) focused on the

efficiency and productivity of the job. As the founder of scientific management, Taylor's

approach sought facts rather than guesswork or hearsay, like most studies of unscientific

approaches at that time. According to Locke (1982), "An essential element of Taylor's

philosophy management…was a scientific approach to managerial decision making" (p. 14).

Taylor (1911) used a *Time and Motion Study*, the first of its kind, to determine how fast a job

should be done, by dissecting the tasks into elements or motions to eliminate wasted motions

(Locke, 1982). Taylor was often criticized for his oversimplified view of human motivation, but

Locke suggested Taylor's critics could not disprove his experiments or ideas.

Mayo (1933) and his colleagues concentrated their study on factors impacting worker

behavior. Mayo and his team conducted employee interviews at the Hawthorne Works of

Western Electric in Illinois. They found that worker behavior was being guided by group norms

instead of management productivity expectations (Nagel-Bennett, 2010). The concept of job

satisfaction is broad and has taken many forms since the seminal work of Robert Hoppock

(1935). He offered one of the first definitions of job satisfaction as "any combination of

psychological and environmental circumstances that causes a person truthfully to say, 'I am satisfied with my job'" (p.47). In Hoppock's study, he sampled various groups from a small town in New Hope, Pennsylvania, including residents and schoolteachers. Per Nagel-Bennett (2010), "the results of Hoppock's (1935) study of the residents of New Hope, Pennsylvania showed more than two-thirds of those surveyed self-reported they were satisfied with their jobs" (p.20). Job satisfaction is often used synonymously with the concept of worker motivation. On the surface, the two do not appear to have a connection, but according to Maxie (2019) "Job satisfaction is usually linked with motivation, but the nature of this relationship is unclear" (p. 34).

Abraham Maslow was an American psychologist that studied human motivation, developing a theory to study motivation utilizing a five-step tiered model of progression (Giese, 2018). Maslow's (1943) *Hierarchy of Needs*, "begins at a basic level, primarily to ensure survival, and then progresses through more sophisticated needs to the point of self-actualization" (Dykstra, 2020). Depicted as a pyramid, the base layer of Maslow's hierarchy addressed fundamental physiological needs, such as food, water, clothing, and shelter. As the needs of each tier are met, individuals advance to the next tier. According to Giese (2018), "The needs and their position in the hierarchy were based on assumptions made by Maslow (1943) gleaned from his studies. The lower-level needs categories must be satisfied before an individual can be motivated by upper-level needs categories" (p.16). Although the needs are presented in a bottom-up, advancing structure, individuals may vacillate between steps depending on the circumstance. According to Dykstra (2020), "Although this hierarchy is often considered

sequential, Maslow noted that it is not fixed, and in some cases will depend upon the individual

and how long certain needs have been met and satiated" (p. 41). The next level of human needs

is safety, such as protection against threats to harm. Examples of addressing safety needs may

include an individual protecting themself against COVID-19, the school bully, or impending

severe weather. An individual will need to satisfy their need for safety before they are ready for

the next step. The third tier concerns the need for love and belonging. An individual will seek

acceptance from others after meeting their basic and safety needs. The acceptance may be from

peers in a workplace environment, a significant other, or a connection with social colleagues.

Esteem needs, such as the respect you may gain from others, is on the fourth tier. Recognition

from a supervisor, colleague, or peer is the acknowledgement sought on this tier. The top tier in

this ascending hierarchy of needs is self-actualization. This need speaks to lofty aspirations, yet

the realization of one's full potential. An individual will not reach this tier without first

completing the previous levels. According to Nagel-Bennett (2010), "Maslow's hierarchy of

needs theory is practical and readily applicable. This hierarchy has resulted in a wide application

of the theory by practitioners" (p. 24). Herzberg's (1959) *Motivation-Hygiene Theory* is one

such postulation that ties well to Maslow's study on human motivation. However, Maslow is not

without his critics. His theory, although popular with general practitioners, due to the ease of

seeing oneself within the hierarchy, critics argue that "Maslow's theory was less than satisfactory

in its explanation of the autonomous nature necessary for self-actualization, and questions exist

around the idea that self-actualization can be attained as a result of the process Maslow put forth"

(Neher, 1991; as cited by Nagel-Bennett, 2010, p. 24). This has led to motivational researchers or psychologists rarely using Maslow's theory any longer.

Herzberg's (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory

At the commencement of their study on workplace motivation, Frederick Herzberg, Bernard Mausner, and Barbara Snyderman questioned the need for a study on job attitudes. At the time of the study, employment in their respective area was reported at "nearly 100% utilization of plant and facilities" (Herzberg et al., 1959, p. ix). But there was a concern in the industry that perhaps manpower and productivity were inefficient, while workers were concerned about their jobs due to industrialization. Herzberg and his team decided to move forward to address the concerns of the industry and those of the workers. As precisely stated in the Preface,

> To industry, the payoff for a study of job attitudes would be in increased productivity, decreased turnover, decreased absenteeism, and smoother working relations. To the community, it might mean a decreased bill for psychological casualties and an increase in the overall productive capacity of our industrial plant, and in the proper utilization of human resources. To the individual, an understanding of the forces that lead to improved morale would bring greater happiness and greater self-realization" Herzberg et al., 1959, p. ix).

In the Herzberg et al. (1959) study on *The Motivation to Work*, Herzberg and his team examined "whether different kinds of factors were responsible for bringing about job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction" (p.57). The Motivation-Hygiene theory is the result of the findings following a series of interviews with over 200 engineers and accountants in manufacturing and utility

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services within metropolitan Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Per Herzberg et al. "engineers and accountants were chosen because of their jobs, which are considered rich in technique, and the richness means these workers would have a lot to share with the researchers" (p. 32). Herzberg utilized the critical incident technique to collect data during the initial pilot study, but "later modified his method of data collection to a semi-structured interview" (p. 25).

Table 1 (Appendix I)

Motivation-Hygiene Theory

Intrinsic (Satisfiers) Motivators Factors	Extrinsic (Dissatisfiers) Hygiene Factor
Achievement	Company Policies and Administration
Recognition	Supervision
The Work Itself	Relationship with Peers
Responsibility	Work Conditions
Advancement	Salary
Growth	Status
	Factors in Personal Life
	Job Security
Job Satisfaction ← → No Job Satisfaction	No Job Dissatisfaction ← → Job Dissatisfaction

Table I. Summary of factors and outcomes based on Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory as adapted from Geise (2018)

In the content analysis of data, Herzberg et al. (1959) found coded factors that emerged from the participant responses and divided those into two continuums. The first continua

concern the job satisfaction of the participants. At one end of the continua is 'job satisfaction,' while the opposite end is 'no job satisfaction.' The next continua are job dissatisfaction. On one end of the continua is job dissatisfaction, and the opposite end is 'no job dissatisfaction' (Herzberg, 1966, as cited by Nagel-Bennett, 2010, p. 26). The factors associated with job satisfaction, or 'motivators,' include achievement, advancement, growth, recognition, responsibility, and work itself. The factors involved in job dissatisfaction, called 'hygiene factors' include administrative policies, balance of work and personal life, compensation, job security, job status, relationship with colleagues, supervision, and working conditions (Herzberg et al., 1959; Nagel-Bennett, 2010). As a functional continuum in Herzberg's theory, job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction have different factors, but both subscribe to the development of the work environment and employee performance. Noltemeyer (2014) posits:

> An employee could have low levels of job dissatisfaction and still be overall unhappy at work because of low levels of job satisfaction. Herzberg argues that both spectrums must be addressed to create the most positive work environment; an employee may have given the 'work itself' high marks, resulting in high levels of job satisfaction, but if the employee also ranks 'company policy and administration' and 'work conditions' as subpar, there may be high levels of job dissatisfaction, resulting in an overall lukewarm work environment (p. 18).

In Giese's (2018) study of Herzberg's Theory of Motivation, they stated "Hygiene factors were found by Herzberg (1966; Herzberg et al., 1959) to be linked to the prevention of job dissatisfaction. Motivator factors, on the other hand, were found to contribute to job

satisfaction" (p. 24). While this is not an inaccurate statement, Giese's statement that hygiene

factors are linked to the prevention of job dissatisfaction does not fully satisfy Herzberg's intent.

As discussed earlier about the current theory, the absence of hygiene factors causes

dissatisfaction among employees in the workplace. In order to remove dissatisfaction in a work

environment, these hygiene factors must be present, however their presence does not ensure

satisfaction entirely. As Giese (2018) continued, a potential point of contradiction is presented:

"Employees require the hygiene factors to be initially satisfied; if any of them are not met they

will experience job dissatisfaction" (p. 24). This suggests that there was a point in time when an

employee was satisfied with a hygiene factor. Perhaps a supporting example may be a new hire

receiving the salary they requested for the position. Is job satisfaction achieved in this example?

Now consider that same employee has worked for five years, performing the same job, without

an inflation increase in salary or a bonus. Is that employee still satisfied, as stated by Giese, or is

that worker experiencing something between 'job dissatisfaction' and 'no job dissatisfaction?'

Herzberg's findings reinforce that hygiene factors cannot motivate employees, but they can work

to reduce the feeling of dissatisfaction. A notion that Giese (2018) so eloquently states:

> Ultimately, Herzberg's (1959) hygiene-motivation theory illustrates to leadership that no
>
> matter how compatible employees are with their supervisor, no matter how comfortable
>
> employees' desks are, no matter how much technology is implemented, these things will
>
> not lead to increased job satisfaction (p. 25).

To be fully transparent, years after the original work on the *Motivation-Hygiene Theory*,

Herzberg (1974) suggested that salary is involved in both motivating and hygiene factors. "As a

motivating factor it (salary) was tied to factors such as recognition; when employees recognized that a higher salary was associated with motivating factors, such as recognition for work, appreciation, and merit-based raises, it became a motivator. Otherwise, salary in and of itself was a hygiene factor" (Dykstra, 2020, p. 45).

This current study utilizes Herzberg's (1959) *Motivation-Hygiene Theory* as the theoretical framework, due to the potential connection of transferable factors to the lived experiences of student conduct administrators, as well as the potential ease of conveying their messages via the theory. According to Owens (2004), "Herzberg's theory has been broadly influential and often appears in the education, business, and industry literature" (as cited by Nagel-Bennett, 2010, p. 28). Nagel-Bennett also shared the ease of understanding the theory while citing Steers & Porter (1991) "Herzberg's work has had a powerful influence on the field of work and is especially valued because the theory is easy to understand, based on empirical data and offers explicit recommendations for administrators" (p. 28.).

Critics to Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory

As with most studies involving the development of theories, a critical analysis should be offered to provide a new or alternative perspective to the reader who may otherwise simply accept the information without merit. Such is the case with Herzberg, as his theory on motivation and hygiene is not without its share of critics. There appears to be a considerable amount of concern with Herzberg's methodology, particularly with the data collection. Soliman (1970) posited that "Herzberg's theory is methodologically bound; meaning that the method implemented to measure the dual factors (intrinsic and extrinsic) determined the results" (as cited

by Nagel-Bennett, 2010, p. 29). The critique stems from the line of questioning by the researcher. Nagel-Bennett suggested that the questions are binding or limiting the participants to provide responses that the researcher wants to hear. As Nagel-Bennett explained, "In response to this question (directions by the researcher), individuals often provide what they think are socially acceptable responses or what the researcher expects to hear rather than their honest response" (p. 29). Latham (2012) and Sachau (2007), believed that Herzberg relied too heavily on a biased methodology (as cited by Dykstra, 2020).

Another concern is that the theory lacked inclusion in the data collection of others beyond the engineers and accountants. One should speculate that the general lay worker and white-collar employee may respond differently to the researcher's questions, particularly for such inquiries as salary and responsibility. Salary is considered a popular criticism because of its placement on the hygiene continuum. "Perhaps one of the most prominent criticisms of Herzberg et al. (1959) is his placement of salary as a hygiene factor, meaning that it can mitigate job dissatisfaction, but is not actually a motivator" (Sachau, 2007, as cited by Dykstra, 2020, p. 47). Dykstra (2020) does include an insertion made by Herzberg in his follow-up study of 1974. "Herzberg (1974) offered a contingency that salary was a hygiene and not a motivating factor only as long as the basic survival needs of the employee were being met (p. 47).

Summary

In summary, this chapter provided a review of the literature related to the history of student conduct in higher education in the United States. An introduction to Herzberg's

Motivation-Hygiene Theory and its emphasis on job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction was

discussed. The methods for this study will be delineated in the forthcoming chapter.

III. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the research methodology for this qualitative phenomenological study regarding job satisfaction of student conduct administrators at institutions of higher education within the state of Florida, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The phenomenological method allows for an exploration of student conduct administrator's lived experiences during the pandemic and offers a means to develop themes from data to recognize the manifestation of job satisfaction. A focus on the participants' shared experience of COVID-19 is central to the selection of the phenomenological method.

Description of Research Design

The experiences of student conduct administrators (SCAs) at institutions of higher education are varied and robust. A qualitative research design was used in this study to focus on the participant's experience with a shared phenomenon, COVID-19. This approach also allowed the researcher an opportunity to explore and gain an understanding of Herzberg's intrinsic motivators and extrinsic factors, discovering how those factors may contribute to the job satisfaction of SCAs.

A qualitative study was utilized as a means for obtaining data in the most natural settings for the participants. According to Creswell (2013), a qualitative study is "collecting data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study" (p. 44). Therefore, the qualitative phenomenological method was the most appropriate approach to understanding the effects of COVID-19 on the job satisfaction of student conduct administrators within the state of Florida.

Participants

Participants for this qualitative phenomenological study were student conduct administrators, within the state of Florida, who were solicited through the membership listserv of the Association of Student Conduct Administrators (ASCA, 2021). Two emails were sent to members including the initial solicitation (see Appendix F), followed a week later by a reminder email (see Appendix G). As a result, nine individuals responded to the request for study participants, and each participant was selected based on their employment as a student conduct administrator within the state of Florida. Per Creswell (2013), five to 25 participants are sufficient for a phenomenological study. Each participant was a full-time, active employee, working at a public university, private university, or community college within the state of Florida. The education level of participants ranged from master's degree to Doctoral degree. The experience level of participants ranged from an entry-level student conduct administrator to a senior-level chief student conduct administrator with more than 20 years of experience in Student Affairs. The gender breakdown of the nine participants consisted of seven identifying as female and two identifying as male (see Table 2, Appendix J).

Table 2

Participant Details

Participant Number	Years of Conduct Experience	Highest Level of Education	Institution Classification	Position Level
Participant 1	5 – 9 Years	Doctoral	Public Univ.	Mid-Level
Participant 2	5 – 9 Years	Masters	Private Univ.	Mid-Level
Participant 3	15 – 19 Years	Masters	Private Univ.	Senior Level
Participant 4	15 -19 Years	Masters	Public Univ.	Senior Level
Participant 5	1 – 5 Years	Masters	Public Univ.	Entry-Level
Participant 6	5 – 9 Years	Masters	Community College	Senior Level
Participant 7	3+ Years	Doctoral	Public Univ.	Senior Level
Participant 8	20+ Years	Masters	Public Univ.	Mid-Level
Participant 9	10 – 14 Years	Masters	Community College	Mid-Level

Role of the Researcher

As a researcher in this study, I position myself as an insider in the area of student conduct. My professional background spans 20-plus years, 13 of those years have been as a student conduct administrator at institutions of higher education. The most recent eight years of student conduct experience have been in public and private institutions within the state of Florida. I am a current member of the Association of Student Conduct Administrators on the international level and Florida state level. As an SCA, my responsibilities include the development, enforcement, and decision-making of rules violations at my respective institution. Due to these affiliations, I realize that my experiences increase the potential for bias based on

interactions with student conduct administrators who have also experienced the COVID-19 phenomenon.

To account for potential bias, I employed the transcendental type of phenomenology for data collection. Unlike hermeneutic phenomenology, where the researcher seeks to construct meaning of data utilizing their personal experiences, the transcendental type seeks an unbiased description of the data by bracketing or setting aside their own lived experiences, to gain a fresh perspective of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

Measure of Ethical Protection

The adherence to ethical protection was of paramount concern for the participants and their data throughout the research process. As with protocol associated with the Southeastern University (SEU) Institutional Review Board (IRB), participation and mastery of the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) program were required to ensure the researcher understood the importance of integrity, ethics, and compliance of research.

Each participant was sent an Informed Consent Form (see Appendix H) to their email address, and each participant signed and returned the form via researcher email. The form outlined the risks of participation (which were minimal), a confidentiality statement, the participant's rights as a volunteer, and consent verifying that each participant was eighteen years of age or older. The confidentiality form acknowledged that records of the study would be kept private and stored on a password-protected laptop, inside of the researcher's locked office. The form also instructed the participants that the data would be permanently destroyed three years after the completion of the study and that all audio/video files would be transcribed following the interview, being destroyed within five days following the interview. The measures that were taken reinforce the importance placed on ethical protections during the research study.

This study addressed the following research question:

What are the lived experiences involved in the job satisfaction of student conduct administrators in the times of COVID-19?

Data Collection

Instruments Used in Data Collection

Student conduct administrators within the state of Florida, who also hold membership in the ASCA, were offered an opportunity to participate in this transcendental phenomenological study. For this study, demographic questions were used to obtain education level, experience in the field, experience level, gender, and classification of their respective institution of higher learning. The researcher used nine participants and recorded their interviews using the Zoom digital recording application, as well as the Otter.ai transcription application. The participants answered eight open-ended structured questions, two of which were follow-up questions (see Appendix B). A laptop and digital tablet were used to capture and store the interviews until all data were transcribed and sent to participants for verification.

Procedures

Before the collection of data commenced, approval was sought and granted by the IRB at Southeastern University (see Appendix C), as well as the Research Committee at the Association of Student Conduct Administrators (ASCA, 2021) (see Appendix E). The ASCA sent an initial email to all state of Florida members, soliciting participants for the researcher's study (see Appendix F). Nine interested participants emailed indicating their desire to participate. A consent form was sent to interested participants, and interviews were scheduled. Creswell (2013) supports the use of five to 25 interview participants, as well as the use of recorded

conversations. A brief introduction of the study was read to each participant, including the

research topic, permission to record the interview, a confidentiality statement, and a thank you

(see Appendix A). Demographic questions also were asked to gauge the participant's highest

level of education, experience as a student conduct administrator, level of position, and

classification of their respective institutions of higher education (public, private, community

college).

Methods to Address Assumptions of Generalizability

The aim of a phenomenological study, like most qualitative studies, is to define a mutual

understanding of lived experiences for several individuals affected by a particular phenomenon;

therefore, generalizability is not an expected characteristic (Leung, 2015). That being said, this

phenomenological study used an emergent design that draws from participant responses to create

codes that will be grouped into fewer themes. The participant group numbers nine, to allow for

intimate responses that could be lost in a large sample group. The shared experiences could be

generalized within some higher education and law enforcement settings; however, the SCA

within institutions of higher education have experiences unique to their responsibilities and skill

set.

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Data Analysis

</div>

Data analysis in the current phenomenological study was conducted manually for each

structured interview question. Utilizing Creswell's (2013) qualitative data analysis strategies,

the researcher began by organizing all transcripts into a private file on a laptop for safe keeping.

Each interview was reviewed, and notes were made within the margins. These notes became the

initial codes of the data. The codes were then clustered, per participant, and transferred to an

Excel Spreadsheet. Each cluster of codes was tabbed, within the spreadsheet, based on the

participant's pseudonym (e.g. Participant 1, Participant 2,…). Next, these codes were reviewed

multiple times and collapsed within the same tabbed spreadsheet, allowing the researcher to

bracket and delineate personal experiences that described the essence of the phenomenon. Then,

the codes were classified and grouped into meaningful units; thus, establishing the resulting

themes through thematic analysis. The recognized themes were Communication, Support, Well-

Being, and Transitioning.

Summary

A phenomenological study was used to describe the common meaning for several

individuals of their lived experiences of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). This chapter discussed

the research methodology of the study and described the research design, participants, measure

of ethical protection, instruments and procedures of data collection, and data analysis. Chapter

four presents the results of the data analysis.

IV. RESULTS

The purpose of this qualitative, phenomenological study was to explore the job satisfaction of student conduct administrators at institutions of higher education within the state of Florida, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Job Satisfaction was defined by Locke (1976) as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (p. 1304). COVID-19 is described as an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus (WHO, 2021). COVID-19 initiated a worldwide pandemic that resulted in many countries around the world enforcing mandates that essentially shuttered the normal way of life of their citizens. Institutions of higher education around the world, and their employees, were not immune to the effects of the pandemic, particularly student conduct administrators in the state of Florida, USA. The result of COVID-19 ultimately affected the satisfaction of these student conduct administrators.

This chapter highlights findings from the lived experiences of the nine participants interviewed for this phenomenological study. The primary research question is addressed following the coding and development of common themes born out of the nine participants' responses to the seven open-ended interview questions. The themes that emerged through interviews with the nine student conduct administrators included Communication, Support, Transition, and Well-being. Through the themes, participants' experiences will be shared, along with evidence of quality, and a summary of the findings.

Research Question

One primary research question has been presented in this study. The question that guided this study was: What are the lived experiences involved in the job satisfaction of student conduct administrators in the times of COVID-19?

Themes

All participants in this phenomenological study indicated that levels of satisfaction in their jobs were influenced in some way by the effects COVID-19 had on their professional and personal lives. Each of the participants shared their lived experiences working as a student conduct administrator at their respective institution of higher education. The themes that emerged from the interviews are offered below.

Theme 1: Communication

The most coded data referenced by all nine participants led to the emergence of the first theme, communication. As COVID-19 blossomed into a worldwide pandemic, most universities sent their students, faculty, and staff home, as academics chiefly transitioned to a remote learning platform. Communication from university leadership was deemed critical to the success of the transition and many universities were able to successfully continue their academic terms. Communication was viewed by all participants as a necessity to educate students, faculty, staff, and constituents, on the current state of the university and how it would operate in the face of COVID-19.

But in the state of Florida, as universities returned to face-to-face learning in the fall, several participants felt the communication became confusing and less effective. The lack of

effective communication may have led to frustration for some participants, and dissatisfaction in others. According to Participant 4, communication began to lag, and the delay of information impacted performance: "I think sometimes frustration would come in due to lack of information. Staff wants direction, they want to know what to do and sometimes you're in a limbo period of waiting to get information. So, there were challenges that would create some dissatisfaction like when you have a lack of information, or you feel communication flow is not happening at the level you are used to." Participant 2 expanded on frustrations about the timing of information and how it affected on-campus residential students:

> I know for us, one of the things I struggled with was the last-minute communication that was sent out to our community regarding COVID rules. At that point, students had already signed their housing agreement and so a lot of them could not back out anymore. Or there wasn't another place for them to live off-campus because people already took those spaces. So, I would say being more mindful of when we're going to send messages out and when decisions are going to be made, not necessarily waiting until the last minute to see what other people are doing to make the decision.

Several participants shared their frustration with a lack of inclusion in decision-making when developing COVID-19 conduct policies. Participant 7 stated that, "There are a lot of policies and procedures that were created and implemented that we were expected to enforce. And we were not at the table giving our input or talking about the impact of that; the pros and cons of that." Participant 7 went on to illustrate the frustration of top-down leadership decision-making. Participant 7 indicated, "It was like the decisions were being made above the clouds

and then they would kind of peak in the clouds and just throw it at us and we were left to interpret."

In the case of Participant 1, the messaging from upper administration became inconsistent due to relaying conflicting communication between local, state, and federal agencies. "I think a lot of dissatisfaction is probably similar to a lot of people in that things kept changing. I think Florida was so incongruent with some of the CDC guidelines and things that we were seeing from a national level and seeing the conflict in (local city), which, you know, the city government made a lot of changes that seemed to align with CDC guidance, but the state didn't see the conflict of how that was changing and not being pushed out consistently to institutions."

Although the communication from upper administration was mostly viewed as challenging, some participants thought otherwise. According to Participant 3, upper administration communicated their COVID-19 prevention plan to the campus well. "I think (member institution) did a good job at prevention planning, thinking ahead in terms of having spaces for isolation and quarantine, and not just saying good luck, go home, or find your place. I think they were really good about communicating those plans and expectations to students, parents, and faculty."

Theme 2: Support

The next theme that emerged from the data was the concept of support. Supporting students, faculty, and staff is an everyday occurrence associated with the work of a student conduct administrator. Each participant discussed the importance of supporting others, particularly in times of COVID. Participant 4 addressed concerns related to individual processes

developed for faculty, and separate processes developed for staff, all geared towards helping students. When addressing the concerns, Participant 4 asked rhetorically, "How can we help each other through these processes, because I don't know that the partnerships were as strong as they could have been?" For Participant 9 and their colleagues, there was an assumption that faculty needed support due to the potential increase of academic integrity cases resulting from the virtual platform. "We recognized that there's probably some type of academic integrity concerns that were going to arise from students conducting all of their work and assessments from home." Participant 9 goes on to discuss the institution's academic integrity policy and how it influenced their support:

> Our institution does not have an academic mandate to report from faculty members. It's only if they should choose to include student conduct matters, which may be for documentation purposes. So that's one thing that we started to encourage faculty to do, let us know if something occurs.

Participant 4 then offered the researcher another rhetorical question, this time concerning support across the broader campus community. "How can we better work in collaboration and have partnerships across campus to support each other through these types of changes." Participant 3 discussed how they sought needed collaborations to bolster their team and fulfill their duty to the students. "I think just utilize your team. Sometimes a lot of small private institutions, where there may be a team of two responsible for student conduct and Title IX, so think about your campus partners that you can utilize to be team members." Participant 3 then explains how they are using their campus collaborations to meet the needs of their office.

For example, we utilize some of our coaches and members of our wellness staff to serve

as hearing officers to have conversations with our students. Or, what if your library is

finding those people that can be champions of the values and mission of the institution, as

well as your student conduct office, then you will realize you don't have to do it all

yourself.

According to Participant 8, their collaboration experience appears similar to that of Participant 3,

but with a twist. The collaborations obtained at Participant 8's institution appear to be born out

of necessity and job security:

During COVID-19, our academic integrity cases skyrocketed and, coupled with limited

staffing due to halted hiring processes, we had to do almost twice as many cases. We had

to borrow staff from other areas that didn't have enough work during COVID to assist

with the work we had going on during COVID. So, it kept those people employed and

also satisfied the lack of staff we had due to unfilled vacancies halted by COVID.

A second pattern developed within the theme of support that focused on the value of

teams and the support of colleagues. According to Participant 5, leadership, whether it is a

department head or the Dean, should "definitely listen to the needs of your colleagues." An

example may be the "Dean of Students checking in on different offices like the housing office."

Participant 5 believed a top-down approach of checking in on staff is needed. The Dean should

ask "How is your department doing? How are you? How is everyone below you? How are they

doing?" Participant 8 explained how a resilient staff brought their team closer together.

"Throughout COVID we relied on each other, and we noticed internally in our team that morale-

wise, yes, the work is hard. The workload is hard, and it takes a toll on people. But the fact that

we had each other, I learned a lot about my team in terms of their resiliency as a people it

brought us closer together." Participant 4 believed staff could use alternative support from

leadership. "I think staff actually needs more support on the virtual format. They want

opportunities to be heard and cared for differently." Several participants echo the thought of

providing more remote workdays as an alternative means of support and care for their

employees.

Theme 3: Well-being

The third theme to emerge from the interview process concerned the well-being of the

participant. Several participants spoke to their concerns regarding self-care, and potential

burnout as the result of a myriad of challenges thrust upon them in the face of responding to the

pandemic. According to Participant 2, an increase in the number of conduct violations led to a

level of chronic workplace stress that was hard to manage. "I do think that COVID gave us a lot

of burnouts very early on because of just the sheer number of conduct violations we were

having." Participant 7 acknowledged that self-care is a challenge for SCAs and colleagues

should check on them periodically. "I think that self-care is something that we as conduct

professionals don't do a good job with at all, and I don't think that our colleagues realize

oftentimes that we need to be checked in on as well since we deal with some heavy stuff."

Participant 7 also dealt with personal burnout issues stemming from a failure to model good self-

care; a contradiction of guidance they try to instill in their staff. "I think that's where I kind of

failed as I burnt myself out. As a leader, I am a role model. No matter how much I try to preach

to my staff about their need to take the time or the need to take a day, if I'm not showing that, if I'm not role modeling that, they're not going to follow that." Participant 4 recognized that well-being also meant forgiving oneself for frustrations caused by COVID. "For me, I had to show myself a decent amount of grace through that learning process, where you know, you can get frustrated and all of that, but you have to also remember that this is affecting you as much as it's affecting other people."

In terms of well-being, the concept of job security is a concern that should not be taken lightly. For Participant 9, the matter was a serious concern due to recent changes to the job title and responsibilities of their position. "I was always worried that my position would be removed, or they would discover that this job could be done by the work of one or two people tops. Or if they just restructured the position of our supervisor to re-include my role, they could easily remove the position." As a new hire at the start of the pandemic, Participant 1 was grateful that the administration maintained its position on keeping the newly hired staff member. "Just grateful for the fact that the institution still kept my position. The offer letter was sent, and I moved in everything. So, I am grateful that they honored the contract."

Theme 4: Transition

The final theme that emerged from the participant's data addressed the concept of transition during COVID-19. Each participant discussed transitioning in various ways, and the codes that support the transition theme spoke to the timing when the leadership at institutions of higher education transitioned to remote learning/work and when they decided to return face-to-face. The codes were grouped into the following sub-themes: Before the Transition, Working

Remotely, and the Transition Back to Campus. The following sub-themes invoke the spirit of transition within the lived experiences of the participants in this study.

Sub-Theme A: Before the Transition

Notification by the World Health Organization that COVID-19 was a worldwide pandemic sent shockwaves around the planet. In the state of Florida, SCAs were hearing from colleagues, and news sources, that universities may be closing, and everyone could be sent home. In many instances, institutions were on their spring break, meaning students would not be allowed to return until further notice. For SCAs, that meant preparing for a remote work experience that many were not familiar with. Participant 5 shared how their office had to be creative and think outside of the box to ensure their work would continue away from campus. "So, bringing the group together and putting our heads together to be as creative as possible to make it work because we had to. We were figuring out, well we used to do this all on paper, now we're going to do it and move everything digital." Participant 5 then explained the frantic process, knowing at any point the office could be told to transition remotely, "I remember I was like I had to think on my toes and I was like, okay I need to go through all the papers I have and try to scan them the day before we were told we're not coming back."

According to two of the participants, the anticipation of coming into their roles as new employees looked dramatically different than the realization following the transition to remote work. Participant 1 stated, "I started my job the day after (member institution) went remote. Coming into a new institution, there's a natural transition where you usually get to know your colleagues and see them in different locations and get that point of reference."   The inability to

develop workplace connections before transitioning to remote work proved challenging for Participant 1. "I think coming into a new institution during COVID, trying to adjust to all the COVID aspects of not having relationships built was an interesting challenge." Before Participant 5 became a full-time employee, they served as a student employee in the office, where the culture was vibrant. "During most of my graduate assistantship, I was always in the office, and it was lively. During the pandemic, we all went online. I felt like I was not seeing my colleagues every day and felt very separated."

Sub-theme B: Working Remotely

To help combat the COVID-19 pandemic, transitioning to a remote work platform seemed to be the universal decision for higher education institutions within the state of Florida. Working remotely was met with mixed feelings by the participants, as some viewed the experience from the lens of lessons learned, while others saw new challenges working from home. Regarding lessons learned during COVID-19, Participant 1 shared that "One of the things I would say is the value of remote work. I think showing the fact that our work translated pretty well to remote work in the student conduct realm. I appreciated that in a way that I haven't before." Participant 9 shared the belief that working remotely paired well with the role of the SCA.

> I would say one big thing we've learned is that we can function well remotely. I think
> conduct is able to do that better than other areas of Student Affairs. Conduct is very
> much a contractual office in that we are not first responders like you would see for

housing and residence life, counseling, health services, or safety and security. The work

of SCAs is very much follow-up.

Contrary to the receptive commentary of remote work by Participants 1 and 9, Participant 7

stated, "I was feeling overwhelmed. I found myself in a virtual setting working harder than I

ever did in the office." Participant 7 elaborated on their experience working from home: "I

would sit down 8, 8:30 AM at the computer, and it was 6:30, seven o'clock before I would even

get up from the couch or get up from the table at home. This really made me question if this is

really what I'm supposed to be doing?"

Participant 8 reviewed their remote work experience from various perspectives.

Regarding the initial transition to remote work, Participant 8 shared, "When we got to the point

where everyone got sent home, the satisfaction piece of it was okay because everybody in my

area, including myself, was feeling like we really shouldn't be out in public. We shouldn't be

interacting face-to-face with people because we don't know what this looks like." Due to a lack

of familiarity with remote work, Participant 8, and associated staff, felt the need to be constantly

busy with work. "I would say from a workload standpoint, everybody was expressing that they

were feeling like they didn't know how to work from home. So, for myself, I felt like I had to

work all the time, and my staff also expressed those same things to me." Due to leadership

responsibilities and the messaging from the university regarding remote work expectations,

Participant 8 felt compelled to constantly work and did not feel they could remove themself from

that commitment.

Because I was working from my living room and didn't have a home office at that time, there was no disconnect. I live by myself, so I didn't have other things going on in the home. I felt obligated as a leader to be on, so it didn't matter if it was from eight-to-5, I felt like, if I was awake, I needed to be doing work because I'm at home. I have to prove that I'm working from home and there was that message from the institution that you must check in with your team. You have to make sure that they're actually working.

Sub-theme C: Transition Back to Campus

The transition back to campus was received similarly to the response of transitioning to remote work; there were pros and cons provided by most participants. The primary point of consternation stemmed from the mandate from leadership to return to campus during a pandemic. According to Participant 4, "I think helping staff transition (back) was difficult. I'm actually having more difficulty bringing them back and getting them more comfortable being back on campus." For Participant 5, the challenge was due to the feeling of separation. "So, when we started back, I came in as a professional staff member and there is still that separation." The feeling of separation was induced by the COVID protocols relayed by the university. "I feel like, right now, my doors are closed, not just because we're doing the interview, but because of COVID protocols. We try to keep the doors closed so we can be in our spaces without having to wear a mask. So, there's still a sense of separation, and it's sad because I want to be more collaborative and feel that within my office."

Although some participants wished to continue working remotely, during the pandemic, others were excited to return to their on-campus offices. Participant 8 shared, "When we

returned in June, I think I was happy to go back to the office. I didn't like working from home."

For Participant 8, a return to the workplace office proved somewhat cathartic:

> I didn't like working at home, then we got to go back to our building, and I think it felt
>
> more normal. Going back, I know there was a lot of anxiety out in the world, but it
>
> actually reduced some of that COVID panic to just go into the office every day. We were
>
> not meeting with people face-to-face, and it was nice to be around other humans and not
>
> isolated in my house alone for three months.

From the perspective of Participant 5, the reaction of others on returning to work was mixed. "We came back from working remotely to all hands-on deck, and a lot of people became used to working from home. But some people preferred coming back."

The transition back to campus meant an increase in the workload of many SCAs. Participant 8 stated, "It felt like everything got dumped into Student Conduct." Everything that Participant 8 was referring to included the response to COVID-19 and how the university would address everything from COVID protocol mandates to the adjudication for violating said protocols. Participant 8 shared that, "I feel like I blocked out how much COVID response stuff I had to do. I can laugh now because some of those policies have gone away, but there was a time when me and my dean of students were constantly on the phone going great, they just dumped more stuff in student conduct." Participant 8 explained some of the additional work dumped on the student conduct office and the desire not to add the additional work onto the staff:

> So, the masking policies, masking violations, social distancing violations, some of the
>
> folks who didn't test, you were supposed to test. All of those things got dumped into the

Dean of Students Office, including students who were COVID positive and were required

to quarantine or isolate in housing. That was a huge escalation of work for me. I tried

not to put that on my staff because they were already escalated with academic integrity

cases. We, me and my dean, were interim suspending students who were having

unmasked overcapacity gatherings that in a normal world would never be an issue. They

were having friends over, having birthday parties, but people didn't have masks on when

the RAs (Resident Assistants) came to knock. And so those people got interim

suspended.

Evidence of Quality

Validation in qualitative research, according to Creswell (2013), is "an attempt to assess

the 'accuracy' of the findings" (p. 249). When using validation strategies in qualitative research,

the focus is on eight strategies that are commonly used by qualitative researchers. Creswell

(2013) also "recommends utilizing at least two of them in any given study" (p.253). For this

study, member checking and rich, thick descriptions were used as validation strategies.

In member checking, the researcher seeks credibility by soliciting input from the

participants about the accuracy of the collected data. When working with SCAs about their job

satisfaction following the shared phenomenon of COVID-19, it was critical to ensure the

accuracy of their lived experiences. Following the meeting with each participant, the transcribed

interview was emailed to them for accuracy, and if necessary, edited to ensure their lived

experiences were accurately detailed.

Rich, thick description in qualitative research provides a detailed account of the participant or setting that is being studied (Creswell, 2013). It invites the reader to determine if the descriptions of the participant or setting are transferable to other settings due to shared characteristics. A rich, thick description strategy was used to validate the data for this study. This validation was accomplished by writing robust, interconnected, detailed quotes within each theme. A review of each recorded video and transcribed interview ensured the accuracy of the detailed descriptions to be used in each Theme.

Summary

This chapter offered answers to the research question by offering a link to the participant's responses from the eight open-ended interview questions. Four themes emerged from the coded data that guided rich responses in the chapter: Communication, Support, Well-being, and Transition. The codes were developed from the quality data obtained from the lived experiences of nine SCAs within the state of Florida whose satisfaction in their work was influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. Chapter Five presents the findings and implications of this study.

V. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore how COVID-19 influenced the job satisfaction of student conduct administrators employed at institutions of higher education within the state of Florida. The theoretical framework for this study was based on the *Motivation-Hygiene theory* of Frederick Herzberg. Herzberg et al. (1959) developed factors that support workplace job satisfaction and labeled these factors as motivating factors. The motivating factors are Recognition, Achievement, Growth, Responsibility, Advancement, and Work Itself. The factors that are tied to job dissatisfaction are called hygiene factors. The hygiene factors are Company Policies, Supervision, Relationships with Peers, Work Conditions, Salary, Status, and Security. Job satisfaction is generally defined as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (Locke, 1976, p. 1304). According to the World Health Organization, COVID-19 is "an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus" (WHO, 2021).

Methods of Data Collection

Data collection for this qualitative study was completed utilizing guidance found in Creswell (2013) for transcendental phenomenological research. After gaining approval from the IRB at Southeastern University, as well as the Research Committee at ASCA, web-based technology was gathered to record and transcribe interviews. The Zoom video recording platform was instrumental in capturing the verbal and non-verbal interaction between the

participants and the researcher. The Otter.ai voice-to-text application was used to ensure accurate data collection in the form of transcribed notes that could be reviewed multiple times.

Following approval to research their membership, the ASCA sent two emails (one week apart) to all state of Florida delegates, soliciting participants for the researcher's study. Nine interested participants emailed the researcher indicating their desire to participate. The researcher sent a consent form to the interested participants, and interviews were scheduled. The nine interested participants would serve as a good sample population since Creswell (2013) supports the use of five-to- 25 interview participants, as well as the use of recorded conversations.

At the commencement of the interview process, a brief introduction of the study was read to each participant, including the research topic, permission to record the interview, a confidentiality statement, and a thank you. Demographic questions also were asked to gauge the participant's highest level of education, experience as a student conduct administrator, level of position, and classification of their respective institutions of higher education (public, private, community college). The interview questions were open-ended and numbered seven; two of which were sub-questions, geared at allowing the participants' freedom to explore their lived experiences within each inquiry. Bracketing was used throughout the interviews to eliminate possible contamination between the researcher and the participants' responses while simultaneously allowing the researcher to view the participants' lived experiences with new eyes and a perspective void of speculation.

Upon completion of each participant's interview, the researcher reviewed their Zoom recordings and Otter.ai transcribed notes, before emailing each to verify the accuracy of the information. The transcribed notes were sent to each participant within forty-eight hours after their respective interviews. Participants were allowed to question the accuracy of the transcribed notes and make appropriate edits to the documents as they deemed necessary, leading to increased data validity. All participants responded to the researcher regarding their respective interviews, affirming their approval to move forward with their data. After the interview process, all Zoom video recordings, Otter.ai transcribed notes, and participants' edited notes were stored on the hard drive of a laptop belonging to the researcher, then stored away in a locked desk within the researcher's office. Per the requirement of the Southeastern University IRB, as well as the agreement between the researcher and each participant, all data collected during this study will be eliminated five years following the completion of the interview process.

Summary of Results

In this qualitative phenomenological study, four themes and three sub-themes emerged from the analyses of participant interviews about the effects of COVID-19 on the job satisfaction of student conduct administrators within the state of Florida. The four themes that emerged included Communication, Support, Well-Being, and Transition, while the three sub-themes reinforced the transition theme. The sub-themes gave a pseudo timeline on the life of an SCA throughout the COVID -19 pandemic. They included Before the Transition, Working Remotely, and the Transition Back to Campus. All participants of this study acknowledged that COVID-19

had impacted their job satisfaction, or job dissatisfaction, as student conduct administrators within the state of Florida.

All participants described their lived experience working at their respective institutions of higher education during the times of COVID-19. There were several moments shared, throughout COVID-19, when participants did not feel upper administration valued, cared for, or even supported them. Generally, the items that reflected job dissatisfaction or no job satisfaction were attributed to upper administration. For SCAs responsible for a department, the challenges multiplied due to their responsibility for staff and the overall operations of their team. In many instances, they were the ones relaying information top-down from their supervisors to their team. For participants new to their roles, the onboarding process was taxing due to the inability to establish relationships with colleagues before being sent home to work remotely. The lack of established relationships outside of the immediate area of influence proved challenging when seeking support.

In concert with the motivation-hygiene theory, Herzberg's factors were used to lend descriptions of the emerged themes. Since the participant pool included individuals from public, private, and community college institutions, with various levels of experience, the data retrieved from the interview questions were varied, yet robust. Overall, the participants were emotionally vested in the interview process. Granting open-ended questions yielded a vast amount of information, which netted 195 original themes. Through horizontalization and clusters of meaning (Creswell,2013), the themes were eventually pared to four. Participant responses were

fairly universal on concerns about communication and well-being. The beliefs were more varied

as it related to support and transition.

<div align="center">**Discussion by Research Question**</div>

Research Question

What are the lived experiences involved in the job satisfaction of student conduct

administrators in the times of COVID-19?

One research question guided the study exploring the influences COVID-19 had on the

job satisfaction of student conduct administrators. In this qualitative phenomenological study,

four themes emerged from the analyses of participants' data about the COVID-19 phenomenon

and how it influenced their work-related job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Eight interview

questions were asked of each participant. From the participant interviews, four themes emerged:

a) Communication; b) Support; c) Well-Being; d) Transition. Three sub-themes were identified

to help fully grasp the concept of Transition from the lived experiences of the participants. The

sub-themes are d-1) Before the Transition; d-2) Working Remotely and d-3) Transition Back to

Campus.

Theme 1: Communication

Each participant emphasized the importance of communication, through various forms, as

an influential concept in determining satisfaction or dissatisfaction in their role as student

conduct administrators. For example, all nine participants spoke positively about the

communication from university leadership transitioning the institution towards a remote work

and learning platform. Identifying COVID-19, how it was spread, the infection rates, and the

potential impact it may have had on a college campus was well relayed to students, faculty, and staff. Conversely, confusion and delayed responses during the remote work phase led to many questioning the timing to return, who should be returning, and "why can I not continue working from home?" Participants 1 and 3 had mixed feelings about the communication and their positive comments addressed the COVID-19 plan for students that required isolation or to be quarantined in university-sponsored locations throughout the city, rather than being sent off-campus without a plan, as some other institutions required.

As universities began planning for a fall return to a hybrid or face-to-face learning platform, all participants, except for numbers 1 and 3, felt the communication from leadership was poorly developed and lacked the same level of clarity that was present in communication during the spring. At the crux of the matter was an apparent omission of the conduct office when developing university COVID-19 policies and what should happen to students who failed to follow them. According to Participant 8, the threat from leadership to suspend student violators was met with protest by some students who thought it unfair. SCAs know the Social Change Model tells them that threats do not work. According to Astin and Astin (1996), the Social Change Model was established in 1994 and approaches leadership as a process that results in positive social change by developing member trust and buy-in to act in ways that are consistent with their own beliefs and values. The model views leadership, not as a title or position, but as a collaborative process. For SCAs, it was a challenging position to be in by holding students accountable for violating university policy, while at the same time disagreeing with the harsh outcomes that they had little, if any, input in creating. Ultimately, all SCAs understood their

responsibility for enforcing the COVID-19 policies, even when they did not have a "seat at the table" when developing the policies.

All participants shared lived experiences dealing with COVID-19 and how it influenced their day-to-day job responsibilities. As COVID-19 forced institutions to close, communication was a key concept in educating students, faculty, and staff on why upper administration needed to close the campus, and how the university would move forward with classes to end the spring term. Due to the lack of knowledge and uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 virus, participants were satisfied with the administration's decision to transition to a remote work-from-home platform, and how the university got its message out to all parties during a time when many institutions were on their spring break. According to Herzberg et al. (1959), company policy is viewed on the continuum of dissatisfaction and describes company policy as "components of a sequence of events in which some overall aspect of the company was a factor" (p. 48). Overall, the satisfaction of communication from upper administration was mixed. The satisfaction exclaimed by the participants during the initial communication by administration contradicts Herzberg's theory that company policy is a dissatisfying factor. Conversely, the poor communication to return to work, the announcement that masks were recommended but not emphasizing that they were not required, and relaying the new COVID protocols, were all mismanaged and caused confusion in and outside of the classroom. Communication, in the form of company policies, aligned with the hygiene factor of dissatisfaction.

Theme 2: Support

Once employees transitioned home, SCAs realized the potential for an increase in academic integrity cases that may add to their traditional conduct caseload, including common misbehavior cases and Title IX cases for those who oversaw that program. Due to the increased workload, several SCAs shared the need for support from campus partners to assist with the adjudication of cases. Eight of the nine participants discussed the importance of supporting others and finding self-support, particularly in times of COVID. These SCAs understood and valued the team they were connected with. Checking in on them periodically, particularly entry-level staff, was a universal concern shared by the eight participants. The eight participants discussed leaning on colleagues in the state for best practices and mental health support as being important because you are not alone. Participants 3 and 8 spoke about the need to bring in staff from other departments to assist them with their increased caseload and, in those instances, kept employees working. When coding the Participants' data, the support theme easily emerged from a place of responsibility for staff and the work itself. According to Herzberg et al. (1959), "Factors relating to responsibility and authority are covered in this category, which includes those sequences of events in which the person speaking reported that he derived satisfaction from being given responsibility for his own work or for the work of others or being given new responsibility" (p. 47). All participants gleaned a level of job satisfaction as their responsibility to supporting colleagues, students, faculty, staff, and themselves. Participant 1 shared a refreshing level of support, and that was from their university president. As a new hire at the start of COVID, Participant 1 was unable to establish relationships with coworkers before

everyone was sent home. Periodic telephone calls from the president were a welcomed show of support for someone coming in new to the university. No other participant offered an experience of support from the level of the president.

Theme 3: Well-being

The Well-Being theme emerged out of an emotional place within each participant. The codes for this theme were robust, but most participants had specific, varied responses to how they were influenced by and dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic. When viewing well-being, this theme aligns with Herzberg's factors in personal life. Herzberg (1959 shared that, "they did not accept sequences in which a factor in the personal life of an individual having nothing to do with his job was responsible for a period of good or bad feelings, even if these feelings affected the job" (p. 48). Herzberg's theory does accept situations for other reasons:

> We did accept situations in which some aspect of the job affected personal life in such a way that the effect was a factor in the respondent's feelings about his job. For example, if the company demanded that a man move to a new location in a community in which the man's family was unhappy, this was accepted as a valid sequence of events and was coded under the 'personal life' category. Similarly, family needs for salary and other family problems stemming from the job situation were acceptable (p. 48)

Several codes that came together to form this theme included an abundance of workplace stress, potential burnout, poor self-care, personal safety, fear of termination, and just being perplexed. Two participants, 6 and 8, spoke about "the great resignation" that is going on within student affairs as a sign that people are wanting to get out because "they were treated differently than

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faculty members and that their voices do not carry weight." Having an understanding of the importance of factors of personal life (work/life balance) and modeling that behavior was discussed by Participants 2, 4, 5, and 7.

Due to COVID-19, a focus on the well-being of self and others took on a much larger role in successfully maintaining relationships with staff and other colleagues. As satisfying as it appeared to be to check on the mental and physical well-being of staff and others, these characteristics mostly fall in line with factors in personal life, which are factors of dissatisfaction. Well-being, due to the desire for a positive outcome, falls on the dissatisfaction continuum closer to "no job dissatisfaction."

Theme 4: Transition

The theme of transition was supported by emerged codes that spoke to timing, the work itself, and protocols. The timing codes were highlighted as sub-themes in the chapter 4 results, and focused on the transition before, during, and after remote work from home. In March 2020, universities around the United States were forced to close campuses due to COVID-19. Students, faculty, and staff were sent home to work, teach, and learn from a safe, remote environment. Since March coincides with the traditional spring break period, many individuals were ill-prepared for a swift change in work and learning modalities, including student conduct offices.

While working remotely, some staff were concerned that they had to show leadership that they were working for fear of being furloughed or terminated due to a reduction of work as a result of COVID-19. This experience is directly tied to the factor of job security, another on the

dissatisfaction continuum. With a concern of company instability due to COVID, the concern

for job security was legitimate. With an increase in academic integrity cases, work was not an

issue for some participants and their institutions. When staff learned they had to return to work

during the summer of 2020, some were happy, while others were upset due to the unknown

surrounding COVID-19. In terms of the work itself, SCAs responded well to their

responsibilities. According to Participant 4, there was no dissatisfaction with the work, because

it is the same work. As the spring semester came to a close, the number of academic integrity

cases continued to pour in and grades were also due, causing some faculty members to become

frustrated with SCAs. The additional cases and frustration from faculty began to wear on some

SCAs. According to Participant 8, "We were tired due to many back-to-back meetings and the

escalation of academic cases and increases in faculty consultation was beginning to wear on me

and my team." In Herzberg's study, work conditions lie on the extrinsic, dissatisfied spectrum.

Some work conditions mentioned in Herzberg's study include "the conditions of work, the

amount of work or sequence of events" (p. 48). The response to work conditions aligned with

the findings in Herzberg's study.

<div align="center">**Study Limitations**</div>

This qualitative, phenomenological study presented a few limitations, including a

singular focus on student conduct administrators within the state of Florida, eliminating

perspectives from student conduct administrators in other states throughout the country. The

data that emerged from the state of Florida SCAs may not be transferable to other states. The

omission of some clarifying demographics, to maintain confidentiality, was a limitation that

reduced an opportunity for study comparisons. COVID-19 was a limitation to the study,

affecting such critical components of the research process, such as in-person interviews, site

visits, and scheduling challenges. The number of participants was small to maintain a cohesive

cohort and eliminate broad perspectives that may result from a large group.

A qualitative approach to this study allowed for SCAs to tell their stories of lived

experiences associated with the influences of COVID-19 on job satisfaction and job

dissatisfaction.

Implications for Future Practice

The findings of this study have clear implications for university leadership at institutions

of higher education. Job satisfaction has been linked to worker motivation since the early 1900s

and has a significant connection between the overall job satisfaction of employees and an

organization's productivity (Herzberg, 1959). The findings revealed that employee job

satisfaction was negatively affected when influenced by a crisis, or pandemic, such as COVID-

19. When confronted by findings such as those in this study, university leadership should

concern themselves with addressing the issues to ensure if something similar to COVID-19 shuts

down the institution, they will be better positioned to handle it.

University leadership should consider adding pandemic to their Emergency Operating

Plans. In the state of Florida, most higher education institutions have a plan to address an

approaching hurricane and the possibility of being away from campus for a few days.

Unfortunately, there was a lack of preparation for COVID-19, and the transition to remote

learning took non-essential employees away from campus for at least three months. What are

institutions doing to ensure their employees have the technology to work remotely? All

employees may not own a laptop or have access to internet services.

When considering policy development, student conduct administrators must be included

in the conversions. The SCAs are the subject matter experts hired to uphold the university's

moral and ethical codes, the institution's academic integrity policies, and, in some instances,

federal laws tied to Title IX, Jeanne Clery Act, the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Community

Act, and Due Process, to name a few. Findings in the current study suggested the inclusion of

staff in decision-making may create buy-in from those responsible for enforcing the policy.

When institutions developed what could have been considered as punitive COVID-19 conduct

protocol for students, sending students away for violating policies sent the wrong message to

students, faculty, staff, parents, and the community. Not having the proper staff in the leadership

meetings placed the institutions in precarious positions that staff was required to maneuver.

SCAs were enforcing COVID-19 policies that were fundamentally and philosophically incorrect

and not having any input or scrutiny in the development of the policies led to detrimental effects

on the morale for some. One of the Participants asked, "What would have happened if 50% of

the student population decided they were not going to follow the COVID protocols? What

would be the university's response; the suspension of ½ of the student body?"

On a more positive note, COVID-19 proved that the work conditions can be improved to

reduce job dissatisfaction. The work of some departments can be done remotely and on par with

the quality of work done in the office. University leadership should consider opportunities for

some of their staff to work from home or develop a hybrid model that incorporates some work in the office and some work at home.

The influences of COVID-19 were demoralizing on society, and its reach was so extensive that, in 2021 the concept of the "*Great Resignation*" rose to the surface. Anthony Klotz, a professor at Texas A&M University coined the term "*Great Resignation*," and stated that, "When there's uncertainty, people tend to stay put (in their jobs), so there are pent-up resignations that didn't happen over the past year" (Cohen, 2021). In higher education, the assumption is that the resignations were tied to fears of COVID-19, long-lasting job dissatisfaction, and/or stressful work environments with meager salaries. These factors align with the dissatisfiers of Herzberg's (1959) Motivation-Hygiene theory. To combat the desire for employees to leave, university leadership should consider ways to recognize, compliment, and reward them for persevering through uncertain times, maintaining the integrity of university, and for doing an all-around good job. The sentiments would mean more if the administration would visit with employees during a divisional meeting or an employee recognition event.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study utilized a qualitative research design that explored the lived experiences of nine student conduct administrators and their job satisfaction as influenced by COVID-19. The results of the study, while significant, leaves open possibilities for future research. Although the data retrieved from the current study on the 9 participants was rich and robust, and considered an acceptable sample size by Creswell (2013), expanding the number of participants would yield a more complete, representative data profile of SCAs throughout the state of Florida. Some

research has already been conducted on job satisfaction of SCAs, particularly chief student conduct officers and their intent to stay or leave the position. In her quantitative study, Nagel-Bennett (2010) found an overwhelming majority (86.4%) of respondents were satisfied to a degree with their positions, while those who intended to stay in their positions had a significantly higher job satisfaction than those who intended to leave. These results challenge Herzberg's theory on dissatisfiers, and it is plain to see when you have statistics.   Future research, utilizing quantitative methods and a survey instrument to gather data would work well for this study on job satisfaction. The surveys would also allow for a comparison to larger and varied populations outside the state of Florida. A mixed-methods approach, utilizing both face-to-face interviews, as well as a survey instrument, may yield the most comprehensive data collection for job satisfaction.

Conclusion

Student behavior, in the United States, has been a concern for leadership since the founding of colleges and universities. Throughout the years, the creation of professional staff positions, like the deans of men and women, was created and charged with oversight of students' behavior, acting *in loco parentis*. Today, student conduct administrators (SCAs) maintain ethical, academic, and social integrity by providing oversight and enforcement of an institution's codes of student conduct.   In times of crisis, such as with COVID-19, SCAs are expected to remain calm and maintain normal operations. These expectations proved to be a bit daunting during the COVID-19 pandemic, and SCAs were also experiencing hardships. The transition of

colleges and universities to remote instruction and work began a period of work-related challenges and frustration that affected levels of job satisfaction within the SCA.

This qualitative, phenomenological study explored the influences of COVID-19 on the job satisfaction of nine student conduct administrators at institutions of higher education within the state of Florida. Herzberg's (1959) Motivation-Hygiene theory served as the theoretical foundation for this study. Herzberg posited that workplace satisfaction lies on two spectrums, job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. Each spectrum is independent of the other and are not opposites. The opposite of job satisfaction is no job satisfaction. The opposite of job dissatisfaction is no job dissatisfaction. The job satisfaction spectrum has motivating factors that span the spectrum from job satisfaction to no job satisfaction. Conversely, job dissatisfaction has hygiene factors that span the length of the spectrum from job dissatisfaction to no job dissatisfaction. This study explored the SCA lived experiences and the results of the study showed that with all the pressures associated with the job, SCAs were overall satisfied with their job, even in the face of COVID-19. However, conflicting satisfaction results for administrative policies and factors for work-life speak to the diversity of the participant pool.

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Appendix A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Good morning (afternoon). My name is Kenneth Maddox. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. With your permission, I will be audio and video recording our dialogue. The purpose of recording is to get all the details while still being able to give you my full attention. All of your comments will remain confidential. I will be composing a report which will contain all participants' comments without any reference to the individual.

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to discuss how COVID-19 influences job satisfaction of student conduct administrators at institutions of higher education in the state of Florida. In 1959, Fredrick Herzberg and others developed the motivation-hygiene theory that identified factors termed motivators that contribute to job satisfaction: these factors include achievement, growth, advancement, recognition, responsibility, and the work itself. They also identified hygiene factors that affect job dissatisfaction: these factors include administrative policies, work/life balance, compensation, job security, supervision, job status, relationships with colleagues, and working conditions.

There are no right or wrong, desirable or undesirable answers. I would like for you to feel comfortable with saying what you really think and how you feel.

I do have some housekeeping items before we begin with the interview questions.

Demographics

What is your Gender?

What is your highest degree earned?

Number of years of experience in Student Affairs?

Number of years of experience in Student Conduct?

Current Position Level: Entry-Level, Mid-Level, Senior- Dean, Vice President, Other (please specify)

What is your institution type? (Example: Private 4-year, Public 4-year Community College)

What is the total enrollment at your institution?

Under 5,000;   5001 – 9,999; 10,000 - 19,999; Over 20,000

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What was your experience like leading through COVID-19?

    a. How did these experiences affect your job satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction?

2. What was the process like when developing COVID-19 conduct protocol?

3. What lessons did you learn during COVID-19?

    a. Where did the lessons materialize from?

4. What suggestions do you have for the administration to address COVID-19 in the future?

5. What advice do you recommend for future student conduct administrators leading during a pandemic, such as COVID-19?

6. Is there anything else you would like to contribute to this study?

Appendix C

SEU IRB APPROVAL

SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

DATE:	September 9th, 2021
TO:	Janet Deck, Kenneth Maddox
FROM:	SEU IRB
PROTOCOL TITLE:	The Effects of Covid-19 on the Job Satisfaction of Student Conduct Administrators at Institutions of Higher Education in the State of Florida
FUNDING SOURCE:	NONE
PROTOCOL NUMBER:	21 ED 25
APPROVAL PERIOD:	Approval Date: September 9th, 2021, Expiration Date: September 8th, 2022

Dear Investigator(s),

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human subjects has reviewed the protocol entitled, The Effects of Covid-19 on the Job Satisfaction of Student Conduct Administrators at Institutions of Higher Education in the State of Florida. The project has been approved for the procedures and subjects described in the protocol.

Any changes require approval before they can be implemented as part of your study. If your study requires any changes, the proposed modifications will need to be submitted in the form of an amendment request to the IRB to include the following:

- Description of proposed revisions;
- *If applicable,* any new or revised materials;
- *If applicable,* updated letters of approval from cooperating institutions

If there are any adverse events and/or any unanticipated problems during your study, you must notify the IRB within 24 hours of the event or problem.

At present time, there is no need for further action on your part with the IRB. This approval is issued under Southeastern University's Federal Wide Assurance 00006943 with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP). If you have any questions regarding your obligations under the IRB's Assurance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Rustin Lloyd
Chair, Institutional Review Board
irb@seu.edu

Appendix D

REQUEST TO STUDY FLORIDA ASCA MEMBERSHIP

Dear Kenneth,

On behalf of the research committee, I thank you for your submission to request to study the Florida ASCA membership. Below are the steps towards approval:

1) I will send a notice to the research committee to see who can evaluate your proposal in a timely manner.
2) Those who are available will have about one week to review the proposal.
3) I will summarize the reviews into a response for you, which will either issue an approval, issue a conditional approval, issue a revise and resubmit, or deny the application.

Please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or email with any questions.
Valerie Glassman, Ed.D.
ASCA Research Committee Chair

APPROVAL TO STUDY ASCA MEMBERSHIP

From: **Valerie Glassman**
Date: Sat, Oct 2, 2021 at 2:17 PM
Subject: Re: Request to Study the Membership
To: Maddox, Kenneth
Cc: Christine Simone

Dear Kenneth -

Thanks for your submission. The research committee has granted you an approval to study the membership. I am copying Christine Simone, ASCA's Deputy Director, who will assist you in next steps. Below you will find some comments from the reviewers.

With best wishes,
Valerie

- COVID has added a lot to the plate of conduct administrators. I think this is a great opportunity to begin to document our lived experiences.
- I think this is a low risk research project to promote to ASCA membership.
- The proposal is lacking sufficient information on how the 6-8 participants will be selected from the larger pool who fill out the interest survey. Will the study focus primarily on entry, mid, or senior conduct officers? Will it focus on public or private employees? Will social identities such as gender and race be considered? With such a small sample size, it would seem important to focus on specific characteristics?
- While this is a gap in the literature, not all gaps are relevant or important. I think this study could provide helpful, important information, but this proposal could be strengthened by centering these contributions rather than the literature gap.
- I would like to see more informed consent information in the body of the email rather than in the attached form.

CALL FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

ASCA
Association for Student Conduct Administration

Call for Research Participants:
Effects of COVID-19 on Job Satisfaction of
Student Conduct Administrators

Dear Kenneth,

My name is Kenneth Maddox, and I am a doctoral student in the Organizational Leadership program at Southeastern University (Lakeland, Florida). I am currently working on my dissertation titled "THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON THE JOB SATISFACTION OF STUDENT CONDUCT ADMINISTRATORS AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA."

The purpose of this phenomenological study addresses a gap in the literature regarding job satisfaction of student conduct administrators at institutions of higher education in the state of Florida; following the outbreak of COVID-19. For this study, the role of administrator is any entry, mid, or senior-level conduct officer at your respective institution.

This study may benefit ASCA membership in several ways: a) by giving voice to the professional membership who are affected by the same phenomenon; COVID-19. b) Provide insight into factors that lead to job satisfaction when dealing with a crisis such as COVID-19. c) With a focus on ASCA-Florida membership, this study will provide an avenue for future research of ASCA membership in other states, regions, and countries. The study has received Human Subjects and Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from Southeastern University.

Because you serve as a student conduct administrator, within higher education in the state of Florida, your input is valuable to this study. Your participation in this research will aid institutions in addressing the needs of personnel when handling future crises. Each selected participant will take part in an interview process that should last approximately 30-45 minutes.

All interview results will be kept confidential, and no one's name will be mentioned in the published dissertation.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please contact me by email at **klmaddox@seu.edu**. We will then coordinate logistics such as consent and interview date and time. Thank you for time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Maddox, Ed.D Candidate

SEU Student

Volunteer to Participate and/or Contact Researcher

FINAL CALL FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

ASCA
Association for Student Conduct Administration

Final Call for Research Participants:
Effects of COVID-19 on Job Satisfaction of
Student Conduct Administrators

Dear Kenneth,

My name is Kenneth Maddox, and I am a doctoral student in the Organizational Leadership program at Southeastern University (Lakeland, Florida). I am currently working on my dissertation titled "THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON THE JOB SATISFACTION OF STUDENT CONDUCT ADMINISTRATORS AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA."

The purpose of this phenomenological study addresses a gap in the literature regarding job satisfaction of student conduct administrators at institutions of higher education in the state of Florida; following the outbreak of COVID-19. For this study, the role of administrator is any entry, mid, or senior-level conduct officer at your respective institution.

This study may benefit ASCA membership in several ways: a) by giving voice to the professional membership who are affected by the same phenomenon; COVID-19. b) Provide insight into factors that lead to job satisfaction when dealing with a crisis such as COVID-19. c) With a focus on ASCA-Florida membership, this study will provide an avenue for future research of ASCA membership in other states, regions, and countries. The study has received Human Subjects and Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from Southeastern University.

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All interview results will be kept confidential, and no one's name will be mentioned in the published dissertation.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please contact me by email at **klmaddox@seu.edu**. We will then coordinate logistics such as consent and interview date and time. Thank you for time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Maddox, Ed.D Candidate

SEU Student

Volunteer to Participate and/or Contact Researcher

SEU ADULT CONSENT FORM

ADULT CONSENT FORM

SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

PROJECT TITLE:
THE INFLUENCE OF COVID-19 ON THE JOB SATISFACTION OF STUDENT CONDUCT
ADMINISTRATORS AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA

INVESTIGATORS:
Dr. Janet Deck, EdD, principal investigator
Kenneth L. Maddox, student investigator

PURPOSE:
The purpose of this phenomenological study will be to explore the influence of Covid-19 on the
job satisfaction of student conduct administrators at institutions of higher education in the state
of Florida.

PROCEDURES:
Participants of this phenomenological study will complete a document requesting the following
demographic information: gender, level of experience (entry, mid, senior), higher education
attainment, years of experience in student conduct, and years of experience in higher education.
Participants will be asked seven open-ended questions; two of which are sub-questions. All
interviews will be conducted through the Zoom platform and will last approximately 30-45
minutes. Interviews will be recorded through Zoom and Otter AI.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION:
There are no known risks associated with this project which are greater than those ordinarily
encountered in daily life.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION:
Your participation in this study may help to educate fellow student conduct administrators when
dealing with a future crisis such as COVID-19.

CONFIDENTIALITY:
The records of this study will be kept private and stored on a password-protected laptop, on an
encrypted file. The principal investigator and student investigator are the only ones with access
to the data.

Data will be permanently destroyed three years after the completion of the study. Audio/Video
files will be transcribed immediately following the interview and destroyed within five days
following the interview. Participants will not be directly identified. Pseudonyms will be utilized
to maintain the anonymity of each participant.

Confidentiality will be maintained except under specified conditions required by law. For
example, current Florida law requires that any ongoing child abuse (including sexual abuse,

physical abuse, and neglect) of a minor must be reported to state officials. In addition, if an individual reports that he/she intends to harm him/herself or others, legal and professional standards require that the individual must be kept from harm, even if confidentiality must be broken. Finally, confidentiality could be broken if materials from this study were subpoenaed by a court of law.

COMPENSATION:
Gratitude in the form of *Thank You* is the compensation offered for your participation in this study.

CONTACTS:
If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact the following individuals.

Kenneth Maddox, Student Investigator
klmaddox@seu.edu
931.249.8511

Dr. Janet Deck, Principal Investigator
jldeck@seu.edu

SEU Institutional Review Board
irb@seu.edu

PARTICIPANT RIGHTS:
I understand that my participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time, without penalty.

CONSENT DOCUMENTATION
I have been fully informed about the procedures listed here. I am aware of what I will be asked to do and of the benefits of my participation. I also understand the following statements: I affirm that I am 18 years of age or older.

I have read and fully understand this consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy of this form will be given to me. I hereby give permission for my participation in this study.

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

I certify that I have personally explained this document before requesting that the participant sign it.

_____   _____
Signature of Researcher   Date

Appendix I

TABLE 1: HERZBERG'S MOTIVATION-HYGIENE THEORY

Motivation-Hygiene Theory

Intrinsic (Satisfiers) **Motivators Factors**	**Extrinsic (Dissatisfiers)** **Hygiene Factor**
Achievement	Company Policies and Administration
Recognition	Supervision
The Work Itself	Relationship with Peers
Responsibility	Work Conditions
Advancement	Salary
Growth	Status
	Factors in Personal Life
	Job Security
Job Satisfaction ← → No Job Satisfaction	No Job Dissatisfaction ← → Job Dissatisfaction

Appendix J

TABLE 2: PARTICIPANT DETAILS

Participant Details

Participant Number	Years of Conduct Experience	Highest Level of Education	Institution Classification	Position Level
Participant 1	5 – 9 Years	Doctoral	Public Univ.	Mid-Level
Participant 2	5 – 9 Years	Masters	Private Univ.	Mid-Level
Participant 3	15 – 19 Years	Masters	Private Univ.	Senior Level
Participant 4	15 -19 Years	Masters	Public Univ.	Senior Level
Participant 5	1 – 5 Years	Masters	Public Univ.	Entry-Level
Participant 6	5 – 9 Years	Masters	Community College	Senior Level
Participant 7	3+ Years	Doctoral	Public Univ.	Senior Level
Participant 8	20+ Years	Masters	Public Univ.	Mid-Level
Participant 9	10 – 14 Years	Masters	Community College	Mid-Level