

THE IMPACT OF DOWNSIZING ON SURVIVORS' CAREER DEVELOPMENT:

A TEST OF SUPER'S THEORY

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The present study compared the career development concerns and other vocationally relevant variables of employees of organizations who have and have not engaged in downsizing within a one year timeframe. The sample consisted of 162 participants, 72 layoff survivors (those who remained in an organization after its downsizing) and 92 non-survivors (employees in organizations who have not downsized within 12 months). Significant results were found that differentiated the career related experiences of participants in the survivors group, survivors from non-survivors, and participants in general regardless of survivorship status. In general, results indicated that non-survivors reported greater job satisfaction and job security than layoff survivors, that being married with children may increase job satisfaction, and social support may buffer the grief reactions that survivors have to the loss of their co-worker friends. Furthermore, Super's age-associated stages within the Life-Span, Life-Space Theory were moderately upheld in the sample, especially for the Exploration stage. However, younger workers demonstrated more Maintenance concerns that would be predicted by the theory. A discussion of the relevant literature is included as well as possible explanations of the results, small sample size, and implications for future research.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Attempting to remain competitive in this global market, many organizations have turned to downsizing to cut costs and stay afloat. While the obvious victims of these situations are those who lose their jobs, another set of victims are left behind - the layoff survivors. Researchers have explored various aspects of the consequences survivors experience in the aftermath of the layoff including their work production, organizational commitment, and emotional experiences and reactions. The importance of looking at survivors as victims in the event of a layoff parallels the attention given to assessing the consequences of caregivers who have survived the death of a loved one with HIV (e.g. Goodkin et al., 2001). Despite the array of variables that have been addressed with regard to the consequences of surviving a layoff, the career development of these survivors in the post-layoff period is largely ignored. This proposal is an attempt to bridge this gap by exploring the career development of layoff survivors through the lens of Super's Life-Span, Life-Space theory (Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996). Research on the influences on the career development of layoff survivors serves various purposes for the researcher, practitioner, survivor, and downsizing organizations alike. Results have the potential to assist vocational counselors in better serving the needs of such survivors and, by informing organizations about survivors' concerns about their careers and other vocationally related experiences, may positively impact employees' productivity and retention serving to strengthen the organizations' bottom line.

Super's Life-Span, Life-Space Theory of Career Development

Super's Life-Span, Life-Space theory is the accumulation of over sixty years of research and reflection and is one of the most well known and respected conceptualizations of career

development over the life course (Salmone, 1996). Other developmental theories of career development have been proposed, but arguably none have stood the test of time and rigorous research that Super's has largely due to he and his colleagues' continued research and writings that served to update and refine the theory. For example, Roe's Personality Theory of Career Choice (Roe, 1957), although one of the first theories to explore underlying influences on career choice, has little influence over contemporary vocational research largely due to its structural ambiguities and methodological weaknesses contained in studies attempting to validate the theory (Osipow & Fitzgerald, 1996). On the other hand, Gottfredson's Developmental Theory of Occupational Circumstance and Compromise (Gottfredson, 1981) is a relatively new theory and, as such, is lacking the depth and breadth of research in support of it enjoyed by Super's theory. In addition, many studies seeking to validate Gottfredson's theory have been unpublished and lead to inconclusive and conflicting results (Osipow & Fitzgerald, 1996). Finally, Gottfredson gives relatively little attention to the adult worker, primarily focusing on the influence child and adolescent development has on vocational choice.

The Life-Span, Life-Space vocational theory also stands out from other theories in its focus on career development beyond the adolescent years. In this respect, Osipow & Fitzgerald (1996) argue that most vocational theories concentrate on the initial career selection/implementation process that usually takes place in one's early to mid-twenties, likely reflecting the emphasis western social institutions place on this initial career selection. Although these theories typically discuss early environmental and internal influences on this initial selection, Osipow & Fitzgerald note that they fail to conceptualize how these and other influences affect career development beyond the early adult years, despite the fact that the majority of career related occurrences take place in mid to late adulthood . Super's

developmental theory was one of the first and most enduring theories that attempted to address career development from birth through death. His life-span approach spurred the work of later career developmental researchers, such as Gottfredson (1981), but arguably remains the cornerstone of career development theories.

Life-Span, Life-Space Stages and Developmental Tasks

Harris-Bowlsbey (1984) conceptualized Super's broad vocational theory as encompassing three facets: (a) self-concept development, (b) defining the term "career", and (c) career related stages and developmental tasks. For the purpose of this project, the last will be the focus. The Life-Span, Life Space theory asserts that as people progress through life, they transition in and out of career related life stages. Furthermore, the life cycle imposes certain career related tasks on people at various points in time that are loosely associated with these stages. Although these stages and developmental tasks have been refined over Super's sixty years of writings, the following are adapted from some of his latest works (Super, 1990; Super et al., 1996).

Birth. As an infant develops into preschoolhood, he or she is faced with the tasks of developing *curiosities, fantasies, and early interests*. Although these early curiosities, fantasies, and interests will doubtfully be overtly related to later career interests, they provide the impetus for children to explore themselves and their environment and serve as the foundation for later learning.

Growth. When children reach early school age and grow into their preteen years, their mastery of four developmental tasks challenges them to develop an awareness of the control they have in their own life related to future work. As children reach their early teens, they acquire the ability to comprehend the long-term nature of time. This enables them to master the task of

career concern in which they become aware of and concerned about their career futures. This stage also challenges them to develop increasing *control* over their lives, making their own decisions and engaging in behaviors on their own accord. Through this early independence, they develop *conviction*, or a sense of assurance in their abilities to think for themselves and achieve goals they set for themselves. As a result, they are able to master the fourth task of *competence*. As children experience success and become aware of their futures, they are more motivated to achieve and develop further work related abilities, habits, and attitudes.

Exploration. The Exploration stage involves deciding on an occupation. This stage involves three tasks- Crystallizing, Specifying, and Implementing. When *crystallizing*, the person is faced with determining what field and level of work he or she is interested in, whereas, during the *specifying* task, the individual selects and commits to a chosen occupation. Finally, when *implementing* the individual makes plans related to attaining a position in the chosen career and carries them out.

Establishment. The Establishment stage challenges the worker to obtain a secure job within the occupation he or she has selected. Again, there are three developmental tasks to master within this stage- Stabilization, Consolidating, and Advancing. *Stabilization* requires the individual to settle down, support oneself, and make maximum use of one's abilities and interests. By stabilizing, the person is making one's position in an organization or field secure by assimilating to its culture and performing the job well. Establishing status within one's occupation is the goal of the *consolidating* task, and moving up within one's career reflects the challenge of the *advancing* task. When consolidating, the individual is maintaining the progress established through stabilization by continuing to perform well and cultivate meaningful work

relationships. Whereas, when advancing, one is taking action that will likely result in moving upward in the field or organization.

Maintenance. During this fifth stage, one is concerned with preserving his or her status and security in the chosen occupation, provided the choice has been made to remain in the occupation for the next several years. The three developmental tasks of this stage (Holding, Updating, and Innovating) reflect the notion that in order to maintain one's position, one is often required to increase his or her skill set and outpace those who may be competing for the same job. The *holding* task involves holding on to or improving one's position when faced with those competing for the same job. When *updating* (sometimes referred to as "keeping up"), one is concerned with staying current with knowledge and advancements in the chosen field. Finally, *innovating* centers around the need or expectation that one will make unique contributions to the field. When an individual has decided to "maintain", but fails to master the associated developmental tasks, they may appear to have "plateaued" and are unable to continue growing and developing in their career once a certain position has been achieved.

Disengagement. Workers in the Disengagement stage demonstrate the desire or need to transition from active worker to retiree. Workers thinking about retiring or nearing the traditional retirement age often experience decreased emotional and physical energy for work related activity, a characteristic of the *decelerating* task. Here the worker begins to mentally disengage from work tasks and slows down the pace of his or her work, which can manifest itself in delegating tasks to younger workers, being less emotionally invested in one's work, and being more selective in the work one takes on. *Retirement planning* involves planning for and anticipating one's retirement, where *retirement living* involves the actual act of retirement, making up the two final tasks of the stage.

Age Associated Transitions within Super's Developmental Stages

Tracing the evolution of Super's theory, one notices distinct changes in his writings related to these stages and tasks. In particular, his early writings discussed the rigidity of the stages, an idea clearly visible in his discussion of the ten propositions describing his theory. Although not included in his original propositions (1953), his 1957 (Super & Bachrach) revision of these propositions state that one's career development does not cease once one reaches adulthood, and it is generally irreversible, orderly, patterned, and predictable. Accordingly, Super initially assigned age ranges to each of these stages. These associated ages changed slightly depending on the writing, but in general, they were as follows: (a) Birth, birth–3 yrs., (b) Growth, 4 yrs.-13 yrs., (c) Exploration, 14 yrs.-24 yrs., (d) Establishment, 25 yrs.-44 yrs., (e) Maintenance, 45 yrs.-65 yrs., and (f) Disengagement, 65 yrs. and older.

This rigidity seemed to flex when he later added what appear to be two different types of “recycling” notions to his theory. The first involves a “minicycle” recycling through the final five stages (all but Birth) as the individual transitions from one stage to the next (Super et al., 1996). For example, as the individual transitions from Growth into Exploration, she may be *disengaging* from adolescent activities (e.g. spending less time playing sports), *maintaining* her occupational choice by attempting to secure a position, *establishing* her place in the organization by settling into the position, *exploring* by seeking out opportunities to do the work they have chosen, and experiencing *growth* by learning how to relate to others within her department, organization, and or field.

The second type of recycling occurs when a person actually recycles through parts of the “maxicycle” of stages and their associated developmental tasks in response to internal and external circumstances. Whereas the minicycle refers to the repetition of the stages as one

progresses through each stage to the next, the maxicycle is the term Super gave to the whole life-stage process. Here Super acknowledged that although people within the age ranges may certainly find themselves with the assigned stage concerns, this does not necessarily have to be the case (Super, Osborne, Walsh, Brown, & Niles, 1992). People are generally more susceptible to recycling through the Exploration, Establishment, and Maintenance stages of the maxicycle, as may be the case when one switches career fields. Accordingly, Super hypothesized that the Disengagement stage and associated substages may be more highly related to age than others (Super, Thompson, & Lindeman, 1988), as is likely the case with the Birth and Growth stages.

Not only is it possible for workers to recycle through stages of the maxicycle, Super also acknowledged that a person can have concerns related to many stages and developmental tasks simultaneously. For example, a person can have Establishment and Maintenance concerns at the same time if she is concerned with increasing her skill set within her profession to increase her marketability as she considers applying at other, more established or prestigious companies within her field.

Career Maturity vs. Adaptability

In his conceptualizations of adult career development, Super differentiated between career adaptability and career maturity, the latter a central construct in adolescent career development. Super coined the term career maturity as defining the adolescent's stage of vocational development and readiness to make an occupational choice (Super, 1955). The term reflects the idea that vocational maturity typically increases as the adolescent ages, not due to biological factors, but rather to social pressures and expectations (Super et al., 1996). However, the construct of career maturity does not fit the adult vocational development experience. Through his experiences with the Career Pattern Study, Super determined that career

development does not cease once one chooses a career, but rather adults continue to be challenged with vocationally related developmental tasks (Halpin, Ralph, & Halpin, 1990). However, he postulated that adults do not tackle these tasks in the linear fashion that adolescents tend to. Therefore career maturity seemed an inappropriate name for this adult experience as it fails to reflect the recycling that adults encounter through the stages in response to time and work experiences.

In this light, Super and colleagues redefined the idea of adult career maturity *career adaptability*, which was thought to better recognize that adult career development is not a linear process, but rather can vary among individuals (Super et al., 1992). Specifically, career adaptability, or planfulness, refers to the possession of the attitudes and information needed to cope with changing work and working conditions (Super et al., 1988). Furthermore, such planfulness reflects the adult's ability to cope with developmental tasks (Super et al., 1992) and to think ahead about one's work/working life. (Super et al., 1988). Therefore, the more prepared a person is to tackle developmental tasks and to cope with changing work related situations, the more career adaptability one has. Given these explanations, it is clear that the impetus for career adaptation is no longer expectations from family and teachers, but rather environmental changes in work, working conditions (Super et al., 1996), and individual intrinsic needs and desires.

What situations would require a person to have high career adaptability or prompt recycling through the maxicycle? Super hypothesized that internal or external circumstances could trigger recycling, and environmental changes in work or working conditions require career adaptability. Because changes in working conditions and internal/external circumstances are not mutually exclusive (i.e. changes in external circumstances could change working conditions; changes in working conditions could change internal circumstances), it seems realistic to assume

that those circumstances that trigger recycling may also require career adaptability. Furthermore, it seems reasonable to hypothesize that internal or external circumstances, or pressures, also require adaptability as such internal pressures undoubtedly affect aspects of one's work. Murphy and Burck (1976) termed such internal pressures "common inner experiences" and include such things as change in values, change in self-esteem, questioning life's meaning, and general stock-taking. Such inner experiences may result in perceiving one's current work as boring or insignificant, for example. External circumstances that may trigger recycling and require adaptability may include: (a) a life changing event such as divorce, birth of a child, marriage, or a near death experience, (b) the loss of one's job by being fired or laid off, or (c) witnessing others losing their jobs in one's own organization as such an experience may trigger feelings of job insecurity.

Because the survivorship experience qualifies as an impetus for recycling, it makes sense to conceptualize this phenomenon via Super's theory. As such, survivorship has the potential to spawn career related concerns for survivors that may not have been an issue prior to their organization's downsizing. Conceptualizing these career related concerns via Super's theory may provide a valid way to understand survivors' career related experiences. Furthermore, no other widely used theory of which the author is aware focuses on adult career development to the extent that Super does and would therefore be appropriate to study these vocationally relevant consequences. However, life-span theory in the human development literature seems to parallel Super's later writings in the sense that it acknowledges that people continue to manage their careers over the life-span and that career changes or career related events do not necessarily coincide with a particular age within a certain stage (Sterns & Gray, 1998).

An Overview of Downsizing Research Focused on Career Related Outcomes

Studies of the effects of downsizing on career related consequences appear to be focused solely on the layoff victims (those who lose their jobs due to downsizing). Such research has assessed: (a) the characteristics of those who find reemployment proceeding a layoff (Couch, 1998; Spalter-Roth & Deitch, 1999; Wanberg, Watt, Rumsey, 1996), (b) the difference in pay between victims' jobs they were laid off from and their new employment positions (Broman, Hamilton, Hoffman, & Mavaddat, 1995; Couch, 1998; Schneer & Reitman, 1997), (c) reemployment satisfaction of layoff victims (Leana & Feldman, 1995; Wanberg, 1995), (d) health effects of reemployment (Gallo, Bradley, Siegel, & Kasl, 2000; Leana & Feldman, 1995; Wanberg, 1995), and (e) how victims' means of coping with being unemployed facilitated or hindered their job search efforts and satisfaction in subsequent employment (Doster, 1997). Despite this breadth of research on victims, no research of which the author is aware has specifically looked at the effects of downsizing on the career development of the survivors. In this study, survivors' career development refers to the concerns participants express regarding their careers and other vocationally relevant variables.

Effects of Downsizing on Layoff Survivors

Although there is little to no research directly assessing the career development related issues of survivors, since the economic downturn of the United States' economy of the late 1980's, researchers have been assessing various survivorship experiences in the aftermath of a layoff. An overview of the literature demonstrates the emergence of at least four main areas of focus: (a) survivors' job satisfaction/involvement, (b) survivors' perceptions of job insecurity, (c) survivors' job performance, and (d) survivors' perceptions of procedural justice relating to the way the layoffs were handled. Other less studied issues include survivor guilt (Brockner et al.,

1986) and other emotional consequences of survivorship (Noer, 1993). Although researchers have not directly assessed the bereavement reactions of layoff survivors, a comparison of the bereavement and layoff survivor literature suggests that layoff survivors may also experience grief in response to the loss of their co-workers. The consideration of survivors' bereavement experiences is important in that the degree of negative grief experienced by survivors may impact the nature of their career concerns and recycling tendencies in the aftermath of a layoff.

Job Satisfaction/Involvement

Studies have demonstrated that the survivorship experience is associated with changes in job satisfaction and job involvement. Many survivors experience decreased satisfaction and/or involvement in their jobs after the downsizing. (Brockner, Grover, & Blonder, 1988; Brockner, DeWitt, Grover, & Reed, 1990). Furthermore, this is often coupled with increased absenteeism and turnover intention (Brockner, Grover, Reed, DeWitt, & O'Malley, 1987; Brockner et al., 1990).

Many survivors report a perception of fewer promotional opportunities post-downsizing, which could also affect survivors' satisfaction with their job. On one hand, this makes sense given the idea that those who were laid off would not be replaced due to the cost-saving intentions of the layoffs. This sentiment has been echoed in various survivor populations (Citrome, 1997; London, 1987). However, some evidence suggests that when victims performed similar roles/functions in the organization as survivors, survivors perceive their promotional opportunities as increasing due to the decreased competition for any available promotions (Shah, 2000). Combined, these results may suggest that, in the shorter term, survivors may perceive themselves as having few promotional opportunities. However, as the company recovers and it begins to fill positions, survivors may face less internal competition for job openings.

Another variable that may contribute to decreases in job satisfaction might include the loss of friends through the downsizing efforts. Shah (2000) reported that those survivors whose friends were laid off experienced a greater negative reaction to the layoffs than those whose friends were not let go. Furthermore, these survivors did not replace these friendships with fellow survivors, thus experiencing a permanent loss in their social structure at work.

However, some survivors report being more satisfied with their work after the layoff (Brockner, Grover, Reed, & DeWitt, 1992). This is usually a product of the work redistribution that accompanies layoffs. When employees are let go, especially in large numbers, those who remain are often required to take on the victims' workloads. For some survivors, this includes work they found more interesting and satisfying than their pre-layoff responsibilities. However, this redistribution often results in an increased workload for survivors (Citrome, 1997), and some survivors volunteer to take on work they know they will not enjoy in efforts to appear valuable to the company (Dunlap, 1994). These efforts are attempts to increase survivors' perceptions of job security in a time when they often fear they may be the next to go.

Job Insecurity

Due to the nature of the circumstances that place employees into the category of "survivor," it is not surprising that many survivors perceive their jobs to be at risk. Furthermore, Corum (1996) reported that job insecurity levels of white-collar telecommunication survivors positively correlated with stress levels. Not surprisingly, 100% of these employees had looked for work elsewhere since the layoffs occurred. Job searching as a reaction to perceptions of job insecurity is a control-oriented coping mechanism practiced by many survivors (Armstrong-Stassen, 1994). When survivors feel that the security of their present job is in jeopardy due to no fault of their own, many attempt to gain some sense of personal control over the situation by

taking action in the form of looking for new employment. However, when survivors feel they have at least some control over their job security, job insecurity can be moderated by self-affirmation practices (Petzall, Parker, & Stoeberl, 2000). If given the opportunity to reflect on areas of their life where they feel competent and worthy, survivors feel more confident overall, which influences their confidence in their ability to keep their jobs.

Work Performance

Being a survivor can also impact one's work performance. The uncertainty and insecurity that often pervades the work environment during times of layoffs can interfere with one's concentration and attitude towards the importance or worth of their job output. Many survivors report that it is more difficult to get work done in a post-layoff environment (Corum, 1996). When survivors perceive the layoffs as random (no clear explanation why one person was laid off over another), the quantity of work has been shown to increase but the quality of the work suffers (Brockner et al., 1986; Probst, 2002). However, some evidence suggests that, through the redistribution of work, if one's work becomes more interesting and intrinsically satisfying, survivors experience an increase in work effort (Brockner et al., 1992). Work effort also increases for survivors with a strong economic need to work when they experience moderate levels of job insecurity (Brockner et al., 1992). Here work effort decreases when survivors feel very secure in their jobs, or conversely, very insecure where presumably they believe that no amount or quality of work is going to increase their chances of keeping their job.

Perceptions of Procedural Justice

Researchers often look at procedural justice explanations for the changes in attitude, effort, and performance survivors experience after downsizing. In this case, procedural justice refers to the perceptions individuals have regarding the fairness of how decisions are made

during the downsizing process (Konovsky & Brockner, 1993). For many survivors, a positive correlation exists between their perceptions of procedural justice and their commitment to the organization (Brockner et al., 1994; Verdi, 1996). Furthermore, the survivors who are most committed prior to the layoff, but believe the organization's layoff related actions were unfair, experience the most negative reactions in the layoff aftermath (Brockner & Tyler, 1992). Low perceptions of fairness can also be coupled with decreased work effort and becoming withdrawn from the organization and its goals (Brockner, 1990). Given this evidence, it seems important to consider how survivors may perceive the fairness of the decisions made and the actions taken by upper management during downsizing efforts.

Although the literature generally does not indicate a gender difference in procedural justice, it seems reasonable to hypothesize that females may have a tendency to perceive the layoffs as less just than would their male co-workers. Gilligan (1982) suggests that whereas males tend to base their perception on even-handed justice, females consider the obligations of compassionate caring and responsibility to others when assessing that something is moral or just. As most business decisions are based on the bottom-line, financial consequences, it may be the case that males are more likely to conclude that decisions about who was laid off were made simply to put the company in a better financial position, and thus the decisions were fair. However, women may be more apt to assess how well the laid-off employees were taken care of as they may be more likely to view such care-taking as the employer's responsibility.

Bereavement Reactions to the Loss of Co-workers

Due to the nature of the role "survivor," survivors inevitably experience the loss of relationships with the layoff victims. Co-workers who were laid off are no longer seen at work on a regular basis, and, quite likely, contact with these victims significantly decreases if not

diminishes all together. Even if the layoffs are anticipated by employees prior to their actual occurrence, workers are often left guessing as to whom will be let go. Therefore, even if they are able to anticipate the loss of co-worker relationships, they are unable to anticipate which relationships will be lost, thus, may be left ill-prepared to process these severed co-worker affiliations.

The literature on the loss of relationships largely defines a loss as one that occurs through the death of someone with emotional relevance to the survivor. However, definitions do vary, as addressed below, and parallels can be found between the bereavement and survivorship literature. Therefore, it seems important to advance both bodies of literature by further assessing the degree of bereavement reactions experienced by the survivor population.

The loss of a co-worker through downsizing arguably qualifies as a bereavement situation, depending on the definition one chooses to abide by. Bereavement as defined by Stroebe, Hansson, Stroebe, and Schut (2001), refers to “the objective situation of having lost someone significant” (p. 6). They clarify by saying that “someone” can include parents, siblings, partners, friends, or children. Using this definition, the non-death loss of a co-worker through downsizing can be categorized as a bereavement situation if the co-worker constituted a significant relationship with the survivor. Stroebe et al. do not further define “significant.” However, Goodkin et al. (2001) defines bereavement as “the occurrence of loss of a loved one,” (p. 672) Using the definition, the laid-off co-workers have to be loved by the survivors in order for the survivors’ situation to qualify as bereavement. Although survivors may feel love for their downsized friends, this definition arguably narrows the survivors qualifying as bereaved. Technically, however, the term bereavement, as defined by Webster’s New World Dictionary (1999), refers to the experience of being robbed; to be left in a sad state; or to take away by

force. In this sense, survivors are indeed bereaved as they have been robbed of their coworkers via the downsizing, may experience sadness as a result, and have had their co-workers taken away by force. These co-workers were likely valued by some survivors in the sense that they constituted a significant relationship in their social network and/or they provided the means to assist the survivors in meeting their work-related goals and ultimately a means to make the organization run which allowed each employee to earn a living. Keeping the criteria of value in mind, survivorship meets Corless' (2001) criteria for a bereavement state. Corless asserts that bereavement is an objective situation of having lost someone or something that the bereaved valued.

Corr, Nabe, and Corr (2003) clarify the relationship between loss, bereavement, and grief by stating that loss leads to bereavement, which may lead to grief. Grief is the reaction to the loss (Corr et al., 2003) or, put another way, the specific emotional and behavioral responses to bereavement (Goodkin et al., 2001). Using the definitions above, non-death loss can lead to grief reactions. Research with those whose loved ones have died suggests that common grief reactions include physical sensations (hallow feeling in stomach, lack of energy, depersonalization, etc.), emotions (sadness, guilt, anger, helplessness, loneliness, relief, etc.), cognitions (disbelief, preoccupation, etc.), behaviors (abnormal sleep and eating patterns, absentmindedness, avoidant behavior, crying, social withdrawal, etc.), social difficulties (difficult to function in concert with others in an organization), and spiritual searching (searching for sense of meaning, rethinking/organizing one's values (Corr et al., 2003). Furthermore, those grieving have demonstrated an increased risk of illness (Corr et al., 2003; Goodkin et al., 2001).

The survivorship literature indicates that layoff survivors do experience indications of some of the aforementioned grief reactions. As mentioned previously in this review, survivors'

work performance may be altered after a layoff, often resulting in higher quantity at the cost of lower quality work output (Brockner et al., 1986; Probst, 2002). They also report withdrawing from the organization and its goals (Brockner, 1990), possibly reflecting the *behavioral* dimension of grief reactions. Furthermore, in a study assessing the health and behavior consequences of various levels of contact/experience with layoffs, Grunberg, Moore, & Greenberg (2001) wrote that survivors who had friends and/or coworkers laid off or who were warned that they themselves may be laid off, reported significantly more eating changes and were more likely to report increased alcohol intake than employees who had no contact with layoffs. *Cognitively*, survivors report an increased inability to concentrate and a decrease in attitudes regarding the importance of their work (Corum, 1996). Many studies also report declines in the *physical health* of layoff survivors. Grunberg et al. (2001) reported that survivors with friends and co-workers who were laid-off reported significantly more health problems and incidences of depression than those with no experience with layoffs. Noer (1993) noted higher levels of depression in layoff survivors even five years after the downsizing incident. Although *social difficulties* of survivors have not been assessed directly, the findings that survivors report withdrawing from the organization and do not seek to establish new friendships with fellow survivors after their friends were laid off suggest negative alterations in survivors' social functioning (Shah, 2000). Likewise, *spiritual searching* does not appear to have been assessed in layoff survivors. However, the increased turnover intention reported in many studies (Brockner et al., 1987, for example) and survivors' reports of reaping less enrichment from their jobs post-downsizing (Dunlop, 1994) suggests that survivors may be reassessing their work values and looking for work that is more intrinsically satisfying to them as a direct result of the survivorship experience. Finally, layoff survivors report many *emotions* that may be a result of the grief

stemming from the loss of friends and co-workers. Such emotions consist of anger, sadness, and frustration (Noer, 1998). Survivors also report feelings of survivor guilt over having a job when others have been laid-off, in part, because they often think they could just as easily have been layoff victims themselves (Adams, 1965; Brockner, Davy, & Carter, 1985).

In efforts to explain some of these grief symptoms, it is reasonable to suggest that the increased job insecurity reported by many layoff survivors could explain such symptoms as poor health, increased alcohol consumption, anger, etc. Specifically, fearing that one may be the next to get laid off could cause one to drink more, become depressed, and/or result in poor physical health due to increased anxiety. However, Grunberg et al. (2001) reported that those who lost friends and co-workers due to downsizing still reported significantly more symptoms of depression, changes in eating habits, and drank more alcohol when degree of job insecurity was statistically controlled for than survivors who did not. Although other studies have not statistically controlled for job security, it may be the case that simply fearing that one may be the next to go is not enough to explain the grief reactions reported in the downsizing literature. These survivors may truly be grieving the loss of the friends and co-workers they valued but no longer have ready access to and who may even reject them because they still have their jobs. Additionally, those laid off may believe that those who remain employed have little in common with them after being downsized. In fact, the layoff victims may even perceive the survivors as having, at least partially, caused the layoffs. These possibilities may contribute to the pain and grief layoff survivors experience.

Despite the existing evidence that suggests survivors may experience grief as a response to their loss, Weiss (2001) proposes that the loss of non-attachment bonds does not give rise to grief, rather these losses result in, at most, distress. Attachment bonds are those such as parent-

child and spousal relationships, whereas non-attachment bonds are those that underlie friendships and other relationships such as that with a co-worker. Accordingly, he refers to non-attachment relationships as affiliations and non-attachment bonds as affiliative bonds. Although a review of the attachment literature is beyond the scope of this study, Weiss clarifies by stating that non-attachment relationships are not focused on the direct accessibility of a secure attachment base as are attachment bonds. Therefore, when one loses an affiliative relationship, they may become distressed, but do not grieve because they have maintained their secure attachment bases through their attachment bonds with other people. It seems that Weiss uses a rather strict view of an attachment bond, as it can be suggested that loss of friends, coworkers, siblings, etc. could qualify as an attachment bond depending on one's relationship to that person.

Weiss (2001) maintains that affiliative relationships in the form of work relationships or friendships provide indirect security versus the direct security provided via attachment bonds. Co-workers provide the resources needed to meet work challenges, to understand others, and to perceive oneself as a desirable work-partner. Friendships provide security in that they facilitate the management of daily social life and its challenges. Although Weiss does not directly address work relationships that are also friendships, it seems logical that these layered affiliations provide the security of a co-worker and friendship bond. Not only do they assist the members in reaching work goals and ultimately contributing to their ability to earn their paychecks, but they also add a caring ear to listen and problem solve, a sense of greater acceptance, and ultimately a resource to help process joyous and difficult circumstances that will better enable the parties to continue with the tasks and responsibilities associated with daily life.

In order to be termed "grief" in the face of a loss, Weiss (2001) infers that one must experience a protest and a despair phase in accordance with Bowlby's (1980) conceptualization

of response to loss of attachment figures. He defines grief as, “the severe and prolonged distress that is a response to the loss of an emotionally important figure,” (p. 47). For adults, he largely limits this “figure” to those who fill the role of parent, spouse, or child. This prolonged distress must include the protest syndrome of searching for the lost person and anxious yearning for their return and the despair syndrome of hopelessness and withdrawal that stems from an acceptance of the loss. However, he does suggest that loss of an affiliative bond may produce sorrow, anger, dismay, and persisting feelings of affection.

The reason the reactions to the loss of affiliative bonds are so distinctly different from attachment losses is because affiliative bond distress is easily substituted with new affiliative relationships, according to Weiss (2001). Although logical, the survivorship research does not support this hypothesis. Shah (2002) reported that survivors in a consumer electronic firm who lost friends due to a layoff tended to not replace those friends with others. Furthermore, survivors who lost friends had significantly more negative reactions towards the layoff, and they lost a significant degree of the trust, intimacy, and reliable advice they once obtained through co-worker relationships post-layoff . Interestingly, although survivors tended not to replace their lost friendships after the downsizing, they did attempt to replace sources for work-related advice. Even so, this replacement did not fill the emotional loss survivors experienced as evidenced by their negative reactions to the layoff, even after the substituted advice sources.

Weiss’s (2001) assertion that the reactions to the loss of an attachment figure are likely more severe than those in reaction to an affiliative relationship are not disputed here. However, it may be the case that the loss of co-workers, especially co-worker friendships, is more severe than hypothesized by Weiss. Furthermore, it is possible that some survivors lost relationships that are central in their social system, therefore increasing the likelihood that they would indeed

grieve that loss. Research suggests that these affiliations are not as readily replaced as Weiss suggests, therefore, these survivors may experience genuine grief reactions to their loss. Additionally, evidence suggests that survivors experience some of the emotional reactions traditionally associated with bereavement and grief, therefore, assessment of survivors' grief reactions seems important and justified. Furthermore, survivors' loss reactions certainly qualify as a change in internal circumstances or pressures that Super suggested could trigger recycling, making it even more relevant to this research.

Risk factors predisposing survivors to bereavement distress.

The bereavement literature suggests that there are various risk factors that may predispose the bereaved to greater levels of bereavement distress. Such factors include: (a) social support in the aftermath of the loss, (b) religiosity, (c), gender, (d) loss history, and (e) age.

Research suggests that bereaved individuals who received adequate social support are at less risk for adverse health affects associated with bereavement (Sanders, 1993), especially when the death of the person resulted in feelings of social loneliness, versus emotional loneliness, by the bereaved (Stroebe & Schut, 2001). However, the research assessing the main effect of social support on the bereavement experiences resulting from the loss of attachment figures as defined by Weiss (2001) is inconsistent in this respect. Some research reports social support as serving as a buffer for distress in bereavement, whereas, others report no effect, and still others report social support as having a negative effect. It is probable that most co-worker relationships lost through downsizing constitute a loss in one's social network versus an attachment-related, emotional loss as defined by Weiss (2001). Therefore, it may be the case that greater levels of social support received by survivors will result in fewer negative bereavement experiences.

The bereavement literature offers some support for the positive effects of religiosity when coping with loss (Stroebe & Schut, 2001). Although results are mixed, Stroebe and Schut's (2001) review of the literature suggests that the social support received through regular church attendance and holding religious beliefs are related to greater levels of well-being in the aftermath of a loss. Presumably, the belief that there is a higher being controlling aspects of the life-course can help the survivor make sense of the loss and indirectly gain some feelings of control over it. Likewise, layoff survivors who report greater religiosity may reap benefits similar to those individuals who have survived the death of someone who was important to them.

Stroebe and Schut (2001) report that the bereaved person's gender can moderate the negative consequences of their grief experiences. Specifically, in their review of risk factors in bereavement outcome, they state that research consistently finds that widowers have significantly higher mortality and depression rates than widows and married males. From this finding it may be safe to make the assumption that bereaved males have greater overall declines in health than bereaved females. Stroebe and Schut suggest that this finding reflects the idea that females adopt more adaptive coping styles in the aftermath of a loss than do males. They assert that successful coping requires the bereaved to directly attend to the emotional impact of the loss while balancing that attention with tasks that take the bereaved person's mind off of the loss. They suggest that females are more successful in achieving this balance because 1) they are more likely to process their painful emotions by confronting the loss and 2) most women take on other tasks such as caring for their family and household tasks that help to balance their intense grief work. On the other hand, men are more likely to avoid grief work by burying themselves in their work, thus not achieving the balance necessary to cope with their grief in a healthy way.

This may also be the case with layoff survivors. Female survivors may experience fewer negative bereavement experiences because they are more likely to emotionally process their loss while balancing that with their work tasks. However, males may tend to increase the quantity of their work at the expense of emotionally processing the loss of people who were important to them. This increase in work focus may further increase their vulnerability to bereavement distress given the probable job insecurity layoff survivors experience. That is, males may put considerable effort into their job despite the fact that they may not hold it much longer.

Regardless of one's gender, experiencing many losses in a short period of time can lead to bereavement overload (Stroebe et al., 2001). Experiencing multiple, sequential losses renders the bereaved individual vulnerable to cumulative negative effects in the aftermath of the losses (Moss, Moss, & Hansson, 2001). As such, it appears that assessing one's loss history is another important variable to consider when determining to what degree a person is at risk for bereavement distress. Likewise, the loss history of a layoff survivor may render him or her more or less able to process the loss of their friends and co-workers who they no longer work with on a daily basis.

Age is yet another variable shown to moderate the degree of well-being of the bereaved. Interestingly, Stroebe and Schut (2001) conclude that younger bereaved individuals suffer more negative bereavement experiences than older bereaved individuals. Especially in the case of young widows and widowers, they suggest that this finding reflects the likelihood that the death occurred unexpectedly. The death of a young spouse is more likely to be unexpected and the result of an accident than the death of an older spouse who is more likely to die of heart disease, cancer, and the like (Stroebe & Schut, 2001).

Drawing a parallel to layoff survivors, although most layoffs are expected in the sense that management is now required to inform workers that large-scale layoffs may occur in the future due to the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act, it may be the case that younger workers are less emotionally prepared to lose friends and co-workers than older workers may be. Older workers may have been thinking about and/or planning for retirement (Sterns, 1998; Super, 1990). Therefore, they may be more emotionally prepared to deal with the daily absence of their friends and co-workers than younger workers who may not have been as emotionally prepared to lose these relationships.

The Survivorship Experience Viewed Through Super's Theory

Given the possible negative consequences of survivorship as outlined above, it seems likely that survivors will require a high degree of career adaptability to weather the storm of survivorship and may experience recycling through parts of Super's maxicycle of stages. Again, career adaptability refers to the possession of attitudes and information needed to cope with changing work and working conditions, and a downsized organization likely qualifies as altered working conditions. Furthermore, Super suggested that alterations in internal or external circumstances could trigger recycling; again, survivorship qualifies as an experience that could trigger both internal and external changes. For example, a survivor may experience the internal change of job insecurity and anger and an external change of losing friends who have been downsized or receiving a heavier load of work.

Assessing survivors' career adaptability levels via their career related concerns that correspond to the stages in Super's Life-Span, Life-Space theory as well as recycling tendencies can help us understand the experience of survivorship through the lens of a valid, highly respected career development theory. Super suggested that measuring an individual's career

related concerns that correspond to the stages results in a measure of one's planfulness regarding one's working life, an essential component in career adaptability (Super et al., 1988). More specifically, comparing survivors' and non-survivors' (people in a comparison group who have not experienced a downsizing within the past 12 months) perceptions of their career related concerns and recycling can help us hypothesize about the possible effects the layoffs have on survivors' career related choices and development. Furthermore, assessing how survivors' procedural justice perceptions; economic need to work; job insecurity; job satisfaction; bereavement experiences, including grief; health; and other related variables affect their career concerns and recycling tendencies can help us understand the relationship these variables have with survivors' subsequent career development.

Rationale for the Study

Utilizing Super's Life-Span, Life-Space theory as a means of conceptualizing the vocationally relevant experiences of survivors increases the chances that the results of this study have valid relevance to the career development of the targeted population. Super's theory has stood the test of time and has continually been updated since its inception to reflect the evolving U.S. vocational culture and the empirically supported ideas of its authors. Furthermore, this theory was specifically developed to look at the career development of working adults. As most vocationally theories are focused on the adolescent and college-aged population who are preparing to enter the work force and are normed and validated on such populations, many of these alternative theories would not be the most appropriate given the population of the proposed study.

The variables assessed in this study are largely supported by the literature as affecting survivorship experiences and/or are hypothesized to impact differences in survivors' career

concerns and recycling tendencies. These variables include participants' survivorship status, procedural justice perceptions regarding the layoffs, economic need to work, perceptions of job insecurity, job satisfaction, and bereavement experiences. Other variables assessed are participants' age, gender, level of education, ethnicity, marital status, number of dependents, level within the organization, perceived physical and mental health, loss history, level of social support, and religiosity.

Research on the influences on the career development of layoff survivors serves various purposes for the researcher, practitioner, survivor, and downsizing organizations alike. The proposed study will likely add to the scant literature on adult career development. Much is known about adolescent career development, but many researchers have only lately begun to study the developmental aspects of adult careers (Osipow & Fitzgerald, 1996). This research may prove to shed more light on the recycling tendencies and task concerns of survivors, thus perhaps prompting revision and updating of Super's conceptualizations in regards to special adult populations. As downsizing becomes the norm verses the exception in U.S. businesses, it is imperative we begin to fill the gap in our research on these survivors.

Practitioners including human resource professionals, career counselors, consultants, and downsizing organizations may benefit from the information provided by this study. Data on survivors' career concerns will better direct organizational and counseling interventions designed to increase worker satisfaction, security, and ultimately productivity on the job. Moreover, this and similar studies may highlight the need for organizations to attend to the experiences of their survivors, especially those that relate to their career development. Such interventions may serve to help organizations reach their intended goals of the downsizing, such as cost reduction while

maintaining productivity, instead of finding themselves with less productive, less satisfied workers.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between specific aspects of the survivorship experience and survivors' career concerns and recycling tendencies as conceptualized by Super's Life-Span, Life-Space theory of career development. To date, there appears to be no literature on the relationship between survivorship and aspects of the survivor's career development. The study of the possible vocational development consequences for employees remaining in downsized organizations seems especially relevant for a number of reasons: 1) Since the economic downturn of the late 1980's, layoffs through downsizing have become increasingly common, 2) these layoffs no longer mainly affect historically targeted manufacturing industries but are also common among other industries (e.g. retail, airlines, social services), and 3) these layoffs are more commonly occurring across organizational hierarchies rather than mainly targeting the blue-collar population. Although such research could have undoubtedly benefited the vocational development of blue-collar manufacturing workers had it been conducted decades earlier, the fact that layoffs are now affecting a larger group of workers makes the topic all the more applicable to a wider variety of employees.

Research Hypotheses

Using Super's Life-Span, Life-Space Theory of Career Development and considering the literature on survivorship, the following hypotheses are proposed:

1. *Survivorship status will differ with degree of recycling behavior. Specifically survivors will evidence more recycling behavior than people in the comparison group.*

1a. Survivors who have co-worker friends who have been laid off will experience greater degrees of recycling than survivors who do not report having friends laid off. With regard to 1 and 1a, results may covary with level of education, loss history, degree of and satisfaction with social support, and religiosity. Survivors have direct experience with fellow friends and co-workers losing their jobs and likely are faced with the fear of losing their own in the future. These and other survivorship experiences discussed in the above review qualify as the internal and external changes in circumstances that Super maintains can trigger recycling behavior. Survivors who's co-worker friends have been laid off may be experiencing greater internal and external changes than those who knew fellow employees who were laid off but did not necessarily consider them friends. People in the comparison group, on the other hand, have not directly experienced these same changes, thus, may not have as strong of an impetus for recycling.

2. *Survivorship status will differentiate the number of career concerns and personal distress experienced by participants.*

2a. Specifically, survivors will report more career concerns related to all tasks within the Exploration stage and the holding and Innovating tasks within the Maintenance stage than will people in the comparison group. With regard to 2 and 2a, results may covary with level of education, loss history, degree of and satisfaction with social support, and religiosity. Given the uncertainty of continued employment, among other sources of tension that proceed a downsizing, it seems logical that survivors will report more personal distress and would be concerned with exploring alternative work options as compared to people in the comparison group. Consistent with the Exploration stage, survivors may be concerned with what alternative work they are interested in, choosing

that alternative work, and taking action to secure a position accordingly. These Exploration behaviors reflect the Crystallizing, Specifying, and Implementing tasks respectively. Likewise, survivors may be more concerned with maintaining their current job by holding onto their position in the face of the current organizational change and becoming increasingly more innovative in their work to prove themselves more valuable and ward off a future layoff. These concerns reflect the Holding and Innovating tasks in the Maintenance stage. Although people in the comparison group are likely to express some concern for maintaining their jobs given the present economic uncertainty, they will likely be fewer than those of layoff survivors.

3. *Survivors who have had co-worker friends laid off will grieve more intensely than survivors whose friends were not laid off and will report specifically more experiences related to guilt, blame, and anger (as assessed by the BEQ-24, subscale 2) than those reflecting existential loss, emotional needs, or preoccupation with thoughts of the layoff victims (as reflected by the BEQ-24, subscales 1 and 3 respectively). With regard to 3, results may covary with level of education, loss history, degree of and satisfaction with social support, and religiosity.*

3a. Survivors reporting greater degrees of social support will report fewer bereavement experiences. With regard to 3a, results may covary with level of education, loss history, degree of and satisfaction with social support, and religiosity. Survivors with deeper emotional affiliations with those laid off will likely report more grief reactions than those who just worked with those laid off but did not consider them friends. Consistent with Wiess' (2001) hypotheses regarding the loss of affiliative bonds, survivors will report more guilt, blame, and anger in relation to the loss than other experiences. Finally,

consistent with Strobe and Schut (2001) social support levels will buffer the bereavement experiences of those who lost someone within their social network.

4. *Survivors with co-worker friends who were laid off will report more negative perceptions of procedural justice than survivors who did not have co-worker friends laid off. With regard to 4, results may covary with level of education, loss history, degree of and satisfaction with social support, and religiosity.*

4a. Female survivors will report lower perceptions of procedural justice than male survivors. With regard to 4b, results may covary with level of education, loss history, degree of and satisfaction with social support, and religiosity. It seems logical that survivors whose friends were laid off would perceive the layoffs as being less fair than survivors who were not personally affected in this way. Consistent with Gilligan's (1982) conceptualization of gender differences and perceptions of morality, females may be less likely to perceive the logical, bottom-line oriented thinking that likely contributed to who was laid-off.

5. *Survivors with more negative perceptions of procedural justice as well as those with a greater reported economic need to work will report more job insecurity, Exploration career related concerns, and recycling tendencies than those who report less economic need to work and more positive procedural justice perceptions. With regard to 5, results may covary with level of education, loss history, degree of and satisfaction with social support, and religiosity.* Research shows that survivors with lower perceptions of procedural justice post-layoff are less committed to the organization. Therefore, it seems likely that these survivors would demonstrate more concern for Exploration tasks reflecting their possible consideration of seeking alternative work. Likewise, survivors

who believe they have a greater immediate need for the economic benefits that come with working will likely be more worried that their jobs may be the next ones to be downsized as compared to survivors who are less reliant on such benefits. Thus, the reliant survivor group will likely be more concerned with career development tasks related to exploring alternative work and be more likely to recycle through past stages reflecting the internal changes of increasing perceptions of job insecurity and external changes of the post-layoff environment of their organization.

6. *People in the comparison group will report greater levels of job satisfaction than survivors. Survivors and people in the comparison group with greater levels of job satisfaction will report fewer Exploration career concerns and recycling tendencies than survivors and people in the comparison group with lower levels of job satisfaction. With regard to 6, results may covary with level of education, loss history, degree of and satisfaction with social support, and religiosity.* The literature suggests that survivors report greater job satisfaction prior to organizational downsizing, therefore, it is likely that people in the comparison group will report more job satisfaction than survivors. Furthermore, consistent with Super's theory, if employees are dissatisfied in their current work, they are more likely to recycle through earlier career development stages. This recycling may be in the form of exploring alternative work options.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Sample and Procedure

The original intention was to gather participants from two organizations. Employees from all levels (front-line, mid-level, and executive-level, or the levels reflecting the structure of the company) were to be sampled from an organization that has experienced downsizing within the past six months to serve as the “survivor” group. Employees from all levels (front-line, mid-level, and executive-level, or the levels reflecting the structure of the organization) sampled from an organization that has not downsized within the past 24 months were to serve as the comparison group. Ideally, both organizations would have been in the same industry; however, it was realized that this may have been difficult to obtain because economic downturns tend to affect organizations in the same industry similarly. Therefore, it was decided that if a comparison organization in the same industry were not identified for use, an organization that has not experienced downsizing within the past 12 months in an alternative industry would be solicited.

However, a downsized organization willing to participate in this study was unable to be identified. Eight organizations were approached, but all declined for similar reasons. Additionally, three consulting firms with clients that included downsized organizations were approached to assist in soliciting downsized organizations’ participation. Although, without fail, all organizations voiced interest in the study and recognized the useful information it had the potential to provide the organization, they were all concerned that employees would infer inaccurate conclusions due to the content of the survey. Specifically, organizations feared their employees would assume additional layoffs were being planned, and they feared potential

increases in anxiety and increased negative perceptions toward the organization. Therefore, all organizations regretfully declined.

It was decided that, because a willing downsized organization to provide participants for the survivor group was unable to be found, both survivor and comparison participants would not be limited to specific organizations. Therefore, workers were invited to participate in the study, regardless of the organization they worked for. Because a central database of contact information (phone, mailing address) for these potential participants did not exist, it was decided that the most efficient and effective way to contact potential participants would be through email. It was also decided that to decrease potential participant confusion, the survivor group would consist of workers whose organization had downsized within the past 12 months. Likewise, the non-survivor group would consist of workers whose organization had not downsized within the past 12 months. As the initial contact with participants was to be made via email, it was also decided that the most effective way to collect the survey data would also be via an on-line method. It was assumed that this would increase the response rate as participants could simply access the survey via clicking on an Internet link within the email and submit the completed survey on-line vs. replying to email to express their interest in participating, waiting for the survey to arrive via postal mail, and then placing the completed survey back into the mail. Furthermore, Grosling and his colleagues (2004) concluded that Internet data collection methods are consistent with the findings of traditional paper and pencil collection methods, and are often more representative of age, gender, race, SES, and geographic location than are traditional methods.

Potential participants for both groups were first identified through the researcher's contacts and an email was sent to these contacts explaining the study, asking for their personal

participation, and asking the individual to forward the email to friends, family, and coworkers who may be interested in participating. The email provided information on the purpose of the study, the participant qualifications (participants must have been at least 18 years-old and currently employed in an organization/company), and provided an Internet link to the on-line survey that interested participants could click on with their mouse and automatically be transferred to the survey. The on-line form included more detailed information on the study's purpose, the study informed consent form, and links to both the survivor and comparison group version of the survey.

The original group of email recipients then made two decisions. First, they decided whether or not they personally wanted to participate in the study by clicking on the website link and completing the appropriate survey. Second, they decided whether or not they wanted to forward the email to their friends, coworkers, and other contacts who might be interested in participating.

After 12 months of attempting to collect data in this manner, a sufficient number of survivor participants had not been obtained. Therefore, graduate and undergraduate psychology students at a regional university were offered extra credit in their course to solicit the participation of additional survivor participants. These students were provided a flyer briefly explaining the study that contained the Internet address containing the research materials. These students presumably either completed the survey themselves if they met the participant criteria, and/or passed on the study information to their contacts. Students were instructed to have the person completing the survey print out a paper copy of the on-line confirmation page provided when a participant successfully submitted a survey.

Measures

Demographic information was obtained via a questionnaire developed by the researcher. Information obtained included: (a) age, (b) gender, (c) years of education, (d) ethnicity, (e) marital status, (f) number of dependents, (g) type of industry employed in (industry types were modeled after the categories provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor), (h) level within the organization (non-managerial, first-line manager, upper management, vice president or higher), (i) job function (job function categories were modeled after those provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor), (j) tenure with present company, (k) how many times the participant has been laid off in the past from the present or other organizations, (l) for the survivor group, how many months ago the present company conducted the most recent wave of layoffs, (m) for the survivor group, how many waves of layoffs the present company conducted within the past year, and (n) for the survivor group, approximately how many employees the company laid off within the past year.

Career Concerns

Adult Career Concerns Inventory (ACCI). Participants completed the ACCI (Super, Thompson, & Lindeman, 1988). This 61-item inventory assesses individual's career concerns pertaining to Super's final four stages of career development (Exploration, Establishment, Maintenance, and Deceleration) and associated developmental tasks. Higher scores reflect more career concerns. Degree of recycling is assessed by the ACCI via the final question of the inventory, however, this item will not be included in this study in favor for a more detailed assessment of recycling described below. This tool assessing the above constructs has evidenced strong internal consistency (coefficient alpha range .90-.95) (Halpin et al., 1990; Niles, Anderson, & Goodnough, 1998; Super et al., 1988), and acceptable construct validity (Niles et

al., 1998; Niles, Anderson, Hartung, & Staton, 1999; Niles, Lewis, & Hartung, 1997; Smart, 1998).

Recycling Tendencies

Recycling tendencies were assessed via 15 questions modified from the recycling section of the Career Development Inventory, Adult Form II (CDI). The CDI is an older version of the ACCI, however it contains a more elaborate recycling section. The single question included on the ACCI was determined insufficient by the researcher to assess the variable, therefore the CDI recycling questions were chosen for use. Higher scores reflect a stronger recycling tendency. Participants have a choice of responding 1) No concern, 2) Little concern, 3) Some concern, 4) Considerable concern, or 5) Great concern, to each of the items. Although no previous internal consistency data is available for this tool, in the current sample, the test demonstrated strong internal consistency with a coefficient alpha of .97.

Bereavement Experiences

Bereavement Experience Questionnaire-24, Revised Short-Form (BEQ-24). Guarnaccia and Hayslip's (1998) revised and shortened version of Demi's (1984) Bereavement Experience Questionnaire was modified to assess survivors' bereavement experiences. This shortened 24-item measure assesses three empirically derived factors of bereavement based on a factor analysis of the theoretically derived 67-item BEQ. The three factors are: (a) Existential Loss/Emotional Needs (subscale 1), (b) Guilt/Blame/Anger (subscale 2), and (c) Preoccupation with Thoughts of the Deceased (subscale 3). Instead of wording reflecting a loss through death, the BEQ-24 will contain language referring to loss of co-workers through downsizing. Alpha internal consistency reliabilities are reported as .86, .83, and .81 for subscale 1, 2, and 3 respectively, and the alpha internal consistency reliability to the complete scale is reported as .91

(Guarnaccia & Hayslip, 1998). Higher scores on this tool indicate more intense bereavement experiences. Participants were asked to determine to what degree each statement applies to them and have options that fall on a 5-point Likert-scale.

Participant Self-rated Health

Self-Rated Health Questionnaire. (SRHQ). The physical health (part I, questions 1-8) and mental health (part II, questions 1-23) sections of the SRHQ were adapted by the researcher from Ryder (1993) to assess the participants' self-evaluation of their current physical and psychological health. Higher scores on the 31 items suggest poorer self-perceived health. Alpha internal consistency reliabilities are reported as .80 and .91 for the physical and mental health sections respectively. However, it is important to note that the current study did not use the last five questions of the mental health form as they primarily assess social support which will be assessed via a separate tool. In the current sample, Alpha internal consistency reliabilities were .78 for both the physical and mental health sections.

Psychological Distress

Hopkins Symptom Checklist-Abbreviated (HSC-abbrev.). The HSC is a widely used, 58 item paper and pencil self-report symptom inventory devised by Derogatis (1977) to measure psychological symptoms frequently seen in outpatients. For this study, it is used to measure survivors' distress levels as a supplement to the SRHQ. In a series of factor analytic studies, Derogatis and colleagues (Derogatis, Lipman, Covi, & Rickels, 1971, 1972) identified five primary symptom dimensions on the HSC 1) somatization, 2) obsessive-compulsiveness, 3) interpersonal sensitivity, 4) depression, and 5) anxiety. Coefficient alpha reported for the current 58 item version are .87, .87, .85, .86, and .84 for the somatization, obsessive-compulsiveness, interpersonal sensitivity, depression, and anxiety scales respectively. Derogatis and colleagues

found 44 of the 58 items to principally load on each of the five factors. For this reason, an abbreviated version of the HSC containing these 44 items were used in the study. Participants were instructed to rate themselves on each symptom, using a 4-point scale of distress (1=not at all, 2=a little, 3=quite a bit, 4=extremely) with reference to their experiences during the past seven days. Higher scores indicate more self-perception of distress.

Social Support

Social Support Questionnaire. (SSQ). The 27-item SSQ (Sarason, Levine, Basham, & Sarason, 1983) was designed to measure the total number of persons individuals believe that can count on for help, as well as individual's perceptions of how beneficial and satisfying these relationships are to them. In this study, the 6-item short form of the SSQ (SSQ-6) (Sarason, Sarason, Shearin, & Pierce, 1987) was used. Respondents were first asked how many people they can count on for physical or psychosocial support under different conditions. Following this first part of each question, is a 7-point Likert scale with anchors of "very dissatisfied" to "very satisfied" for which respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with these relationships. The SSQ-6 yields two factors, a social support availability or number score (SSQ-N) and a social support satisfaction score (SSQ-S). Alpha coefficients for the SSQ-N and SSQ-S are reported as .97 and .94 respectively (Sarason et al., (1983). Internal consistencies are reported as .90 and .93 for the SSQ-N and SSQ-S respectively (Sarason et al., 1987).

Loss History

To assess participants' loss history, selected items from the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS) (Holmes & Rahe, 1967) was used. The scale consists of 36 potentially stressful life events that together have consistently shown a positive correlation with measures of illness (Kobasa & Puccetti, 1983). To supplement these items, two questions were added to assess the

participant's experiences with job loss. The items were, "How many times in the past year have you been laid off from a job?" and "How many times in the past year have you voluntarily left a job?" In the current sample, coefficient alpha for these items was .77.

Religiosity

Participants' religiosity was measured via ten questions that assessed aspects of religious involvement on the assumption that religiosity can moderate bereavement distress. Although published religiosity measures such as the Intrinsic/Extrinsic Revised (Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989) are available, the researcher believes that such measures often assess what the participant reaps from his or her religiosity versus his or her religious beliefs and quantity of religious involvement. The measure used in this study was intended to measure the later. Internal consistency of these ten questions was strong in the current sample (coefficient alpha = .94). Each question provides four response options which are intended to progress from most "religious" to least. The questions were as follows:

1. How often do you attend church or synagogue?
 1. At least once a week
 2. Almost every week
 3. About once a month
 4. Seldom or never

2. How important would you say religion is in your life?
 1. Very important
 2. Fairly important
 3. Not very important
 4. No important at all

3. How important would you say spirituality is in your life?
 1. Very important
 2. Fairly important
 3. Not very important
 4. No important at all

4. About how often do you pray?
 1. At least once a day

2. Once a week
 3. Less than once a week
 4. Never
5. Overall, please indicate your religious involvement during the past month (e.g. combined church or synagogue attendance, prayer, participation in religious organizations.)
1. Very involved
 2. Fairly involved
 3. Not very involved
 4. No involvement
6. Overall, please indicate your religious involvement during the past year (e.g. combined church or synagogue attendance, prayer, participation in religious organizations.)
1. Very involved
 2. Fairly involved
 3. Not very involved
 4. No involvement
7. To what extent is religion involved in helping you understand or deal with stressful situations?
1. Very involved
 2. Fairly involved
 3. Not very involved
 4. No involvement
8. Which of the following statements come closest to your personal belief?
1. There is a personal God of transcendent existence and power who has a planned purpose for my life.
 2. There is a transcendent aspect of human experience which some people call God, but who is not imminently involved in planning the details of my life.
 3. The notions of God or the transcendent are products of human imagination; however, they are meaningful aspects of human experience.
 4. The notions of God or the transcendent are products of the human imagination; therefore, they are irrelevant to the real world.
9. Which statement best reflects circumstances in which you turn to your religion?
1. Religion is part of my daily existence, therefore I turn to religion in all that I do.
 2. I turn to religion mostly in times of stress and hardship.
 3. I turn to my religion mainly during holidays (e.g. Christmas, Hanukkah).
 4. I never turn to religion.
10. Which statement comes closest to expressing what you believe about God?
1. I believe God exists.
 2. While I sometimes have doubts, I feel I do believe in God.
 3. I don't believe in a personal God, but I do believe in a higher power of some kind.
 4. I don't believe in God.

Number of Co-worker Friends Laid Off

Whether or not survivors' co-worker friends had been laid off was assessed with the following questions. It was believed that it might be easier for participants to estimate the percentage of layoff victims that were their friends, acquaintances, or who they did not know, rather than actual numbers, especially if the layoffs were large.

1. What percentage of people laid off would you consider to be your personal friends?
2. What percentage of people laid off would you consider to be acquaintances?
3. What percentage of people laid off did you not know at all?

Procedural Justice Perceptions

Survivors' perceptions of procedural justice during the layoffs was assessed via 10 items. The first three items were taken from a measure authored by Greenberg (1993) and have a reported reliability of .84. The fourth item was adapted from Brockner and colleagues (1987). The final six items were adapted from Mansour-Cole and Scott's (1998), 14 item tool. Coefficient alpha for the 14-item measure is reported as .88 (Mansour-Cole & Scott, 1998). Responses were obtained on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". These ten items demonstrated strong internal consistency in the current sample (coefficient alpha = .96).

Economic Need to Work

The participants' economic need to work was assessed via 10 questions created by the researcher. Participants had response choices along a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". The items assessed the degree to which the participant (and his/her family) depended on the participants' income for their financial obligations, financial savings goals, leisure/entertainment needs, and health care benefits (i.e. health insurance). These ten

items demonstrated an acceptable degree of internal consistency with a coefficient alpha of .75.

The ten items were as follows:

1. My family's economic welfare depends on what I earn on my job.
2. My family depends on wage increases and/or bonuses that I can depend on getting at regular intervals (e.g. yearly).
3. My family has enough savings to provide for our needs for six months.
4. My family has enough savings to provide for our needs for four months.
5. My family has enough savings to provide for our needs for two months.
6. After paying bills, my family has enough money left over to do things we enjoy.
7. My income is adequate to meet my family's needs.
8. When money is tight, I can borrow from my 401K or other investment sources.
9. My family depends on the insurance benefits provided by my employer for our health care coverage.
10. If I were to lose my job, my spouse or other family member could adequately provide for my family's needs.

Perceptions of Job Insecurity

Participants' perceptions of their job insecurity was assessed via 10 items. The first six were adapted from Corum (1996); the final four were added by the researcher. Psychometric data are not available for the first six questions as Corum analyzed data from each question separately. While internal consistency for these 10 items was borderline with a coefficient alpha of .65, other research assessing job insecurity had used a single item, such as, "To what extent do you believe more layoffs in the organization are likely to occur in the near future?" with responses varying from "Not at all likely" to "Very likely" (Brockner, Grover, Reed, & Dewitt,

1992). This single item may not tap other facets of the construct of job security that Corum's measure, while additional questions may do so to a greater extent. Participant response choices fell on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree".

Job Satisfaction

Participants' degree of satisfaction with their job was assessed with the 10 items authored by Warr and colleagues (1979) as reported and used in Ratcliff's (1992) study. These items measure both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of job satisfaction and have demonstrated satisfactory reliability when used with layoff survivors (Cronbach's alpha = .85). Items assessed the degree to which participants were satisfied with aspects of their work such as their pay and benefits, professional development afforded them, their relationships with co-workers, support from supervisors, and sense of accomplishment derived from their work. Participants responded with choices that fell on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "greatly satisfied" to "greatly dissatisfied".

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

The main purpose of this study was to study the relationship between being a lay off survivor and subsequent career development issues such as career related concerns and recycling tendencies as conceptualized by Super's Life-Span Life-Space Theory (Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996). The current sample consisted of 162 total participants, 72 of which identified themselves as layoff survivors, and 92 who identified as participants whose organization had not conducted layoffs within the past 12 months, or non-survivors. Within the survivor group, 44 were females and 28 were males, and the vast majority identified as Caucasian (93%), with four percent identifying as Black/African American, and three percent as "other". The non-survivor group consisted of 59 females and 33 males, 80% of whom identified as Caucasian, three percent as Black/African American, and two percent as Hispanic, Asian, and "other". Table 1 provides descriptive information regarding age, education, tenure, and layoff history of the participants of both groups. Independent samples t-tests indicated that the samples were not significantly different with respect to age, years of education, or the number of times participants have been laid off from a job. However, survivors reported being employed with their present employer longer than did non-survivors ($t(161) = 2.63, p < .001$), and, as suspected, survivors reported more experiences surviving a layoff than did non-survivors ($t(161) = 2.69, p = .047$). Table 2 provides descriptive information for marital/family status, present industry, job level, job function, and annual salary for both groups.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics

Variable	<u>Survivor</u>		<u>Non-survivor</u>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age	41.28	11.96	37.36	12.55
Education in yrs.	15.86	2.45	16.38	2.71
Tenure with present company in yrs.	9.68	9.75	6.22	7.04
Months since last layoff wave in present company	4.50	3.65	---	---
Number of layoffs waves in present company in last year	2.35	1.93	---	---
Number of times laid off in present/other organizations	1.50	.70	1.43	.85
Number of times survived layoff in present/other organizations	3.18	2.9	2.12	2.0

Table 2

Group Descriptives

Variable	<u>Survivor</u>		<u>Non-survivor</u>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Family				
Single/no children	19	26.4	25	27.2
Single/ w/children	11	15.3	7	7.6
Married/ no children	9	12.5	21	22.8
Married w/ children	33	45.8	37	40.2
Industry				
Agriculture/forestry/fishing	0	0	0	0
Mining	0	0	0	0
Construction	1	1.4	1	1.1

Table 2 (continued). *Group Descriptives*

Variable	<u>Survivor</u>		<u>Non-survivor</u>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Manufacturing	5	6.9	3	3.3
Wholesale trade	0	0	1	1.1
Retail trade	2	2.8	5	5.4
Transportation/ warehousing	5	6.9	6	6.5
Utilities	3	4.2	1	1.1
Information/media	1	1.4	0	0
Finance/insurance	2	2.8	7	7.6
Real estate	2	2.8	2	2.2
Professional/technical	10	13.9	8	8.7
Management of co.	3	4.2	1	1.1
Education	12	16.7	20	21.7
Healthcare	14	19.4	17	18.5
Arts/entertainment/ recreation	1	1.4	0	0
Food Service	2	2.8	4	4.3
Government/public administration	5	6.9	15	16.3
Job level				
Non-management	43	59.7	51	55.4
1 st line management	16	22.2	28	30.4
Upper management	9	12.5	7	7.6
VP or higher	2	2.8	3	3.3
Job function				
Managerial	7	9.7	8	8.7
Sales	11	15.3	14	15.2
Finance/accounting operations/ distribution	2	2.8	3	3.3
Information systems	7	9.7	1	1.1
Human resources	6	8.3	6	6.5
Administration	4	5.6	8	8.7
Research/development	11	15.3	8	8.7
Engineering	1	1.4	3	3.3
Legal	5	6.9	2	2.2
Other	0	0	1	1.1
Annual Salary	15	20.8	34	37.0
> \$20,000	8	11.1	5	5.4
\$21,000-\$30,000	10	13.9	18	19.6
\$31,000-\$40,000	9	12.5	13	14.1
\$41,000-\$50,000	9	12.5	16	17.4

Table 2 (continued). *Group Descriptives*

Variable	<u>Survivor</u>		<u>Non-survivor</u>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
\$51,000-\$60,000	9	12.5	18	19.6
\$61,000-\$70,000	3	4.2	4	4.3
\$71,000-\$80,000	4	5.6	4	4.3
\$81,000-\$90,000	6	8.3	5	5.4
\$91,000-\$100,000	7	9.7	1	1.1
\$101,000-\$150,000	4	5.6	4	4.3
\$151,000-\$200,000	0	0	0	0
\$201,000+	1	1.4	0	0

An initial concern with the alternative data collection approach was the inability to control the industries in which the participants worked. However, the frequency data indicate that the survivor and non-survivor samples are remarkably similar in terms of the industries they represented. In fact, approximately 50% of each sample came from the professional/technical, education, and health care industries. The government/public administration and finance/insurance industries appeared to be somewhat overrepresented in the non-survivor group. Therefore, the hypotheses were also tested with non-survivor participants randomly selected out (10 of the government/public administration industry, five of the finance/insurance industry) to make the represented industries more readily comparable. However, these analyses yielded no significantly different results than when the full data set was analyzed. Therefore, the full data set was used in the following reported results.

Results of the Proposed Hypotheses

The results of the analyses conducted to test the proposed hypotheses are presented in the order in which they were conducted. As some hypotheses were tested together, the results are not necessarily presented in the order that the hypotheses were presented earlier. It is believed this results in a less redundant presentation of the analyses.

Hypothesis 1: Survivorship status will differ with degree of recycling behavior. Specifically survivors will evidence more recycling behavior than people in the comparison group.

Hypothesis 2: Survivorship status will differentiate the number of career concerns and personal distress experienced by participants.

A series of one-way multivariate analyses of covariance (MANCOVA) were conducted to test hypotheses 1 and 2. Hypothesis 1 suggested that survivors would evidence more recycling behavior than non-survivors. Hypothesis 2 suggested that survivors would report more personal distress than non survivors.

Initially, a series of four MANCOVA's were run to determine the effect of survivorship status on recycling tendencies, career concerns, self-reported health, and job satisfaction. No significant differences were found when participant religiosity, loss history, degree of and satisfaction with social support, tenure at present job, and years of education were controlled for. Because no differences were found when the tests were run as planned, a series of exploratory MANCOVA's were run to examine the conditions under which differences between the survivor and non-survivor groups might surface with regard to the dependent variables. First, tenure was omitted as a covariate; however, the test again failed to detect differences in the dependent variables. Then, both tenure and loss history were omitted as covariates on the third MANCOVA. However, again no differences in the dependent variables were found. When omitting social support as a covariate and controlling for participant religiosity and years education, the most promising results were found (Wilks' $\Lambda=.910$, $F(8,141) = 1.739$, $p = .094$), however the difference between the survivor and non-survivor groups was still insignificant. Here the power (.73) and effect size (.09) were rather low ($N=152$). Furthermore, two-way MANCOVA's indicated that scores on the dependent variables did not differ significantly with

regard to participant gender or job level, nor was there any significant interaction between survivorship status and gender or job level. Thus, hypotheses 1 and 2 were not supported.

Hypothesis 2a: Survivors will report more career concerns related to all tasks within the Exploration stage and the holding and Innovating tasks within the Maintenance stage than will people in the comparison group

Hypothesis 2a predicted that survivors would report more career concerns related to all Exploration tasks and the Holding and Innovating tasks within the Maintenance stage than non-survivors. A one-way MANCOVA with survivorship status as the fixed variable, total Crystallization, Specification, Implementation, Holding, and Innovating tasks as dependent variables, and religiosity, years of education, degree of and satisfaction with social support, and loss history as covariates failed to detect any significant differences. However, our effect size ($\eta = .025$) and power (.23) were low, indicating we had only a 23% chance of detecting any existing differences. Hypothesis 2a was not supported.

Hypothesis 1a: Survivors who have co-worker friends who have been laid off will experience greater degrees of recycling than survivors who do not report having friends laid off.

Hypothesis 3: Survivors who have had co-worker friends laid off will grieve more intensely than survivors whose friends were not laid off and will report specifically more experiences related to guilt, blame, and anger (as assessed by the BEQ-24, subscale 2) than those reflecting existential loss, emotional needs, or preoccupation with thoughts of the layoff victims (as reflected by the BEQ-24, subscales 1 and 3 respectively). With regard to 3, results may covary with level of education, loss history, degree of and satisfaction with social support, and religiosity.

Hypothesis 4: Survivors with co-worker friends who were laid off will report more negative perceptions of procedural justice than survivors who did not have co-worker friends laid off.

Hypotheses 1a, 3, and 4 suggested that having co-worker friends laid off would affect survivor participants' post layoff experiences. A two-way MANCOVA including whether or not survivors had coworker friends laid off and age level (18-36 years of age vs. 37-66 years of age) as fixed variables, and BEQ scores, recycling tendencies, and perceptions of procedural justice as dependent variables, and level of education, loss history, degree of and satisfaction with social support, and religiosity as covariates revealed no significant results. Thus, survivors who reported having coworker friends laid off did not display differences in grief, recycling tendencies or fairness perceptions of the layoffs when compared to survivors who did not report having friends laid off, regardless of the participants' age. Thus, hypotheses 1a, 3, and 4 were not supported.

Hypothesis 3a: Survivors reporting greater degrees of social support will report fewer bereavement experiences.

Hypothesis 3a predicted that the degree of social support survivors received would affect the degree of bereavement experiences they reported. Two, one-way MANCOVA's were conducted controlling for level of education and loss history. The first assessed the effect of the degree of social support (summed scores of 12-30 = low support group, summed scores of 31-60 = high support group) on the three BEQ subscales and revealed no significant differences with regard to bereavement experiences. The second, assessing the effect of survivor satisfaction with social support (summed scores of 10-31 = low satisfaction group, summed scores of 32-36 = high satisfaction group) on the three BEQ subscales revealed no significant multivariate results.

However, tests at the univariate level indicated that survivor social support satisfaction did differentiate BEQ3 scores ($F(1,48) = 6.26, p < .05$). Inspection of means suggested that survivors who reported less satisfaction with the social support they received reported being more preoccupied with thoughts of the layoff victims ($M = 10.40$) than compared to survivors who reported more satisfaction with the social support they received ($M = 8.38$). Furthermore, the difference between survivors' support satisfaction and their BEQ2 scores approached significance ($F(1, 48) = 3.48, p = .068$). Means suggested that survivors who reported less satisfaction with the social support they received experienced more guilt, blame, and anger bereavement experiences ($M = 14.48$) than compared to survivors who reported more satisfaction with the social support they received ($M = 11.96$). This test had a low effect size (.02) and low power (.14) suggesting that if the sample size had been larger ($N = 45$), the chances of finding any differences if they indeed existed would have been greater. Thus, hypothesis 3a was partially supported because, although quantity of social support did not seem to affect survivors' bereavement experience, satisfaction with the social support they received did.

Hypothesis 4a: Female survivors will report lower perceptions of procedural justice than male survivors.

Hypothesis 4a suggested that female survivors would report lower perceptions of procedural justice than male survivors. A one-way MANCOVA that assessed gender differences in the survivor group on the procedural justice, recycling, and self-reported health variables while controlling for differences in years of education, loss history, degree of and satisfaction with social support, and religiosity failed to detect any gender differences. Therefore, hypothesis 4a was not supported.

Hypothesis 5: Survivors with more negative perceptions of procedural justice as well as those with a greater reported economic need to work will report more job insecurity, Exploration career related concerns, and recycling tendencies than those who report less economic need to work and more positive procedural justice perceptions.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that survivors with more negative perceptions of procedural justice and greater economic need to work would report less job security than those survivors with more positive perceptions of procedural justice and less economic need to work. A two-way MANCOVA controlling for years of education, degree of and satisfaction with social support, loss history, and religiosity revealed no significant interactions between survivors' fairness perceptions and economic need to work. However, univariate tests revealed that the interaction between fairness perceptions and economic need to work was marginally significant for the total Exploration concerns ($F(1, 47) = 3.92, p = 0.054$). It is probable that a larger sample size may have increased our chances of identifying a significant interaction. This test had a low effect size ($\eta^2 = .08$) and low power (.49) indicating that we had only a 49% chance of finding a statistically significant effect, again, probably due to the small sample size ($N = 56$). Inspection of means suggested that economic need to work did differentiate the number of exploration concerns for those who perceived the layoff procedures as more fair (Higher procedural justice, less economic need to work, $M = 3.42$; higher procedural justice, greater economic need to work, $M = 2.22$). However, economic need to work did not differentiate the survivors on Exploration concerns if they perceived the layoffs to be less fair. See Figure 1. As the results were in the opposite direction than was proposed, hypothesis five was not supported.

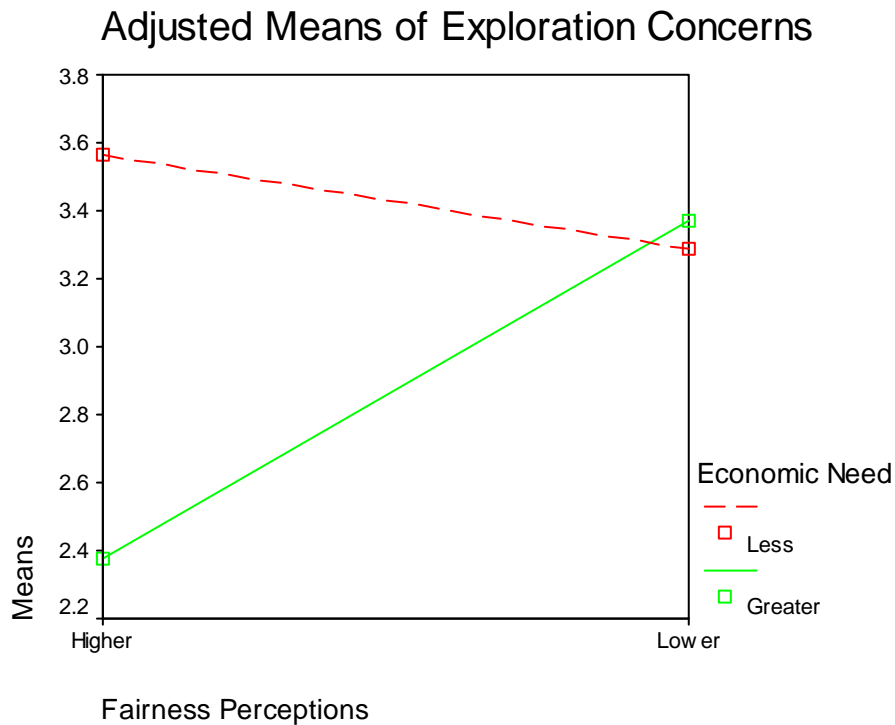


Figure 1.

Hypothesis 6: People in the comparison group will report greater levels of job satisfaction than survivors. Survivors and people in the comparison group with greater levels of job satisfaction will report fewer Exploration career concerns and recycling tendencies than survivors and people in the comparison group with lower levels of job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6 predicted that non-survivors would report greater levels of job satisfaction than survivors. Furthermore, all participants reporting greater job satisfaction levels would report fewer Exploration concerns and recycling tendencies. A one-way ANCOVA was conducted with survivorship status as the fixed variable, job satisfaction as the dependent variable, and religiosity, years of education, degree of and satisfaction with social support, and loss history as covariates. No significant differences were detected, but again, power (.19) and effect size ($\eta = .007$) were low. However, when an exploratory two-way ANCOVA was

conducted with age (18-36 vs. 37-66 years of age) added as a fixed variable, significant main effects for survivorship status ($F(1, 124) = 3.88, p = .05$) and age ($F(1, 124) = 7.54, p < .05$) did emerge, and the age x survivorship status interaction did approach significance ($F(1, 124) = 3.46, p = 0.65$). The power (.45) and effect size ($\eta = .027$) were low for the interaction, thus decreasing our chances of finding a significant result. Specifically, younger employees ($M = 26.62$) reported more dissatisfaction than older employees ($M = 22.82$) (note, higher scores = lower satisfaction), and survivors reported significantly lower job satisfaction ($M = 26.04$) than did non-survivors ($M = 23.40$). The interaction suggests that age may play a larger role in survivors' job satisfaction scores than for non-survivors. (Younger survivors, $M = 29.22$, older survivors, $M = 22.85$; younger non-survivors, $M = 24.00$, older non-survivors, $M = 22.79$.) It appears that being a younger employee, and presumably having less experience in the work world and perhaps having unrealistic expectations of the world of work, renders young survivors disappointed in their jobs, thus they express less satisfaction with their work.

A one-way MANCOVA with participant job satisfaction (summed scores of 8-23 = higher satisfaction, summed scores of 24-48 = lower satisfaction) as the fixed variable, Exploration concerns and recycling tendencies as dependent variables, and religiosity, years of education, and loss history as covariates was significant (Wilks' $\Lambda = .94, F(2, 146) = 4.40, p < .05$). Univariate tests indicated that participants more satisfied with their jobs reported fewer recycling tendencies ($M = 2.25$) than did those who reported less job satisfaction ($M = 2.82$) ($F(1, 147) = 8.48, p < .05$). An exploratory two-way MANCOVA adding survivorship status as a fixed variable indicated no significant interaction between job satisfaction scores and survivorship status. Taken together, these results indicate partial support for hypothesis 6.

Exploratory Analyses

Due to the fact that the vast majority of the hypotheses were not supported by the data, a series of exploratory analyses were conducted to explore the impact of work related and theoretically supported variables on the survivorship experience.

Super's theory proposes that age strongly affects the number of career concerns workers experience (Super, Savikas, & Super, 1996; Super, 1957), thus a two-way MANCOVA was conducted with survivorship status and age (18-36 vs. 37-66 years of age) as fixed variables, all tasks of the ACCI as dependent variables, and religiosity, years of education, degree of and satisfaction with social support, and loss history as covariates. A main effect for age was detected at the multivariate level (Wilks' $\Lambda = .63$, $F(12,110) = 5.44$, $p < .001$). Post hoc at the univariate level indicated that younger workers reported more career concerns within the following tasks than did older workers: Crystallization ($M = 3.23$, $M = 2.39$), Specification ($M = 3.52$, $M = 2.68$), Implementation ($M = 3.33$, $M = 2.38$), Innovating ($M = 3.15$, $M = 2.82$), Stabilizing ($M = 3.52$, $M = 2.73$), Consolidating ($M = 3.49$, $M = 2.70$), Advancing ($M = 3.59$, $M = 2.78$), and Updating ($M = 3.27$, $M = 2.80$), than did older workers. Also at the univariate level, a significant survivorship status x age interaction emerged for the Crystallization task ($F(1, 121) = 3.90$, $p < .05$), and approached significance for the Innovating task ($F(1, 121) = 3.19$, $p = .077$). For Crystallization, age impacted the survivor group significantly more than the non-survivor group ($M = 3.72$ vs. $M = 2.39$), where the younger survivors experienced more Crystallization related career concerns than did the older survivors ($M = 3.72$ vs. $M = 2.39$). This same difference was the trend found within the Innovating task. Survivors tended to report more Innovating concerns than non-survivors ($M = 3.44$ vs. $M = 2.69$), and survivors appeared to be

more affected by age with younger survivors reported more Innovating tasks ($M = 3.44$) than did older survivors ($M = 2.70$).

Given these significant findings, it was assumed that age could potentially play a significant role in the participants' experiences of the substages (vs. tasks as the previous test suggested) and recycling tendencies within Super's theory. Because it is probable that experiencing career related concerns may prompt stress experiences, I wondered if participants would also report different amounts of health concerns depending on their survivorship status and age. Thus, a two-way MANCOVA was conducted with survivorship status and age (18-36 vs. 37-66 years of age) as fixed variables, all substages of the ACCI, recycling tendencies, and self-reported health concerns as dependent variables, and religiosity, years of education, degree of and satisfaction with social support, and loss history as covariates. Again, a main effect for age was detected at the multivariate level (Wilks' $\Lambda = .63$, $F(7, 117) = 9.94$, $p < .001$). Post hocs at the univariate level indicated that younger workers reported significantly more career concerns within the Exploration ($M = 3.61$, $M = 2.70$), Establishment ($M = 3.59$, $M = 2.72$), Maintenance ($M = 3.18$, $M = 2.82$) substages; more recycling tendencies ($M = 3.12$, $M = 2.18$); and more health concerns (Hopkins: $M = 67.30$, $M = 59.99$; SRHQ: $M = 29.12$, $M = 26.57$), than did older workers.

At the univariate level, multiple significant findings emerged. The difference between reported recycling tendencies between survivors ($M = 2.65$) and non-survivors ($M = 2.52$) approached significance ($F(1, 123) = 3.66$, $p = .058$). The survivorship status x age interaction for recycling tendencies ($F(1, 123) = 3.98$, $p < .05$) and health concerns ($F(1, 123) = 4.57$, $p < .05$) was significant. Inspection of the means indicated that age had a stronger effect on recycling tendencies for the survivor group (younger: $M = 3.46$, older: $M = 2.16$) than the non-

survivor group (younger: $M = 2.76$, older: $M = 2.19$). This same difference was found for health concerns (as measured by the Hopkins) with age affecting the survivor group more strongly (Survivor group-younger: $M = 71.25$, older: $M = 56.80$; Non-survivor group- younger: $M = 63.35$, older: $M = 63.19$). It may be the case that younger workers display less career adaptability (as measured by the ACCI) than older workers because they are entering the work force with unrealistic expectations of the world of work and their early career success. It makes some sense that younger survivors report more health concerns and recycling tendencies as they have experienced the additional stress of the reality check that their job is not necessarily secure.

With age apparently playing such a significant role on participants' work related experiences, I wondered what other variables might also impact participants work related experiences. Therefore, an additional series of separate two-way MANCOVA's were conducted combining survivorship status with participants' tenure in their current job (>1-3 years vs. 4-38 years), whether or not they had children, and marital status. In all of these analyses, the dependent variables included job security, all subscales of the ACCI, recycling tendencies, self-reported health variables, and job satisfaction. Years of education, degree of and satisfaction with social support, loss history, and religiosity served as covariates. Significant findings emerged in all three of the analyses. Not surprisingly, a significant effect at the multivariate level emerged for survivorship status (Wilks' $\Lambda = .63$, $F(7,118) = 10.04$, $p < .001$) and tenure (Wilks' $\Lambda = .807$, $F(7,118) = 4.04$, $p = < .001$) in the first MANCOVA. Univariate tests indicated that survivors reported more job security ($M = 34.62$) than non-survivors ($M = 27.63$) ($F(1, 124) = 68.17$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, participants who reported being employed by their current organization for three years or less reported significantly more Exploration concerns ($M = 3.61$, $M = 2.65$) ($F(1, 124) = 24.97$, $p < .001$), Establishment concerns ($M = 3.52$, $M = 2.78$) (F

(1, 124) = 20.65, $p < .001$), Maintenance concerns ($M = 3.16, M = 2.81$) ($F(1, 124) = 6.42, p < .05$), and recycling tendencies ($M = 2.79, M = 2.37$) ($F(1, 124) = 7.74, p < .05$) than those working for their current employers for more than three years. This later finding parallels that of the significant effect of age on these variables, and makes sense given the high correlation between participant age and tenure at current organization (Pearson = .617, $p < .001$). No interaction between tenure and survivorship was found.

Multivariate results indicated a significant main effect for having children (Wilks' $\Lambda = .78, F(9, 115) = 10.04, p < .001$). Univariate results indicated that participants without children reported significantly more Exploration concerns ($M = 3.48, M = 2.76$) ($F(1, 123) = 12.52, p = .001$), Establishment concerns ($M = 3.46, M = 2.78$) ($F(1, 123) = 14.09, p < .001$), recycling tendencies ($M = 2.79, M = 2.37$) ($F(1, 123) = 7.29, p < .05$), health concerns ($M = 66.67, M = 58.71$) ($F(1, 123) = 6.70, p < .05$), and less job satisfaction ($M = 27.16, M = 22.30$) ($F(1, 123) = 15.36, p < .001$) than participants with children. A significant interaction effect between survivorship status and whether or not participants had children ($F(1, 123) = 10.01, p < .05$) indicates that having children has a greater effect on the job satisfaction scores of survivors (w/o children: $M = 30.33$, w/children: $M = 21.35$) than non-survivors (w/o children: $M = 23.99$, w/children: $M = 23.25$).

Marital status also demonstrated a main effect at the multivariate level (Wilks' $\Lambda = .83, F(8, 116) = 3.08, p < .05$). Univariate tests indicated that married participants experienced fewer Exploration concerns ($M = 2.81, M = 3.58$) ($F(1, 123) = 12.98, p < .001$), Establishment concerns ($M = 2.83, M = 3.57$) ($F(1, 123) = 16.80, p < .001$), Maintenance concerns ($M = 2.75, M = 3.25$) ($F(1, 123) = 8.53, p < .05$), recycling tendencies ($M = 2.42, M = 2.82$) ($F(1, 123) = 4.34, p < .05$),

and health concerns ($M = 59.32$, $M = 66.91$) ($F(1, 123) = 5.56$, $p < .05$) than single participants. No interactions emerged.

In a final attempt to further understand any differences in work related experiences between survivors and non-survivors, a decision was made to group these participants, not according to whether or not their organization conducted layoffs within the past year, but according to the number of survivorship experiences participants reported. Therefore, the survivor group ($N = 113$) consisted of participants who reported having at least one survivorship experience, and the non-survivor group ($N = 43$) reported never having a survivorship experiences. No significant results emerged with this grouping; however, the power (.63) and effect size (.092) were relatively small in the one-way MANCOVA, indicating only a 63% chance of discovering any significant differences if they indeed existed. In an attempt to more evenly distribute the survivorship groups, a second analysis considered the non-survivor group ($N = 79$) as consisting of participants who reported zero or one survivorship experience, and the survivor group as participants who reported more than two survivorship experiences ($N = 77$). Again, no significant differences emerged with this grouping, but the chances of detecting such differences were again low (power=.52, eta = .076)

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

Although the majority of the original hypotheses were not supported by the data, two did receive partial support. The hypotheses and their general outcomes are briefly listed below.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that Survivorship status would differ with degree of recycling behavior and that survivors would evidence more recycling behavior than non-survivors.

Hypothesis 1a suggested that survivors who have co-worker friends who were laid off would report more recycling than survivors who do not report having friends laid off. These predictions were not supported.

Hypothesis 2 stated that survivorship status would differentiate the number of career concerns and personal distress participants reported. Hypothesis 2a specified that survivors would report more career concerns related to all tasks within the Exploration stage and the Holding and Innovating tasks within the Maintenance stage than non-survivors. Neither of these hypotheses were supported.

Hypothesis 3 suggested that survivors who had co-worker friends laid off would grieve more intensely than survivors whose friends were not laid off and would specifically report more experiences related to guilt, blame, and anger than those reflecting existential loss, emotional needs, or preoccupation with thoughts of the layoff victims. Furthermore, hypothesis 3a suggested that survivors who reported greater degrees of social support would report fewer bereavement experiences. Although hypothesis 3 was not supported, with regard to 3a, participants who reported greater satisfaction with the social support they received reported less bereavement experiences (i.e. preoccupied with thoughts of victims, guilt, blame, and anger).

Because the quantity of social support did not seem to matter, hypothesis 3a received partial support.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that survivors with co-worker friends who were laid off would report more negative perceptions of procedural justice regarding the layoffs than survivors who did not have co-worker friends laid off. Furthermore, hypothesis 4a suggested that female survivors would report lower perceptions of procedural justice than male survivors. Neither of these predictions were supported.

Hypothesis 5 stated that survivors with more negative perceptions of procedural justice as well as those with a greater reported economic need to work would report more job insecurity, Exploration career related concerns, and recycling tendencies than those who reported less economic need to work and more positive procedural justice perceptions. The data did not support this prediction.

Hypothesis 6 suggested that non-survivors would report greater levels of job satisfaction than survivors, and participants with greater levels of job satisfaction would report fewer Exploration concerns and recycling tendencies than participants with lower levels of job satisfaction. The data revealed that survivors did report more recycling tendencies than non-survivors. When age was added as a fixed variable, survivors did report less job satisfaction than non-survivors, and younger workers reported less job satisfaction than older workers. Furthermore, age seemed to affect job satisfaction levels in the survivor group more with younger survivors reporting less job satisfaction than older survivors. Therefore, hypothesis 6 was partially supported.

The exploratory analyses revealed many interesting findings. When participant age was considered, younger workers reported more career concerns as reflected in many ACCI stages

(Exploration, Establishment, and Maintenance) and tasks (Crystallization, Specification, Implementation, Innovating, Stabilizing, Consolidating, Advancing, and Updating), recycling tendencies, and health concerns than did older workers. Furthermore, age proved to play a more significant role in the survivor group in regards to Crystallization, Innovation, recycling tendencies, and health concerns than in the non-survivor group. Regarding job security, not surprisingly, non-survivors reported feeling more secure in their jobs than survivors. When participant tenure at their current job was considered, the data revealed that those participants working three or less years at their current job reported more Exploration, Establishment, and Maintenance concerns as well as recycling tendencies.

Marital status and participant family situation were also found to impact participants' career experiences. Married participants with children reported fewer Exploration and Establishment concerns, recycling tendencies, and health concerns. Participants with children, regardless of marital status, also reported greater job satisfaction. Married participants, regardless of whether or not they were parents, reported fewer Maintenance concerns.

Implications of the Results

Despite the numerous unsupported hypotheses, the data did reveal important findings regarding survivorship in the workplace. The results can be divided into three main categories: 1) those explaining the different work related experiences survivors experience when compared to non-survivors, 2) those explaining variables that might differentiate the survivorship experience, and 3) those that help us understand workers' career related experiences regardless of survivorship status. In general, though survivorship status did prove to differentiate participants regarding some work related experiences, age appeared to be a more important differentiating variable.

Variables Differentiating the Survivorship Experience

Social support.

Some of the hypotheses predicted that certain variables would significantly differentiate survivors in regards to their survivorship experience. Whereas the number of friends survivors reported being laid off did not seem to affect the post-layoff experiences measured, survivors' satisfaction with the social support they received did impact their grief reactions. This later finding is consistent with the grief literature which suggests the bereaved individuals who receive adequate social support are at less risk for adverse bereavement experiences (Sanders, 1993). Interestingly, the quantity of social support did not significantly impact survivors' grief reactions; the important variable was survivors' satisfaction with the support, regardless of how many people they had in their social circle to call upon. This finding is consistent with the effect of social support on other stressed populations, such as parents of premature infants. Affleck, Tennen, and Rowe (1991) reported that it was mothers' satisfaction with the social support they received while adjusting to the birth of a premature infant, not the amount of support, that predicted the mothers' adjustment outcomes. Survivors in the current study reported that the more satisfied they were with their social support, the less they found themselves preoccupied with thoughts of the layoff victims. Furthermore, they may not experience as much anger about the layoffs and feel as much personal guilt and responsibility for them as compared to survivors who are not as satisfied with the support provided by their social network.

It may be the case that survivors who are more satisfied with their social support have deeper, more meaningful relationships with those providing the support. Therefore, these relationships are better able to buffer the loss of co-worker victims. Again, this is consistent with the literature on parents of premature infants (Affleck, Tennen, & Rowe, 1991; Beckman &

Pokorni, 1988). In the case of these parents, informal support such as listening when one needed to talk and expressing understanding for one's situation was related to lower degrees of distress. Thus, it makes sense that the survivors in the present study are less occupied with thoughts of the victims; they have other meaningful relationships to help them cope. Furthermore, the meaningful social support providers may help them put the layoffs into perspective, helping the survivors rationally evaluate their responsibility in the downsizing, thus reducing the amount of guilt and blame the survivors feel. Taken together, survivors who are less preoccupied with thoughts of the victims and feel less personal responsibility for the outcome, may feel less angry about the downsizing in general. It is probable that the reason no differences in bereavement experiences based on number of friends laid off were found was because it is not the number of friends lost in the layoff that matters, rather it is survivors' satisfaction with the support they received from others in the post-layoff period that counts.

Perceptions of fairness.

Another variable that may differentiate the survivorship experience is the degree to which survivors believe the layoff procedures were fair. Interestingly, the greater survivors' procedural justice perceptions and the less economic need they had to work, the more Exploration concerns they reported. This finding is contrary to what the data was expected to show. It was expected that survivors who were upset at the injustice of the layoffs would be more inclined to reconsider their line of work and explore other avenues that may be better suited for them. Furthermore, it was suspected that survivors who depended more on their current income to support their families would be more worried about future layoffs, especially if they believed the former waves were unfair, and would be more likely to seek alternative work to ensure continued paychecks. However, the data suggests differently. It may be the case that survivors who

depend less on their jobs economically, and who believe the way the layoffs were conducted was fair, have more cognitive and emotional space to rationally consider whether or not their current job field is right for them. In other words, they may experience less pressure to remain where they are, thus feel less paralyzed when it comes to considering alternative options. Not only is the economic risk less for this group of survivors, but they may also have more faith in the work world, thus feel more secure in trusting an alternative employer.

Brockner (1990) reported that survivors who perceived the layoffs to be unfair, were more withdrawn from the organization, and displayed a decreased work effort. This finding may help explain the current data. That is, if survivors are emotionally and cognitively withdrawn from their organization and arguably their jobs, perhaps they are also withdrawing from thinking about career alternatives or the goodness of fit between their work needs and their current position. Perhaps a coping mechanism employed by survivors is simply to go through the motions at work and not think too deeply about what other options may exist for them.

Gender did not prove to differentiate the procedural justice perceptions of layoff survivors. There are various possible reasons why men and women perceived the layoff procedures to be equally fair. First, the stereotypical male and female values of morality and justice as posed by Gilligan (1982) may have both been equally met in the layoffs the survivors experienced. Alternatively, Gilligan's hypothesis about gender differences in this regard may not hold up in the world of work two decades after she proposed her ideas. Perhaps women in today's world-of-work have accepted and understand the bottom-line oriented business decisions that are often made, therefore, their perceptions of justice differ little from the logical decision making style that is more stereotypically male.

Factors that Differentiate Survivors and Non-survivors

Whereas, job security and job satisfaction clearly differentiated our survivor and non-survivor participants, age also seemed to play an important role in our participants' career related experiences, especially for the young survivors in our sample.

Job satisfaction and job security.

Non-survivors reported being more satisfied with their jobs and feeling more secure in their employment than did survivors. It seems logical that employees working for organizations that have not experienced recent downsizing would feel that their jobs are not as much at risk as those working for employers who have recently employed layoffs. The fact that they could lose their jobs due to downsizings, especially in a weak economy, hits much closer to home for survivors. They know that no-fault termination is a fact of life in today's work world as their coworkers have been recently laid off. It is likely that non-survivors also know that downsizing could occur. In fact, Greenhaus (2003) suggests that overall workers today experience less job security due to the turbulence of the new economy, evidenced by the continued loss of old jobs and creation of new jobs. However, non-survivors may believe their company is less likely to engage in this form of cost saving.

Because the literature has shown that survivors often report less job satisfaction than non-survivors (e.g. Brockner, Glover, & Blonder, 1988), it was not surprising to find that this was also the case in the current sample. Even if the job satisfaction is not enough to cause them to consider alternative forms of employment, it makes sense that the overall satisfaction and fulfillment survivors get out of their job is decreased when they believe their job is at risk. Additionally, increases in work load and changes in job opportunities in the post-layoff period may also contribute to the decreased satisfaction survivors experience (Citrome, 1997).

Interestingly, when age and family status of the participants were considered, results indicated that younger, childless survivors may experience less job satisfaction than older survivors with children. It may be the case that younger survivors are adjusting to the reality of the world of work, facts of life that older survivors have had more time to accept. Younger survivors may be wrestling more with the uncertainty and relative unpredictability of the changing work environment, especially given that they have seen their laid off co-workers become victims of the turbulent work world.

Furthermore, our data suggested that younger workers in general experience more career concerns, thus displaying less career adaptability than older workers. Marvis and Hall (1994) suggest that adaptability is a vital characteristic for workers to perceive their careers as being successful. It makes sense that having more concerns, or having less career adaptability, could lead to increased job dissatisfaction. One possible reason for the higher quantity of career concerns could be that these younger employees may be surprised at the affect the weak economy is having on their places of employment, especially if they were anticipating entering a workforce that was strong, much like it was less than a decade ago when they may have been in school and yet to enter the world of work. Older workers, on the other hand, may experience more satisfaction and less concerns because they have become more involved in their work over time and, thus, experience more perceived control in their jobs (Hayslip & Panek, 2002).

Being a parent seems to protect survivors from further decreases in job satisfaction. Although no gender differences were found in the present study, Friedman and Greenhaus (2000) reported that fathers tended to report more job satisfaction than childless men, however, the opposite was the case for mothers in their study. Perhaps both mothers and fathers in the present study consider their children a higher priority in their lives, thus their criteria for job satisfaction

is not as stringent as childless survivors. These parents may reap aspects of their life satisfaction from their children, but without children survivors may demand a greater level of fulfillment out of their work life. This coincides with Super's emphasis on work values (Super, Savikas, & Super, 1996) and life roles in this theory (Osborne, Brown, & Niles, 1997). Working parents in the current sample may value family over work and place a relatively heavy emphasis on the role of parent in their lives. Super would contend that these more salient values and roles determine one's satisfaction to a greater extent than do other values (i.e. job advancement) and roles (i.e. worker) (Osborne, Brown, & Niles, 1997).

Age Difference in Survivors and Non-survivors Career Experiences

Although survivorship status in and of itself did not differentiate our participants in terms of recycling tendencies or career concerns, when age was considered, other significant findings did emerge. It appears that survivorship status may not play as important or as prominent of a role in employees' career concerns as expected; whereas, age seems to be a more meaningful variable.

Career concerns and recycling tendencies.

When compared to non-survivors, age plays a greater role on survivors' recycling tendencies, Crystallization tasks, and perhaps Innovating tasks. Regarding recycling tendencies, perhaps the younger workers had unrealistic expectations of their work experience, then when the layoffs hits, they were more inclined to actively re-consider their current position and even consider new employment in hopes of discovering the kind of work that would give them the fulfillment they originally expected. It is not surprising that, in general, younger workers experience more Crystallization related tasks (tasks involving determining the field of work one is really interested in) than did older workers, as this is one premise of Super's theory. Again,

utilizing the hypothesis that younger workers may have come into the work world with expectations that the current world of work could not meet, it makes sense that age may play a greater role on survivors' Crystallization struggles than non-survivors. Younger survivors are faced with the reality that their job may be at risk, a realization that may be new to them given their recent entrance into the workforce, therefore, they may be more likely to reconsider what field and level of work might really be suited for them. Super, Thompson, and Lindeman (1988) propose that people likely experience Crystallization task struggles at choice points in their career. It may be the case that the survivorship experience is one of those points. In sum, Super's theory suggests that younger workers and those workers faced with choice points are most at risk for experiencing Crystallization tasks. Therefore, it makes sense that the younger survivors in this sample report engaging in more Crystallization tasks than the older and non-survivor participants.

The marginally significant finding that the younger survivors experience more Innovating task struggles (the expectation of making unique contributions to one's field) than the older and non-survivor participants is somewhat surprising. Super suggests that workers over the age of 45 are most likely to struggle with the task of Innovating and breaking new ground in their careers. However, there are some reasons why this may be more the case with the younger survivors. The literature suggests that being a survivor decreases the amount of risk survivors are willing to take in their work (Noer, 1993). Innovation often requires risk-taking, thus it makes sense that survivors are less willing to take risks as they fear failure may result in them being the next to be laid off.

But why is this affecting younger survivors to a greater extent than older survivors? Younger workers may have adapted more readily to the new world of work concept that

workers' evaluations are performance and value based vs. loyalty and longevity based. In fact, Rousseau (1995) explained that the new economy involves new unspoken agreements between employee and employers, referred to as the new psychological contract. Whereas, the old contract relied heavily on relational components, or a high degree of and long-term emotional commitment; the new contract is more transactional in nature. This means that the contract involves concepts such as pay for performance, low degree of emotional commitment between the parties, and easy exit from the business relationship. Therefore, it may be the case that younger workers are aware that they are expected to add value to the company from the beginning, which often involves proving their value by continually innovating on the job, and that their loyalty to the company does not guarantee them a job. Older workers, on the other hand, may not have internalized this new expectation, thus many of them may be less affected by the survivorship experience in this way.

Another interesting, and perhaps somewhat counterintuitive, finding that emerged in the data was that younger survivors report more health concerns than older survivors. It seems logical to hypothesize the opposite finding, that older survivors would report more health concerns than younger survivors if not strictly based on the fact that they are older. Again, it may be the case that younger survivors are struggling with the fact that their expectations about the world of work were perhaps unrealistic. As previously discussed, this may prompt recycling tendencies, Crystallization and Innovating task struggles, and decreased job satisfaction. All of these negative career related experiences may prompt negative physical health responses, thus younger workers report more health concerns. Furthermore, the literature suggests that workers experience decreasing work related stress as they get older (Warr, 1992 as cited in Hayslip & Panek, 2002). Therefore, these older workers may also experience less overall health concerns,

which can include stress related health symptoms, when compared to younger workers who may experience more work related stress.

Although the age related differences are interesting, it is still curious why differences between survivors and non-survivors in regards to recycling tendencies and career concerns and their related tasks were not found. Of course, our sample may have simply been too small to detect any existing difference.

One possible explanation is selective sampling. Self-selection bias may have affected the sample, questioning whether the general population of survivors is represented with the present small sample. It could be that the post-layoff consequences experienced by these employees is much greater than that reported in the study because survivors most affected chose not to participate in this study. These survivors could be over inundated with additional work, too angry to approach the study, or may not want to think about experiences related to the layoffs because avoiding such cognitions and emotions makes it easier for them to cope. Conversely, the survivors who chose to participate may have been the most affected and looking for a place to express themselves. Therefore, they were eager to share and process their experiences through the questionnaires. However, the former may be more likely.

However, assuming no differences were to be found, it may be the case that, in general, survivors and non-survivors are relatively equally stressed working in the current economy. As the ACCI (our main tool measuring career concerns and tasks) is a measure of career related adaptability, the findings suggest that both groups are equally adaptable to changes in work and working conditions, regardless of survivorship status. Survivors and non-survivors alike may have adapted to the changing world of work at relatively the same rate. In fact, our findings

suggest that when it comes to Super's career tasks and concerns, age may play a greater role in workers' adaptability than survivorship status does.

Factors Affecting Career Related Experiences Regardless of Survivorship Status

Marital and family status, job satisfaction, age, and tenure in one's current job, emerged as variables differentiating the career related experiences of our workers regardless of their survivorship status.

Family and marital status.

It may be the case that the reason why the single and childless participants expressed more career related concerns is due, at least in part, to the more central focus these participants' jobs may play in their lives. Additionally, Friedman & Greenhaus (2000) found the married workers who feel supported by their spouses report increased career satisfaction. Perhaps the spousal support married workers in the current sample received contributed to the decreased career concerns they expressed. Friedman & Greenhaus also reported that married men with children reported greater career satisfaction, whereas married women reported no differences in career satisfaction, and mothers reported decreased satisfaction with their careers. In the current sample, both single and childless participants, regardless of gender, reported more Exploration and Establishment concerns, recycling tendencies, and health concerns; and single workers reported the additional stress of increased Maintenance concerns. As it may also be the case that many of the younger participants are more likely to be single and without children, the reasons for the increased reporting in these areas for this population may be similar to the reason why younger workers report many of these same experiences. However, an additional explanation may be that single, childless workers may look to their careers as a more significant part of their identity and put more emphasis on finding work they truly believe fits them and establishing

themselves and, in the case of single workers, moving up within their field. Married workers and those workers with children may expend a great deal of their time and energy on their spouses and children. Whereas, single and/or childless workers may place much of that same energy into their careers. It may be the case that these workers spend more time on the job, take more work home more often, and expect to reap more from their investment into their careers than workers who have spouses and families to also focus on. Therefore, they may express more concerns about the degree to which they are successfully establishing themselves and moving up within their careers- they simply expend more energy focusing on this area of their lives.

Job satisfaction.

Whereas being single and/or without children increases workers' likelihood of reporting recycling tendencies, being more satisfied in one's job was associated with fewer recycling tendencies in the current sample. This finding makes sense given the fact that recycling involves making a change in one's career after having made an initial career choice (Super et al., 1992). If one is not satisfied in their current position, it naturally follows that they may be more likely to consider a change when compared to those workers who are satisfied in their work.

Age and tenure.

According to the participants, being a younger worker renders one with less career adaptability and less job satisfaction. For both survivors and non-survivors, younger workers reported more Exploration concerns and accompanying Crystallization, Specification, and Implementation tasks; Establishment concerns and accompanying Stabilizing, Consolidation, and Advancing tasks; and Maintenance concerns and accompanying Updating and Innovating tasks. In one respect, the participants in this study followed Super's proposition of age-related career stages. He proposed that younger workers are more likely to struggle with Exploration and

Establishment concerns and their related tasks to a greater extent than older workers (Super, 1990).

Exploration. Even though Super suggests that people aged 14-25 are most likely to struggle with Exploration concerns, it makes sense that the younger workers in the present sample would be more likely to express concerns related to this stage than our older workers. This result parallels that which was discovered with tenure; workers who reported working in their current job for three years or less experienced more Exploration, Establishment, and Maintenance concerns. Because tenure and age are highly correlated (Pearson $r = .617$, $p < .001$), it is likely that many of the younger workers have been at their jobs for fewer years than the older workers. Super suggests that workers struggle with Exploration concerns at choice points within their career path, one of which can be entrance into the world of work (Super, Thompson, & Lindeman, 1988). Shortly after entering the work world, people often question whether or not they have made the right choice and whether their current job fits their interests, skills, and values. It also makes sense that younger workers are struggling with more Specification tasks (selecting and committing to a chosen occupation). Often when one enters a career field or organization, one is trying to specify their place in that field, which often involves choosing a specialization in which to be involved. It logically follows then, that younger workers would be more concerned with carrying out the Exploration related decisions they have made, which is the central aspect of the Implementation task (making plans related to attaining a position in the chosen career and carrying them out). This is certainly not to say that older workers do not grapple with Exploration concerns and related tasks. Super suggests that older workers can certainly recycle back into the Exploration stage (Super et al., 1992). However, it makes sense that more younger workers were experiencing these concerns in the current sample as it is

developmentally appropriate given their age and lower degree of experience in the work world in comparison to older workers.

Establishment. Super (1990) suggests that workers aged 25-40 are most likely to struggle with Establishment concerns (obtaining a secure job within one's selected occupation), and this was the age range that made up a large proportion of the "younger worker" group. The data supported Super's theory in that the younger workers reported more Establishment concerns and being more focused on all the tasks within this stage than did the older workers. The career tasks in this stage involve establishing oneself in the chosen career position, settling down, pursuing a stable lifestyle both personally and career wise, developing security in their job, and advancing into more financially rewarding and/or challenge work roles. Interestingly, research has reported that workers who are more motivated to advance within their jobs, are less likely to perceive their careers as successful (Aryee, Chay, & Tan, 1994).

This, combined with the other career concerns younger workers expressed, may contribute to the reasons why younger workers reported less job satisfaction. The fact that research has shown that older workers experience less work related stress (Hayslip & Panek, 2002) may, in part, explain why older workers reported greater satisfaction with their work. Another explanation is offered by Parasuraman and Greenhaus (2002). They suggest that, over time, workers may increase their self-esteem and career decision making self-efficacy, rendering them better equipped to make career decisions that maximize the person-career fit between themselves and their jobs/careers. If older workers indeed do make more informed decisions, it makes sense they would experience greater career satisfaction. Parasuramen and Greenhaus' explanation may also apply to why older workers, in general, reported fewer career concerns; they have fewer concerns because they know themselves and the world of work well enough to

choose work that fulfills them and that they feel secure in navigating on a short and long-term basis.

Maintenance. Contrary to Super's theory, the younger workers reported more Maintenance related concerns than the older workers did. According to the age-related aspects of Super's theory, workers aged 45 and older are most likely to express Maintenance concerns which are related to preserving one's status and security in their chosen occupation, often through innovating and making significant contributions to one's organization and/or career field. The data do not suggest that the older workers are not concerned about Maintenance, it just suggests that the younger workers have greater concerns in this area. Why might this be? One probability is that, as suggested earlier, younger workers may have a greater awareness of the performance and value based criteria of their continued employment that Rousseau (1995) discusses as being a significant aspect of the new economy. Thus, they may be expressing more stress over the desire to prove their worth to the organization through updating their field related knowledge and using that knowledge to make new, value laden contributions to their organization. It may be the case that due to their limited time on the job and experience in the field, succeeding in Maintenance related tasks is much more challenging than for older workers. Thus, older workers may express some age-appropriate Maintenance concerns, but younger workers are perhaps struggling more in this area because they are attempting to grapple with tasks they do not have enough resources to succeed in.

Furthermore, Weick (1996) describes today's organizations as being boundaryless, which could contribute to younger workers' Maintenance concerns. Boundaryless means that organizations' internal and external boundaries have become more permeable. Organizations' employees move within the organizations in attempts to gain cross-functional skills and increase

one's value to the organization, and even outside of the organization in the role of consultant or contract worker. Weick suggests that today's boundaryless organizations result in more vague work rules and make a worker's next steps in the job or career less obvious. Whereas the older participants may believe they have accomplished Maintenance related tasks, the younger workers may be unsure of how to go about making significant contributions to their organization in organizations that appear to be void of boundaries.

Disengagement. Although Supers' theory seemed to do a reasonably good job in predicting the career related experiences of our younger workers, why did the older workers fail to express more Disengagement concerns (the desire or need to transition from active worker to retiree) than younger workers? The data suggest that younger and older workers express relatively equal amount of concerns when it comes to slowing down in their careers, planning for retirement, and actively engaging in retirement activities.

One of the most probable explanations for this finding is the effect the changing work world is having on the way people retire (Sterns & Kaplan, 2003). The transition into retirement today is becoming more complex (Szinovacz, 2003) and can take on many forms. For a variety of reasons, people may choose to move in and out of retirement (Sterns & Kaplan, 2003), may take on bridging jobs that aid in the transition from full-time worker to retiree, engage in part-time work, or take on new careers all together (Szinovacz, 2003). In fact, more older people are in the workforce today than ever before (Hayslip & Panek, 2002) and many older workers express a desire to continue to work (Sterns & Kaplan, 2003).

What factors might affect the older participants' desire to continue working? Researchers indicate that people's need for control, attachment to different life roles, job satisfaction (Barnes-Farrell, 2003), financial need (Sterns & Kaplan, 2003; Szinovacz, 2003), and perceived health

(Barnes-Farrell, 2003; Szinovacz, 2003) can all play a role in individuals' decision whether or not to retire. Barnes-Farrell explains that, due to people's tendency to seek ways to maintain control of their lives, if individuals perceive themselves as having more control in their working lives than in retirement, they would likely chose to continue working and delay retirement. Furthermore, often people have fears or anxiety about retirement life (Barnes-Farrell, 2003), which can decrease their control beliefs around retirement and reinforce the decision to continue working.

People's attachment to the roles they play in their work life can also delay traditional retirement (Barnes-Farrell, 2003). Specifically, individuals who identify with the worker, organization member, or career role, will likely want to continue to identify with this powerful aspect of their identity in later life. This desire would reinforce their decision to remain in the work force in some way. The "worker" identifies with being a productive member of the working society. In this way, the worker does not have to work in the same job or for the same organization, but they will likely want to continue to engage in some sort of work in their traditional retirement years. The "organization member" identifies with working for a particular organization, thus it will be important to them to remain a member in some form in later life. It is probable that the organization members are more concerned with keeping their jobs and growing their organizations than they are with slowing down and engaging in retirement activities. The older worker who identifies with their "career role" has a professional identify tied to their occupation, not necessarily the job or organization. In this case, they will likely seek work that allows them to continue in their profession, perhaps in a consultant or teaching role.

Job satisfaction and health status may also have affected the older participants' surprisingly minimal concerns about retirement. Although research to the contrary was noted,

Barnes-Farrell (2003) summarized a body of literature that suggests a relationship between positive feelings about their jobs and the desire to delay retirement. This could be the case in the current study, as the older participants reported more job satisfaction than did the younger workers. Likewise, the healthier older workers are, the more likely they are to consider continuing full-time work (Barnes-Farrell, 2003; Szinovacz, 2003). Again, the older workers in the current study perceived themselves to be in better health than the younger workers, which may encourage them to continue working at their current pace in future years.

Another reason today's workers are working longer and retirement at age 65 is no longer a given fact or realistic expectation is that older workers often have a financial need to continue work (Sterns & Kaplan, 2003; Szinovacz, 2003). In fact, due to the weak economy over the past four years, many older workers have had to return to the workforce to make up for lost investments that made up the bulk of their retirement funds (Sterns & Kaplan, 2003). Additionally, the US is realizing it may have difficulty financing the Baby Boomers' retirement years, thus are altering social security regulations such as increasing the eligibility age. This further increases many older workers' need to continue actively working. As a result of these and related changes, the current generation of older workers are realizing they may need to supplement their retirement savings and are breaking the retirement norm by engaging in alternatives to traditional retirement.

Thus, the Baby Boomers are changing the way American's retire, for a variety of reasons. They are coming up with creative ways to continue working, moving in and out of the work force, and in all, viewing retirement as a process versus an abrupt change in one's working life (Hayslip & Panek, 2002). Although it is unlikely that the older workers in this study are not thinking about retirement, it may be the case that they are not thinking about retirement in

traditional ways. As Super's ACCI's Disengagement questions are based on traditional ideas of retirement, it might not be surprising that the older and younger workers reported no differences in the degree to which they were thinking about and planning for retirement.

Age versus cohort effects. In the current sample age appears to be a stronger predictor of career related experiences than does survivorship status. Given the developmental nature of people's career paths, the strong age/career stage association makes sense and is consistent with Super's theory. However, the data suggest that given the changes in the world or work over the last two decades, the age ranges associated with Super's theory may not be as robust as they may have been in what used to be a more traditional work world. Today's workers appear to be concerned with Maintenance oriented concerns at a much younger age than what used to be the case. Furthermore, there is no significant difference between older and younger workers in regards to their focus on Deceleration related tasks. Therefore, where younger workers seem to still be more concerned with Exploration and Establishment tasks, as Super's theory would suggest, the current data suggest that Maintenance concerns emerge much earlier than was originally suggested by Super and that workers regardless of age, are equally concerned about Deceleration.

However, it is interesting to consider whether or not the same findings would emerge if this study was conducted on future generations of workers. In other words, do the current findings reflect true maturation (age) differences in workers over time, which Super's theory simply may not account as well for in the 21st century? Or could the results reflect differences between cohorts or generations of workers? The later would reflect a cohort effect, whereas the former would represent an age effect (Baltes, Reese, & Nesselrode, 1988). Perhaps the cohorts represented in the current sample are adjusting to the new world of work in different ways based

on the unique experiences of their generations. For example, perhaps the older workers are reporting more job satisfaction, fewer career concerns, and better perceived health because they are more aware of how bad the state of the economy could be because of their parents' stories about surviving the Great Depression. Maybe the younger generations are expressing such disappointment with work because they expected the job security they witnessed their parents enjoying while they were children. Perhaps they expected to reap the benefits of the strong, expanding economy the country enjoyed in the late 1980's and 1990's when this generation may have been in secondary or post-secondary school and yet to enter the job market. If these explanations hold for the results of this study, the same study may reveal different results if done with future generations of workers with different shared cohort experiences. Sterns and Kaplan (2003) criticize linear, age-graded developmental models, like Super's, stating they take into account only one aspect of behavioral change during the life span. However, they also acknowledge the difficulty of creating theories that account for the broad range of differences among people. As the idea of cohort effects suggest, such linear models do not take into account cohort effects, the normative, history graded factors that affect most members of a generation similarly. They also do not consider "nonnormative" influences that include the unique experiences that individuals encounter over a lifetime that do not necessarily affect other people of the same age or generation. Keeping these three influences on behavioral change in mind, it seems it is hard to study such lifespan changes and determine exactly why change is occurring. In the current case, are the current results regarding career concerns an effect of maturational (age) differences of the workers, cohort differences, or nonnormative experiences? Using the cross-sectional research design it is hard to tell because it does not allow the ability to compare age and cohort effects as a sequential research design would.

Recommendations for Workers, Organizations, and Others with Influence on Workers' Careers

Despite the preceding questions, the results imply suggestions for the individual worker, organizations, career counselors, and others who have the capacity to influence the careers of others. It is the hope that these recommendations may serve to increase the quality of worker's lives in today's work environment.

Recommendations Relating to Survivors

Survivors appear to worry about the security of their job and are less satisfied with their work. Furthermore, younger survivors seem to express more concerns about their careers than do older survivors, which may lead to increased stress and more health concerns. Although it may be impossible to eradicate all of the worry and stress that is associated with surviving a layoff, more attention to these consequences by both organizations and individual workers may decrease these negative effects.

Downsizing almost always results in more work for fewer workers. Giving survivors more ownership in determining who takes on what extra work may serve to prevent job dissatisfaction and may even allay some of the career concerns of younger survivors. Organizations can encourage survivors to create career management plans, and redistribute the extra work to employees who could professionally benefit from the experience gained by the redistributed work tasks. Furthermore, supervisors can work with survivors, especially younger survivors, to ensure that their short and long-term career goals are realistic. Unrealistic goals get workers up for failure and ultimately lead to decreased motivation (Whitmore, 2002). Setting realistic goals may serve to prevent some of the perhaps unnecessary concern younger survivors express in regards to Innovating tasks. The career management plans could readily link to organizational needs, helping survivors feel that their work is contributing value to the

organization. Survivors who are assured of their value and who believe that the work they are taking on is directly contributing to their career goals, are probably more likely to be satisfied with their work, feel more secure in their job, and be less concerned with Exploration and Maintenance tasks because they will be taking action to fulfill the needs of these stages.

Recommendations Regardless of Survivorship Status

Organizations, regardless of their layoff history, could increase their attention towards their employees' career management plans in efforts to increase employees' job satisfaction, decrease turnover due to recycling tendencies, and decrease the amount of career related concerns expressed by younger workers. Many organizations require career management plans, however, all too often they are simply a task to be checked off to satisfy the needs of the human resources department. Carefully constructed, realistic short and long-term career goals created as part of a strategic career management plan could significantly contribute to increased worker satisfaction and decreased career concerns, especially for younger workers. The current data suggests that younger workers may have visions of grandeur when entering the workforce or starting with a new organization. It appears that, too often, they have unrealistic expectations of the contributions they will make to their organization in the early part of their tenure. Their inability to follow through with this innovation, may lead to unnecessary stress, feeling devalued, and low self-efficacy. An organizational culture that actively works with employees' to develop realistic career goals could help younger employees set appropriate expectations of their contributions.

In today's work world, it is likely that career management needs to be an active part of organizations' cultures. It can no longer be something that workers think about around the annual performance evaluation time. Rather, each new project and new responsibility taken on

could directly link to employees' career management plan, thus the plans should become a constant fixture of the culture. Furthermore, employees' short and long-term goals should not only reflect what the employee seeks to professionally accomplish, but should also directly link to the organization's strategic plan. Inherent in this model is the assumption that the organization clearly and regularly communicates its goals to its employees. Effective communication to employees from organizational leadership, especially within an organizations that has experienced layoffs, increases employees perceptions of job security (Dunlap, 1994) and increased organizational commitment (Brockner et al., 1990). This way, the needs of the employee and the organization are being met, increasing the satisfaction of both parties. The employees may experience more fulfillment in their jobs because they are actively working towards their professional goals, and the organization has employees whose work is contributing to the fulfillment of its goals. Supervisors can be actively involved in helping employees set realistic goals, decreasing the chances of younger employees expecting too much of themselves too soon.

Of course, the concept of paying attention to employees' professional needs is nothing new. However, it is probable that many organizations have yet to realize the positive results they could reap by more actively working to team with its employees to help them reach their professional goals. Especially in a time of economic uncertainly, taking such a big picture approach where the focus is on long term gain, can seem to be too great of a risk in the short term. However, it may be the case that employees who readily see their value to the organization, and who believe that they can reach their professional goals while working for that organization, will have fewer recycling tendencies, express less active concern for their career futures, feel more secure in their jobs, and reap more satisfaction from their work, making the time spent

planning and continually monitoring employees' future contribution to the organization worth the investment.

Career Planning with or without Organizational Support

It is probable that many organizations will be slow to implement such a culture shift, or will never do so. In this case, employees will need to engage in such long-term planning on their own. In today's world of work, employees need to consider themselves responsible for their professional development and continued learning, versus depending on their organization to provide such opportunities (Greenhaus, 2003; Noer, 1993). Taking this independent stance may give workers more ownership over their careers and a greater feeling of control over their futures. If active career management is not part of a workers' culture, he can engage in such an activity independently- creating professional goals that readily add value to their employer by linking to the goals of the organization. Seeking out the guidance of a mentor (Roche, 1979), or career or life coach (Zeus & Skiffington, 2000), in or out of the organization (Greenhaus, 2003), can help ensure that one's goals are realistic and appropriately challenging. Taking this approach will not only allow the employee and employer to reap the benefits already mentioned, but also allow the employee a way to continually monitor the fit between themselves and their organization. Employees who find that their professional goals no longer fit within the strategic plan of their company have the options of rethinking their career management plan, or considering alternative employment opportunities that are more in line with their professional development needs.

This type of goal setting where workers consider their long and short term professional goals and link those goals to their organizations' strategic plan can become part of training curriculums at secondary and post-secondary institutions. Preparing workers in this way allows

them to take an active role in their career management process from the start, versus running the risk of new workers depending on employers to determine their career paths. This enables workers to actively monitor the fit between their and the organization's needs by providing criteria with which to evaluate their current position.

Weaknesses of the Current Study and Recommendations for Future Research

Application to Career Development Theories

Perhaps one of the most prominent weaknesses of this study is its grounding in a linear, age-graded theory of career development (Sterns & Kaplan, 2003). However, there appear to be very few alternatives in terms of career development theories that attempt to explain the changes in adult career development over time. In fact, even more recent theories of career development posed by organizational researchers echo Super's age-graded stage ideas. For example, Arthur, Inkson, and Pringle's (1999) theory poses three career modes, fresh energy, informed direction, and seasoned engagement, that Greenhaus (2003) suggests are very similar to Super's Exploration, Establishment, and Maintenance. Both Super and Arthur and colleagues allow for the notion of recycling through the stages or modes in response to internal or external changes. Although the Arthur et al. model is not hindered by the historically rigid association with age ranges that Super's is, it proposes that workers progress through the three modes in early career, mid-career, and late career respectively. Parasuraman, Greenhaus, and Linnehan (2000) propose that age is still a good marker in terms of understanding one's career development over the course of the adult life. However, they propose a more obvious inclusion of the idea of multiple career/job changes and emphasize attending to the degree of person-environment fit as people move in and out of different work engagements. Perhaps a study that used such a model that combines the notion of age-graded stages with career change and person-environment fit

variables would help us better understand any differences between survivors' and non-survivors' career experiences. Perhaps we would find that workers who have engaged in multiple career transitions and who have learned enough about themselves and the world of work in the process, make better choices in regards to their fit within the jobs and organizations they choose and fair better in the aftermath of a layoff. It would also not be surprising to find that older workers would be the ones with the experience and knowledge to make the more informed choices.

Differentiating Age versus Cohort Effects

As noted earlier, a weakness associated with a cross-sectional study is the inability to distinguish between age and cohort effects. In other words, we do not know if the age-related results are due to age or maturational differences in the participants, or due to the normative history graded experiences that people in the same generation share. One way to sort out the possible confounding between age changes and cohort differences is to use a sequential research design (Baltes, Reese, Nesselrode, 1988). The intention of sequential designs is to allow the researcher to study human development in a changing world without erroneously explaining any differences as being the result of age differences, if indeed the differences are simply between cohorts. Because the discussion of these different sequential designs is beyond the scope of this project, the interested reader is referred to Baltes, Reese, Nesselrode (1988) for a discussion and description of different sequential design options.

Increased Sample Size

It is likely that the results of this study could be strengthened, and may even be different, with a larger sample size. Therefore, an aspect that seems to warrant much consideration in further research of this sort seems to be increasing the sample size. Before proposing

suggestions to increase participant numbers, a discussion of possible reasons why the current sample size was so small follows.

Possible explanations for the small sample size.

Although, given the data collection method of the study it is impossible to calculate the response rate, it seems reasonable to assume that the vast majority of people the survey reached did not respond to the request for participants. Furthermore, the initial collection method failed due to the lack of interest by downsized organizations themselves. The data collection difficulties beg the question, what prevented organizations and individual employees from volunteering for the study? These reasons could be one or more of many.

First, organizations themselves communicated much trepidation about participation. The most frequently voiced reason for the decision not to participate was that the organizations' administrations feared employees would believe more layoffs were on the horizon if they approved a survey like this one. This was despite my attempt to explain that the survey would clearly state that the questions asked in no way reflected future layoff related decisions of the organization. It may be the case that this fear speaks to the decreased trust survivors hold toward their employer in the post-layoff period (Verdi, 1996). Interestingly enough, the organizations' administrations seemed to have some insight into the employees' potential wariness in trusting that the survey did indeed have nothing to do with potential layoff plans. I made it clear to the organizations that they would be provided aggregated data that the survey yielded, potentially allowing them to address some of the potential negative effects their employees were experiencing. However, this long-term, potentially positive consequence apparently did not outweigh the short-term, potentially negative consequence of increased employee suspicion towards management.

A second reason for declining participation was that organizations feared that employees were so busy, that asking them to fill out a survey would take time away from their work. This reason makes sense given the research finding that layoffs commonly result in an increased workload for survivors (Citrome, 1997).

Not having the time to complete the survey, given the amount of work that survivors are often faced with, may be a reason why individual employees themselves chose not to fill out the survey when they received the email requesting their participation. Many of the potential participants may have received the email request while at work and did not believe they had the time to complete it. The survey used in this study was quite long, and test runs indicated that it took people 20-40 minutes to complete.

The increase in virtual communication may also have precluded some people from participating. It is not uncommon for email users to receive multiple “junk” emails every time they open their inboxes. Because it is likely that most people who responded to my request to pass the survey on to others did so by sending it to multiple people within their email address books, the forwarded message was probably sent via “Bulk” email. Recipients may have been less likely to take the forwarded message seriously given its “Bulk” labeling, therefore many people may have deleted the message without carefully looking at it.

Suggestions to increase sample size.

Researchers might make a number of changes in the method of the current study to increase the size of the sample of participants. First, researchers might chose to utilize a shorter survey. The survey took participants anywhere from 20-40 minutes to complete. Future research might chose only one health measure and use the single item recycling question provided by the ACCI vs. using the more lengthy recycling measure.

Second, researchers could engage in alternative data collection methods. In addition to the email attempts at obtaining volunteers, researchers could request the participation of various professional organization members. Because an employer would not be involved, this approach would omit the worry that endorsing the research would increase participants' worries about future layoffs. Many of these organizations have websites where an Internet link to the survey could be provided, or research information could be included in an organization newsletter. Additionally, if the organizations have email lists, emails providing information about the study and a link to the survey could be directly emailed to the organizations' members. Finally, direct postal mailings could also be sent to members, perhaps prompting Internet wary members to participate in the survey.

Suggested Survey Content Changes

The study could also have been strengthened more specific survivorship history data was collected from the participants. Future research that collected more specific survivorship history information would allow researchers more grouping options when creating hypotheses and analyzing the data. Such history could include, not only how many layoffs the participants have survived in the past, but how long ago each layoff occurred, and how long the participants were employed in those organizations. The ability to group participants according to how many layoffs they survived and how long ago they occurred may provide richer results shedding more light on the survivorship experience.

A more internally consistent measure of job insecurity could also produce stronger, more definitive results. Creating a more robust measure or doing a more exhaustive search on existing measures might improve on this limitation of the current study.

Response Biases

The current study suffers from both self-selection bias and self-report bias. The participants of this study were not required to complete the survey; therefore, this design comes with an inherent self-selection bias. It may be the case that those who did volunteer are fairing better than those who did not, thus, making it less emotionally taxing to reflect and report on their survivorship experiences. However, the converse may also be true. Those who participated may be fairing worse than those who did not and volunteered in the hopes that it would help them better cope in the aftermath of the layoff. Furthermore, the culture of the organization that the workers function in could also have contributed to the self-selection bias. For example, employees who work in an organization who the participant perceives as supporting them after the layoffs, may chose not to participate because they do not feel the need to cathect about their experiences. Either way, self-selection runs the risk of inflating or deflating the magnitude of the results. Ideally, a study that harnessed the participation of organizations that required workers to participate would be ideal, but due to ethical considerations, the likelihood of that is very slim.

The nature of the current study's questionnaires were self-report. The workers reported on their own perceptions of their experiences. This design makes the self-report assumption that people are the best reporters of their own experiences and behaviors. Furthermore, this approach runs the risk of participant response biases (Anastasi & Urbina, 1997). A way to strengthen the results a study of this sort yields would be to collect data from multiple sources such as the worker him or herself in addition to the perceptions of the worker's family, coworkers, supervisor, and even clients if applicable. This might provide richer results in term of adding information regarding how others perceive the workers to be fairing and offer a comparison to the perceptions the worker reports.

Next Step: Longitudinal Study

A logical next step in the research would be a longitudinal study looking at the pre and post career concerns of layoff survivors. This would allow for a direct longitudinal prospective comparison of the career development of survivors and non-survivors. The most efficient way to conduct such research would be to recruit employees of organizations who are planning to downsize, and organizations that are less likely to engage in such restructuring. Of course, this type of study would require the participation of organizations to a greater extent than was even asked for in the current study. It is probable that the only researchers who would be granted such permission would be internal consultants or human resources departments, as such research would require advanced knowledge of upcoming layoffs. Nonetheless, such research could shed light on the long-term consequences survivorship has on career development

Finally, studies that expand this research could involve a longitudinal study looking at the effectiveness of interventions with younger employees whose aim includes teaching employees strategic career management skills. Because this research suggested that younger employees may have unrealistic expectations of the contributions to an organization early on, such interventions could include giving employees information on setting realistic, yet challenging goals. Furthermore, such programs would enable the organizations themselves to share realistic career contribution timelines with their new employees to assist employees in setting goals that meet the organizations' expectations.

Although a larger sample size would likely have strengthened the results of this study, its findings nevertheless may be a valuable source of information for employees, organizations, and career counselors regarding employees' career development concerns in the current work world where downsizing is becoming a more regularly utilized form of cost reduction. Furthermore, it

provides useful guidance to researchers planning to conduct research addressing similar questions.

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