ARE WE IN THIS TOGETHER? PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN ACADEMIC ADVISORS AND ADVISING ADMINISTRATORS AND THEIR RELATION TO ADVISOR JOB SATISFACTION

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Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
December, 2010

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many people without whom this undertaking would not have been possible.

First, to my family that has supported me throughout my educational endeavors—I would not have been able to do this without you. My mother, Deborah Eppler Chabinak, gave up many things along the way so that I could achieve my goals, and for this I will be eternally grateful. My great grandfather, Rudolf Eppler, and my grandparents, Daniel and Gloria Eppler, showed me at a very young age the importance of education and lifelong learning in whatever form it may take. While my father, John H. Chabinak, and his parents, John and Esther Chabinak, were not able to see me reach this goal, I know they would have shared in my joy of becoming the first Chabinak to earn a doctoral degree.

Second, there are a few special friends who have gone above and beyond in supporting me throughout my education. To John Muller, I thank you for your love and your support of my endeavors throughout these years. To Robin Poore, who has been a great friend and supporter for many years, I thank you for all you have done, especially in helping me through some very tough times. To Adriana Philipp, Michelle Peterson, Megan Linsenmeyer, and Marissa McIntyre, I thank you for always being available to discuss this project and provide help and feedback when I needed it.

Third, to the many friends and colleagues who have supported me along the way and gone out of their way to ease my burdens when I really needed to do academic work—I truly appreciate your help. I also have to thank the Spears School of Business for being flexible and supportive while I completed this process.

Fourth, Dr. Stephen Wanger has been a wonderful and supportive advisor throughout this process, and I could not have finished this without his assistance. My committee members, Dr. Mary Jo Self, Dr. Jesse Mendez, and Dr. Ed Harris have also provided much assistance throughout this process.

Finally, I must thank the academic advisors that took their time to participate in this study. Their insights not only allowed me to complete this dissertation, but also gave me knowledge that I hope to use as an advising administrator someday to improve the quality of relationships between academic advisors and their administrators.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

In America's current economic times all sectors of society are tightening belts and looking for ways to do more with less. Higher education is no exception to this, and both parents and students are questioning their ability to afford education beyond high school. They are also questioning higher education's ability to provide a quality, cost-efficient educational product in the midst of tuition hikes and increasing fees. Student success and retention have always been concerns of higher education administrators, but today's lean times have increased the emphasis on helping students complete their degrees in a timely fashion. One way to help students persist and thrive at an institution of higher education is to provide them with quality academic advising, whether it is provided by faculty advisors or professional advisors. Quality academic advising cannot happen unless there is leadership both among advisors themselves and among academic advising administration. The partnerships of professional academic advisors and their advising administrators and how such partnerships affect advisor job satisfaction is the focus of this study.

Background of Study

The Evolution of a Profession

The first advisors were presidents, then faculty and tutors, who helped guide students through the university toward their chosen profession, with less focus on course selection since a narrow selection of programs and lack of elective choices meant students did not have as many course options as they do today. Many of these faculty members lived on campus and spent considerable time with students both in and out of the classroom, so shaping the whole student into a responsible citizen was an important priority. As institutions began expanding and changing in the mid 1800s, positions were established to help with discipline and citizenship issues, such as watching over the newly admitted female college students (Nidiffer, 2002), allowing faculty to again focus on teaching and contributing to the development of separate student services. By the early 1900s, most institutions had changed their curricula to reflect a broad range of professions and elective choices (Gruber, 1997), so students needed more assistance identifying which courses and plans of study would meet their needs. It is also around this time that counseling and advising became more specialized (Cook, 1999). The American Council of Education provided their endorsement of advising during the late 1930s with a document called *The Student Personnel Point of View*, a guiding document in student affairs and the first publication encouraging focus on the student as an individual with respect to guidance and educational path (Gillispie, 2003). As World War II ended and higher education saw an influx of students returning from the war with GI Bill funding, student services exploded to assist them. Academic advising became a separate profession as a result of the explosion of student personnel services after World War II

(Goodchild & Weschler, 1997). These events, combined with rapid expansion in technology and professional areas, set the stage for professional academic advising to become an important service within higher education institutions.

Several key developments led to the real birth of academic advising in the 1970s, culminating in the establishment of a professional association by the end of the decade. Developmental advising was advanced as a model for advising in the early 1970s (Cook, 1999), and its holistic approach is still utilized in advising today. Freshman orientation classes also took hold at many universities during this time, encouraging students to be proactive in their academic and extracurricular choices. Community colleges experienced a large increase in students, especially those with issues requiring detailed planning for educational success, and advising centers sprung up to assist these students (Cook, 2001). In 1977, a national conference on academic advising was held, giving birth to the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) two years later (Cook, 1999). Many consider establishment of a professional association to be one of the final steps in establishing a profession, and the National Academic Advising Association continues to do this for the profession of academic advising. The year 1980 marked the first publication of the *NACADA Journal* (Gordon, 1998), now considered to be one of the top publications in the field of academic advising. The National Academic Advising Association hosts a large annual conference and many other regional conferences and workshops, produces several publications related to advising, provides a clearinghouse of resources for advisors, and provides a venue for networking and information exchange between advisors at all levels. According to NACADA, "members represent higher education institutions across the spectrum of Carnegie classifications and include professional advisors/counselors, faculty,

administrators and students whose responsibilities include academic advising" (National Academic Advising Association, 2009, para. 2). State branches of NACADA also serve to connect advisors within each state to each other and to NACADA, as well as to disseminate information from the national association. Most have one or two statewide conferences a year and also participate in regional activities, allowing advisors to participate in professional development activities even on small budgets. Overall, NACADA has been instrumental in helping academic advising gain the importance and recognition it has today in higher education, mostly through research initiatives, the dissemination of advising research, and professional development opportunities for advisors. This evolution of academic advising as a profession has provided many opportunities for leadership in academic advising at all levels, a tradition that continues today as academic advising becomes even more important to institutions and higher education as a whole.

Common Duties of an Academic Advisor

Academic advisors perform a wide variety of duties on campuses, with advising individuals, sitting on institutional committees, advising student organizations, community service, outreach, and teaching all being very common duties of advisors. This wide variety of activities also allows advisors to make contacts across their campus and their community that can be very helpful as they advise students and help them make a plan of action and find resources. Students get to see advisors outside of their normal office context when they participate in service type projects, again painting advisors as approachable, "real" people, which makes students more likely to seek their help when needed. Many of the ideals in the retention theories that will be mentioned in Chapter Two, such as Astin's Theory of

Involvement, mattering, and validation, are made easier when students see advisors as approachable people.

Data concerning the number of hours per week professional academic advisors work are scarce, but the typical full time professional advisor works 40 hours per week, although most are expected to put in additional hours as needed for accomplishing their work. Advising load is a common way of examining an advisors' workload, and according to a 2004 survey the mean number of advises in public four year institutions was 285 students to one advisor (Habley & McClanahan, 2004). This survey also reported the mean number of contacts per semester at these institutions to be 2.4 times. Since these are mean values, there are advisors who have much higher advising loads in addition to the other work they do, putting their job satisfaction in jeopardy.

Academic advisors work with their advising colleagues in a number of ways, including cooperation with other advisors in their office or department, cooperation with advisors in other campus departments through committee work and assisting students with transfers, minors, or double majors, and through professional development opportunities at all levels. Humans are by nature social creatures who crave interaction with others who have common interests and experiences, and academic advisors often find these similar souls in other academic advisors. A common vocabulary already exists between advising colleagues and discussions can provide needed validation as well as a chance to vent to an understanding colleague, which are all important in helping professions, such as academic advising, that are prone to stress and burnout.

Since academic advising is a profession situated almost exclusively in educational settings which tend to be bureaucratic, academic advisors have many opportunities to interact

with administrators at a variety of levels. First, they interact frequently with the administrator who has direct responsibility for the advising unit they work in, known as the advising administrator. Second, there is usually another administrator, such as a dean or associate dean, who has close ties to campus administration and disseminates campus wide advising policy and procedure changes and updates to their advisors through the advising administrator. Third, the advisor, as an employee of the institution itself, ultimately reports to the university administration. Depending upon the institution, advising may be housed under academic affairs or under student affairs. Fourth, advisors must also be able to articulate and follow policies and procedures set forth by the regents or other governing body. Since academic advising is an activity that encompasses many different duties and relationships, advisors have many opportunities to be leaders in one or more areas of their sphere of practice.

Academic Advising as a Retention Tool

At many higher education institutions, renewed attention to academic advising and the advising process has been the result of an emphasis on keeping students enrolled at the institution until they complete their degree. Many institutions are also investing time, money, and effort in advising programs in hopes of retaining not only students but also professional advising staff. Training an advisor is expensive, as it takes time to learn policies, procedures, and advising skills even if there is no formal training program. In his review of retention literature, Nutt (2003) found that academic advising is one of the few direct links between students and academic affairs. As such, academic advising fills a critical role in higher education institutions through meaningful interactions with campus administrators. Habley and McClanahan (2004), in the ACT, Inc. report *What Works in*

Student Retention, mention that academic advising is one of the areas that has the greatest impact on student retention. Students also appreciate consistency in advising staff, often complaining when their advisor changes several times throughout their college career. Students' perceptions of advising quality include factors such as correctness of information received from the advisor, rapport with the advisor, and advisor availability (Lowe & Toney, 2000/2001). These student perceptions of academic advising quality are important to retention because it takes time for advisors to build rapport with their students and for students to trust their advisor's knowledge and skills, making advisor retention an important concern in advising programs. Academic advising is one of very few campus services that puts students in prolonged relations with a university professional who can help them not only make the most of college but also help them gain valuable life skills, making advising an important institutional activity (Hunter & White, 2004).

Academic advising provides a formal opportunity for the institution to improve the student experience and for students to interact with a concerned, caring agent of the institution. Academic advisors are often the only consistent, regular contact outside of class that students have with an institutional representative (Steingass & Sykes, 2008), making advising an important retention tool. Academic advising is an educational exchange that assists students in connecting with opportunities to further their learning both in and out of class, ultimately leading to increased engagement (Campbell & Nutt, 2008). Since academic advisors are one of the main points of contact with the institution for students, they often know what is going on with students long before the rest of the campus (Teitelbaum, 2000). To seal the importance to the educational experience of academic advising, Light (2001) found in ten years of research on how to get the most out of college that the most important

consideration is good academic advising. Raushi (1993) mentions advising as being one of the most important activities students take part in during their time on campus. When fewer students are being retained by an institution it is likely that the institution is not in tune with what its students need and expect the institution to provide (Richmond, 1986). This is a critical point where academic advisors can really assist the institution by providing that connection between students and the institution by being a caring institutional representative. Individual advisement provides an opportunity for advisors to become familiar with current issues in the student body that may affect the retention of students at the institution as advisors interact with students on a routine basis. Sharkin (2004) mentions such individual counseling and advisement as positively influencing retention of students in his examination of several research studies concerning counseling and retention.

Problem Statement and Research Question

Problem Statement

As a helping and service profession within higher education, academic advising is plagued by the realities of burnout and substantial turnover. Carstensen and Silberhorn (1979) speak to the perception that not only is academic advising a low-status function within higher education institutions, but it is also lacking in support and recognition. This is particularly true of professional academic advisors who are more likely than faculty to be underpaid and overworked (Murrell, 2005). In an environment that includes tight timelines, multiple responsibilities, complex reporting relationships, and a large investment of empathy and emotional energy by the professional academic advisor, job satisfaction can quickly decline. Such a decline in job satisfaction can serve as negative reinforcement, ultimately

leading professional academic advisors to become unhappy and leave their advising position, the advising profession, or both. Few studies have examined job satisfaction specifically within the population of professional academic advisors, and those studies available have looked broadly at advisor job satisfaction across institutional types or at the relationship between advisor job satisfaction and student satisfaction with advising. The proposed study seeks to examine the relationship between professional academic advisor job satisfaction and the partnership with academic advising administration, filling a gap in the literature.

Research Question

Does being a partner with administration in academic advising lead to increased satisfaction with academic advising for advisors in full-time four-year, more selective, higher transfer-in institutions?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is a positive correlation between advisor job satisfaction and advisors' perception of respect by administration.
2. There is a positive correlation between advisor job satisfaction and advisors' perception of their involvement in the decision making process.
3. There is a positive correlation between advisor job satisfaction and advisors' perception of autonomy in their work.

Professional Significance

This proposed study hopes to contribute to the research base of academic advising by examining advisors' perceptions of their partnerships with administration and advisor job

satisfaction. It is proposed that positive partnerships, as demonstrated by positive, significant correlation coefficients, between academic advisors and their advising administrators contribute to increased job satisfaction for academic advisors. Professional academic advising has traditionally had high rates of burnout and turnover, resulting in a lack of consistency for students and high advisor recruitment and training costs for institutions. Academic advising is an important tool for student retention and consistency and advisor satisfaction is critical to the educational mission of higher education. In the lean budgetary climate currently permeating higher education, saving valuable recruitment and new advisor training dollars is important because those dollars can be used toward continuing professional development and other rewards for advisors.

Overview of Methodology

In this study, data were collected using a web-based survey instrument and analyzed using quantitative methods. The study is a correlational relationship study designed to examine the strength and directionality of the hypothesized relationships between advisors' perceptions of respect, inclusion in decision making, and autonomy, plus advisor job satisfaction. Pearson *r* product moment correlation coefficient was the statistical procedure used to analyze the data through SPSS Version 18.0. Because the web-based survey was comprised of questions created by the researcher for this study, a pilot study was performed to identify any issues with the instrument or administration before the main data collection period. The pilot study also determined reliability and validity. Carnegie classified FT4/MS/HTI public institutions were the focus of the proposed study, specifically academic advisors identified through each of the 42 institutions' websites. The academic advisors were e-mailed the survey and supporting information early in the summer when advising

loads are somewhat lighter. In accordance with Dillman's (2009) tailored design method, reminders were periodically sent to maximize return rates.

Definitions of Key Terms

As is the case in most professional fields, higher education, student services, and academic advising have developed terminology and concepts that are unique. Many terms used in these fields also have multiple meanings and interpretations that can be misunderstood when taken out of context. Defined here are some terms that have critical, specific meanings in the context of the study.

Academic advising

Academic advising includes course scheduling assistance, counseling of students as it relates to their academic performance, and referrals to other campus and community resources. Academic advising can fall under either academic affairs or student affairs depending on the specific institution.

Professional academic advisors

Professional academic advisors are those whose primary responsibility is academic advisement of students, not teaching a full-time course load. These advisors often also have training in academic advising, student affairs, or counseling, as opposed to training in the academic discipline they are advising, although they may have training in both areas.

Academic affairs

Academic affairs is the administrative area of the higher education institution that oversees the faculty, curriculum development, and academic policies and regulations.

Student affairs

Student affairs is the administrative area of the higher education institution that oversees student life and auxiliary services. Some services often included under student affairs are campus life, student activities, residential life, counseling, health services, dining services, recreation services, and other services relevant to student life.

Leadership in academic advising

Leadership in academic advising is a process that can be learned, provided certain characteristics such as empathy and a desire to help others are present.

Job satisfaction

In this study, job satisfaction refers to academic advisors' perception of satisfaction with the current advising position, satisfaction with the profession of academic advising, and intent to remain an academic advisor.

Full-time four-year, more selective, higher transfer-in (FT4/MS/HTI) Carnegie institutions

These institutions are those where at least 80% of undergraduates are full-time students, first-year students test scores are in the top fifth of baccalaureate institutions, and 20% of undergraduates are transfer students (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2009).

Delimitations

The study focused on professional academic advisors and their satisfaction with their administrative partnerships; therefore, the results are not generalizable to faculty advisors because faculty have a different set of responsibilities and expectations placed upon them by their profession. This study also focused on public full-time four-year, more selective, higher transfer-in institutions (FT4/MS/HTI) as defined in the Carnegie classification system, so results are not generalizable to other institutional types. This study looked at a very specific higher educational institution type as classified by the Carnegie system, but future researchers could attempt to replicate this study to see what similarities and differences exist among differing institutional types in the area of advisor partnerships with administration and advisor job satisfaction.

Summary

In this chapter, the development of academic advising and common duties of academic advisors is discussed to place academic advising in context as a profession. Academic advising has gained attention in higher education recently due to the positive impact it can have on retention and here it is described as an important tool for retention. The problem is stated along with the research question and hypotheses that consider the relationship between respect, involvement in decision making, and autonomy perceived by advisors and their overall job satisfaction. A brief overview of the methodology used in the study is provided, as well as definitions of key terms used throughout this study. Finally, the delimitations of the study are discussed, focusing on replicability as opposed to

generalizability. Chapter Two will present a review of the literature that shapes the foundation of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In Chapter One, the evolution of academic advising was discussed to lay the foundation for how and why academic advising has grown and changed. Common duties of academic advisors were described so these leadership principles can be examined in the context of what an average academic advisor does, even though duties can vary widely. Some of the most salient retention literature and theories, as well as their relationship with academic advising, established academic advising as a retention tool. In this chapter, a more comprehensive review of retention theories will be provided, and leadership in academic advising will be defined using principles from several leadership theories and authors. A discussion of empirical research on job satisfaction is also presented, both in industries outside academic advising and within academic advising itself. Academic advising is a relatively new profession, so looking at job satisfaction in related fields is a way to increase understanding of the many facets of job satisfaction that may influence academic advisors. Many studies across a wide variety of industries have looked at job satisfaction and supervisor relationships, several of which are included in this chapter to underline the importance of supervisor/employee relations in job satisfaction. Since academic advising largely grew out of the student affairs

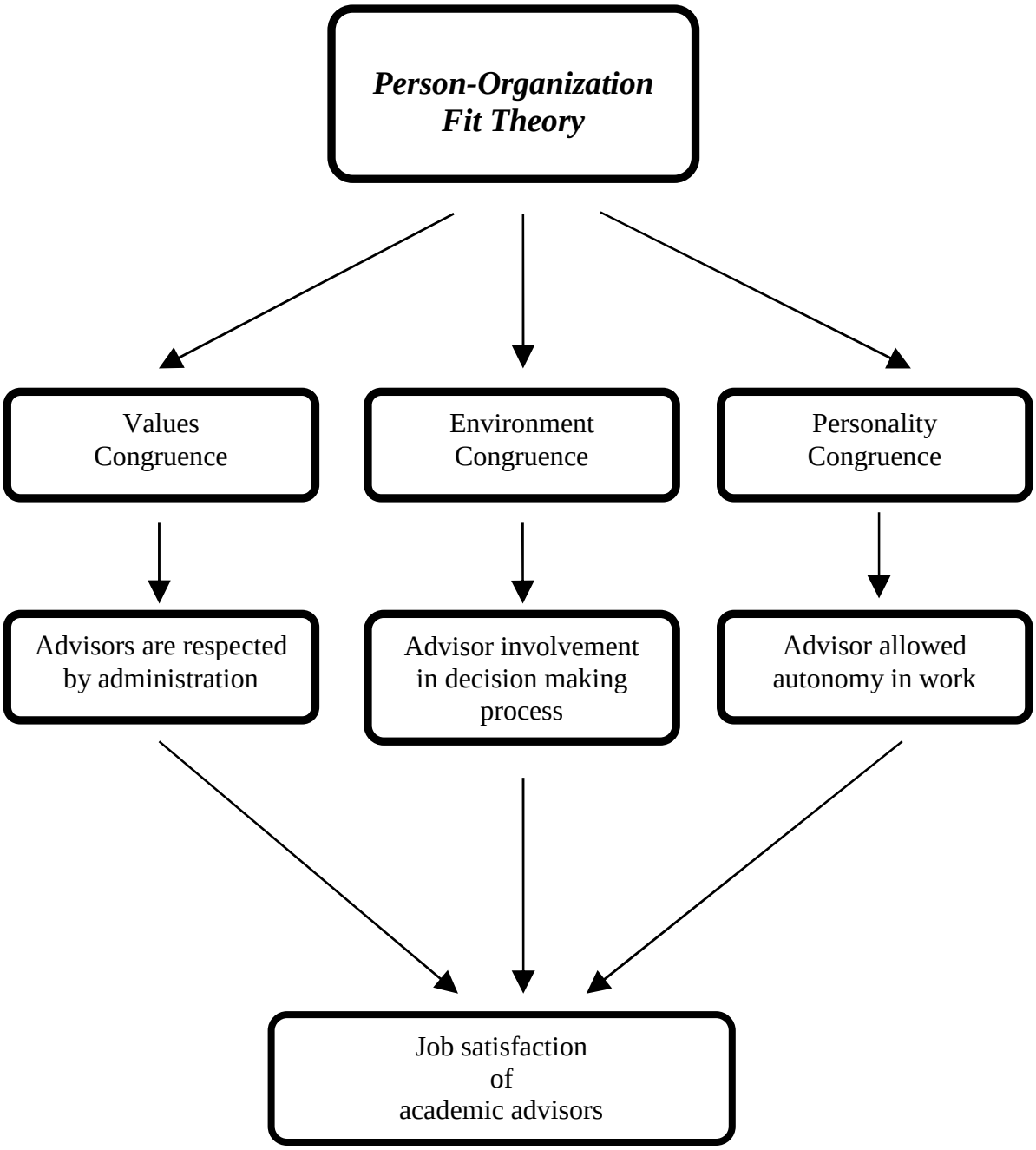
segment of higher education, several studies of job satisfaction of student affairs practitioners are included here to illustrate job satisfaction concerns of those who work most directly with students in similar ways to academic advisors. After reading this literature review, the reader should have a basic understanding of academic advising as a profession as well as how job satisfaction has been examined in student affairs and academic advising.

Theoretical Framework: Person-Organization (P-O) Fit Theory

Person-Organization (P-O) Fit Theory is based heavily on Holland's Assumption of Congruence (Perdue, Reardon, and Peterson, 2007). Holland categorizes jobs and workers into one of six types, including Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, or Conventional (Hartung & Niles, 2000). The Assumption of Congruence in Holland's theory states that individuals are most satisfied when their Holland type matches that of their work environment. According to Perdue, Reardon, and Peterson (2007), "when characteristics of the person and the job are more similar, then tenure in the job will be longer, satisfaction will be higher, and achievement will be greater" (p. 30). Person-Organization Fit Theory says that job satisfaction and commitment to the organization are functions of values, personality, and work environment congruence, as adapted by Westerman and Cyr (2004) into their Integrative Model of Person-Organization Fit. Many adaptations of Person-Organization and Person-Environment Fit have been advanced in the literature, but the Integrative Model adapted by these two authors is used for this study due to its applicability to the three variables being examined in relation to advisor job satisfaction in this study. Respect by administration indicates values congruence for academic advisors, environment congruence encompasses the

advisor being involved in decisions affecting their work environment, and personality congruence is indicated by advisors being allowed autonomy in their work. When academic advisors think their administrator knows what they do, is a leader, and values their contributions, a reciprocal, respectful relationship is created, which advisors value due to the helping, relationship-oriented nature of their work (values congruence). Academic advisors are trained professionals who are lifelong learners by the nature of their work, so putting their skills and knowledge to work engaging in the decision making process with their advising administrator is part of who they are (personality congruence). Academic advising can be a very individualized job and a high level of autonomy is expected by advisors, as long as there is still support available when they need it. This expectation of autonomy can be a major source of unhappiness if the work environment is one where micromanagement is present (work environment congruence). When an employee views the fit between themselves and the work environment as good, they tend to not only be more satisfied but also to perform better and be recognized for such performance (Bretz & Judge, 1994). Theoretically, advisors who have a good fit in these three areas of congruence through their relationship with their advising administrator should be more satisfied, perform at a higher level, and be more likely to stay in advising. Figure 1 below presents these relationships visually.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of Advisor Perceptions of Supervisor Relations and Job Satisfaction



Theoretical Foundations of Retention

One of the most prominent student development theorists, Alexander Astin, has researched student involvement for decades and is most well-known for Astin's Theory of Involvement. This theory concentrates on student involvement with the institution, which Astin views as crucial to the college experience (Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991). Astin's main argument is that if students are to learn and become more advanced in their thinking it is important that they are a participating part of the collegiate environment (Evans, Forney, and Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Academic advisors are in a position to help create involvement with the institution through routine advising appointments by helping students identify not only what courses to take but also organizations to join and career activities that can enhance their educational program.

Several other student development concepts are also useful for examining how students relate to the college environment. First, Komives and Woodard (1996) discuss the human aggregate model, which focuses on the fit between people and the environment. Rewarding educational experiences require congruence between the student and the environment, and students are more likely to persist when they feel such congruence (Komives and Woodard, 1996). Academic advising can help students build congruence by working with them in mutually respectful relationships throughout their college career. Second, Schlossberg's research on the concept of mattering is important to retention because students need to feel they are valued by the college or university before they will become involved in the institutional culture (Evans, Forney, and Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Advisors can increase mattering through utilizing developmental advising concepts to help students set goals and evaluate those goals throughout the

college experience, personalizing the advising experience to show the student that they do matter to the institution. Third, validation is another element that is critical for student development, because it shows that students are valued as people by the institution (Evans, Forney, and Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Such validation can happen both inside and outside of the classroom, including participation in student organizations and through effective academic advisement.

At many higher education institutions, one of the most noticeable ways advising is becoming a retention tool is evidenced by the expansion of advising centers on many campuses in the last few decades (Tuttle, 2000). The increase in nontraditional students also means they need advisors at nontraditional times, causing many advising units to change or extend their hours to serve more diverse student groups (Teitelbaum, 2000). Knowing the changing student population, with its increased diversity and new needs, is a critical issue for advisors who must adjust the services they provide to ever changing students. Whatever form it takes, this change and adaptation is the new model of serving and advising students, and improvements continue to be made and new theories advanced regularly that can help advisors guide students more effectively through the higher education landscape.

One of the most prominent new models, appreciative advising, builds off of appreciative inquiry, an organizational behavior theory, to create a practical approach to advising. Appreciative advising involves five phases, including Disarm, Discover, Dream, Design, and Deliver (Bloom & Martin, 2002). These phases are not mutually exclusive and they are presented as a circular, systems approach. Appreciative advising is a way of advising that focuses on the student, assisting them to create an educational

plan that is meaningful and applicable to them, whatever their goals may be. The advisor is almost like a coach in that they support them through the process and help them decide what approach to take, but they let the student actually go out and see the results of their actions. Then, the advisor is available to either help the student celebrate their success or listen to details of the failure and help the student make adjustments for future attempts (Bloom & Martin, 2002). One of the main advantages of appreciative advising is that these elements can be incorporated into any type, method, or style of academic advising. This makes appreciative advising accessible to all advisors, regardless of institution, which is one of the main reasons it is gaining so much support within the National Academic Advising Association and higher education as a whole.

Leadership in Academic Advising

Leadership is a broad construct that evokes different meanings depending on context and personal interpretation. The definition of leadership used in this literature review has several important aspects that relate to the context of academic advising. First, several authors mention that leadership is a process (Bennis, 1989; Burns, 1978; & Northouse, 2007) as opposed to a discrete or constant action. Academic advising is a process as well, with advisors guiding students along their educational path, helping them make myriad adjustments along the way. Second, while leadership may have some inborn predisposition (Burns, 1978; Northouse, 2007), many aspects can be learned through observation, modeling, and experience in various organizations (Bennis, 1989; Northouse, 2007). Academic advising is similar in that certain characteristics, such as empathy and a desire to help others, are somewhat inborn, but actual academic advising involves watching and learning from experienced advisors and assimilating that into a

personal advising style. Third, leadership is dependent upon context, as people tend to rise to leadership in different situations depending on what is happening either within or external to the group (Bennis, 1989; Burns, 1978). Academic advising is also contextual because advisors fill different roles depending on who they are interacting with and what that individual needs from the advisor. Finally, leadership involves breaking out of one's own area of expertise or responsibility to help solve group problems even if it is not the job of the leader (Dalton, 2003). Power can be exerted by those who are not formal leaders, and these informal leaders emerge at all levels of the higher education institution (Richman & Farmer, 1974). Conventional views of leadership holds that only one person is the leader, leadership only applies to formal groups, and leadership and management are interchangeable terms (Rogers, 2003), but contemporary leadership theories do not subscribe to these views. Leadership is currently believed to be more about context and less about specific personal qualities, essentially "doing the right thing at the right time in the work environment" (McCaffery, 2004, p. 57). This is really what makes leadership in academic advising so important—advisors have so many opportunities to "do the right thing at the right time" and advising is not often examined in this way. Morrill (2007) states that leadership is "an interactive process of influence" (p. 120) and "an engaging reciprocal process" (p. 122), and academic advising fits this because advisors do have influence in interactions with students, colleagues, and/or administration on a daily basis. Not only are advisors influenced by students, colleagues, and administrators but they have influence with each of these constituencies through their professional practice. This reciprocal process of influence aligns with the reciprocity of influence in contemporary leadership theories.

Just as leaders must read and react to the context at hand, so too must academic advisors. The use of stories as a leadership tool is very effective (Morrill, 2007) within academic advising because it can work with students, colleagues, and administrators. Students often respond well to stories told during the advising session that relate to their particular situation, colleagues can learn from stories told by another advisor, and administration can get a feel for what advisors are working with through listening to their stories. Such stories are not dramatic pieces of fiction; rather, they are narratives based in the advisor's personal experience used to illustrate a point or pose a problem for discussion.

Four principles of leadership that are mentioned by McClellan (2004) are particularly salient when looking at leadership in academic advising. The principles establish that leadership and management coexist, leadership is not just the duty of one person, leaders learn how to be leaders, and group characteristics are just as important as individual characteristics in leadership. Due to the detailed nature of academic advising, some management tasks are involved, such as scheduling appointments and allocation of resources, and advisors look to the leader to help with these things. However, the leader may be someone different depending upon the situation or context, such as when an advisor shares information with the group to aid in each advisors' professional development. If the group is not cohesive or responsive to such flexibility in leadership, it will create an environment that is detrimental to the development of advisors. Willing collaboration is a necessary element of a leader's success (McClellan, 2004) in all aspects of academic advising.

Shared governance was set forth in 1966 by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) as a way to incorporate faculty, administration, and a board in making decisions about how the higher education institution works (DeNardis, 2004). While this model of university governance was long held as the standard mode of operations for academia, many have questioned its efficacy in today's times. Rhoades (2005) mentions the increased presence of "nonfaculty professionals" as a challenge to faculty expertise and the larger shared governance structure. He contends that the bilateral system has outlived its usefulness and additional groups should be included when relevant to the decision or problem at hand. As he says it, "we need a more inclusive, democratic academic republic" (Rhoades, 2005, p. 40). Academic advisors would be a group that fits into the "nonfaculty professionals" group, and even if they are not represented on the institutional level, they could be part of shared governance within their unit by their advising administrator. Newer approaches to shared governance focus more on the collaborative aspects of interested constituencies working together as opposed to the faculty versus administration check and balance system of the past (Gallos, 2009). Gallos states that "leading and governing are two sides of the same coin" (p.138), and academic advising administrators could take an approach that involves advisors in a collaborative way to improve services to students.

Job Satisfaction

Many studies have been done examining job satisfaction and turnover rates across all types of industries, including educational institutions. Since the proposed study looks at job satisfaction of academic advisors in relation to their partnerships with administrators, several studies that looked at job satisfaction and supervisor relationships

are discussed here. First, Stinglhamber and Vandenberghe (2003) conducted a longitudinal study of alumni from a Belgian university who had been in the workforce for several years. Four questionnaires were sent over a period of 15 months, yielding 238 useable response sets. In this study they sought to find links between job conditions, perceptions of both supervisor and organizational support, turnover, and commitment to the organization. They found that when supervisors value employee contributions and support them the employees are more attached to the supervisor, but not necessarily to the organization. Where job conditions are concerned, it appeared that intrinsically satisfying job conditions enhanced the perception of supervisor support when supervisors provided opportunities for employees to reap such intrinsic rewards from their jobs, even more than increased extrinsic rewards. This bond strengthened by intrinsically rewarding job conditions also reduced employee turnover.

Second, Sparr and Sonnentag (2008) surveyed 345 German employees across hospital, public administration, and research and development industries. They found that feedback, specifically between supervisors and their employees, was an important part of making employees feel valued and in control of their work environment. Through their statistical analysis of questionnaire responses, they found that increased frequency of positive feedback from supervisors and increased personal control over decision making on the job contribute to higher levels of job satisfaction.

Third, Harris, Wheeler, and Kacmar (2009) gathered two samples, one with 244 alumni of a Midwestern university and one with 158 state employees. In both samples they wanted to investigate empowerment, quality of leader-member exchange, job satisfaction, and turnover. Additionally, in the second sample they looked at supervisor

ratings of job performance and organizational citizenship. Their findings suggest that empowerment of employees contributes to increased job satisfaction and decreased turnover intentions more than quality of leader-member exchange, although for those with low empowerment higher quality leader-member exchange can help.

Job Satisfaction in Student Affairs

Being a relatively new profession, academic advising is in many ways still trying to find its home in higher education institutions. While in many institutions academic advising is placed under academic affairs in the institutional hierarchy, it can be argued that it is more of a student affairs function. One of the most compelling reasons for this argument is that the generally accepted educational path to professional academic advising is through master's programs with concentrations in areas such as student affairs, student personnel work, counseling, and college student development. Another reason academic advisors often align themselves with student affairs as opposed to academic affairs is that they believe they have more in common with student affairs practitioners than with faculty. Job satisfaction of student affairs thus has been included here because it parallels job satisfaction of academic advisors more closely than that of faculty or academic affairs.

Student affairs practitioners often see their work with students as equal in importance to that of faculty (Hirt, 2007), but student affairs is typically subordinated to academics in the eyes of the institution. Scott and Bischoff (2000) state that institutions where students and staff, as well as students and faculty, forge positive relationships are more likely to retain both students and staff than those that focus solely on academics. One of the most valuable tools available to institutions is their personnel, and the

positive, caring attitudes of those who have regular, repeated contact with students is the best retention tool available (Noel, Levitz, & Saluri, 1985). Trusting relationships between supervisors and their staff is very important in student affairs (Carpenter & Stimpson, 2007) to facilitate improved service to students. Organizational commitment of student affairs practitioners is also increased when positive relationships with administrators are present.

According to Boehman (2007), as many as 61% of practitioners leave the student affairs field. Studies show that 50-60% of new student affairs professionals decide to leave student affairs before they have worked in the field for five years (Renn & Hodges, 2007). These figures show that attrition is a cause for concern for the student affairs profession with burnout, low pay, and limited advancement topping the list of reasons practitioners leave the field (Lorden, 1998). Since most entry-level student affairs positions require a Master's degree, this level of attrition after advanced educational preparation is surprising. In their study of student affairs professionals during their first year, Renn and Hodges (2007) found relationships, fit, and competence to be the overarching themes these new professionals were struggling with as they started their careers in student affairs. As student affairs continues to diversify, examining job satisfaction is an important way to understand and address these issues, possibly reducing practitioner attrition rates.

Bender (2009) mentions salary, level of responsibility, involvement in decision making, and working conditions to all be important factors in job satisfaction for student affairs practitioners. Similar to other studies, she found that while job satisfaction was high (66%), many did not plan to stay in student affairs (25% intending to leave and 39%

undecided). While they were satisfied with the autonomy in their position, they were not satisfied with their involvement in decision making. These student affairs practitioners also thought that student affairs was not given the level of respect and importance it deserves at their institutions. In her 1997 study of 500 female National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) members, Blackhurst (2000) found that burnout and limited advancement were the greatest factors leading women to leave student affairs, even though 70% were satisfied in their current positions. Interestingly, fewer than 50% planned to make a career of student affairs, and while they did not enter student affairs based on salary or advancement, these were the most common reasons for leaving student affairs.

Malaney and Osit (1998) found that student affairs practitioners want to be involved in decision making and they want clear, open lines of communication with supervisors, especially those who have spent much of their careers in student affairs. Student affairs professionals who belong to professional associations have increased job satisfaction over those who do not hold a membership in their professional organization (Chernow, Cooper, & Winston, 2003). This could indicate that links with the profession through such associations are an important tool in combating burnout. Those in student affairs must be prepared to take on new roles and responsibilities as changing student populations and institutional changes are thrust upon them and they must educate themselves in management and change practices to be successful (Kuk, Cobb, & Forrest, 2007). Professional association membership is one way student affairs practitioners can continue to educate themselves in these areas and grow within their profession.

Job Satisfaction of Academic Advisors

The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) conducted a survey of academic advising in 2000 that looked at many facets of the academic advising profession, including advisor satisfaction (Lynch & Stucky, 2000). In an online survey completed by 2,695 advisors who were both members and nonmembers of NACADA, a picture of academic advisors at the millennium emerged. Of the advisors who responded, 38% had been advising 5 years or less and 62% had been advising 10 years or less. These percentages show that the majority surveyed have been advising less than 10 years, speaking to both turnover in and expansion of academic advising. The majority (76%) were female, and they hailed from a wide variety of ethnicities, institutional types, and curricular areas. Most held the Master's degree (62%) and were full year (85%), full time academic advisors (89%). Lynch (2002) found that two major areas of dissatisfaction included institutional support of academic advising and consideration of advisor's opinions in decision making. This dissatisfaction was especially displayed by those advisors working in large, public institutions. A difference between the opinions of advisors and advising administrators manifested itself in the area of consideration of advisor opinion in decision making, with advisors believing less consideration was given to their opinions and advising administrators thinking the level of consideration was generally appropriate. Overall, advisors seemed satisfied with the numbers of students they served, although both advisors and administrators thought that increased funding and increased support staff, more advisors, and better advisor training would improve advisor job satisfaction.

Epps (2002) focused on the work life of academic advisors for her dissertation using a qualitative approach, specifically interviews with 18 professional academic advisors. Throughout the study she aimed to paint a picture of how professional academic advisors experience the profession on a day to day basis. Through her analysis of how these participants became advisors and the six elements of work life, including "job satisfaction, relationships with colleagues, commitment to the organization, performance, variety, and autonomy" (p. 84), Epps uses quotes from the 18 interviews to illustrate what actual advisors perceive as part of their jobs. Epps was careful to point out that this was not a generalizable study and had some limitations, but she gleaned valuable information about academic advising. Regarding how advisors entered the profession, there was no pattern and there was only on the job training provided. Overall, they most enjoyed working with students while they least enjoyed paperwork tasks and inconsistency in policies, procedures, scheduling, and compensation. The advisors in this study reported good relationships with their colleagues and supervisors, although most thought they were not involved enough in decision making, especially at higher levels of the institution. Interestingly enough, most had an allegiance to their institution and wanted to stay there, even though they stated they did not have as much influence within the institution as they might like. They also mentioned they had a high level of autonomy in their work, sometimes to a fault. Through this study Epps allows a snapshot view into the work lives of 18 professional advisors who were remarkably similar in their views of advising, even though they were from different institutions, linked together by their satisfaction of working with students and dissatisfaction with compensation and influence.

Murrell's (2005) dissertation was a study of advisor job satisfaction and its relationship to student satisfaction with academic advising. The setting was three Midwestern community colleges and data collection included 34 academic advisors and 573 students, with students' responses being grouped by their participating academic advisor. Murrell found that most of the advisors were satisfied with advising, and especially with autonomy in their jobs and recognition in their schools. The advisors were neutral on opportunities for advancement as well as compensation, both interesting findings. Students were generally satisfied with the academic advising they received at each of the three participating institutions. Three significant positive relationships were found in the data analysis, including relationships between recognition within the school and student satisfaction, advisor advancement opportunities and student satisfaction, and advisor autonomy and student satisfaction. Such positive relationships indicate that institutions can improve academic advising and subsequently students' satisfaction with academic advising by allowing advisors the levels of autonomy they desire, providing opportunities for recognition within the institution, and providing for advancement opportunities, in addition to improving compensation and providing for professional development, which may be difficult in current budgetary times.

In recent years, Donnelly examined advisor job satisfaction in his dissertation and subsequent related articles (2004, 2009). The first study in 2002 (2004) examined the relationship between use of professional standards and advisor job satisfaction, and the second (2009) looked at overall academic advisor job satisfaction. The former study utilized an online survey, focus groups, and interviews to establish a connection between advisor job satisfaction and standards use, while the latter used just a questionnaire to

look at overall job satisfaction of advisors. In the 2002 study of 102 participants, Donnelly (2004) found that there was a connection between standards use and job satisfaction as perceived by the advisors, but he also found information about several more general facets of advisor job satisfaction. The advisors reported moderately high satisfaction with the value of their work as well as with working with both students and colleagues. Intrinsic rewards were larger contributors to advisor job satisfaction than extrinsic rewards, although the majority of advisors were dissatisfied with salary, benefits, and advancement opportunities. Through the interviews, advisor/supervisor fit was brought up by several respondents but was not investigated further in this study.

In his second study of academic advisors' job satisfaction, Donnelly (2009) surveyed nearly 2,000 academic advisors. Advisors reported they found the variety of their work, benefits, and teamwork opportunities to be satisfactory while they are not as satisfied with recognition, pay, and opportunities for advancement. In the open-ended response questions, 27% of those who responded indicated improved administrator relations could improve advisor job satisfaction, which was the most frequent response given. Administrator relations could include areas such as consultation with advisors before making decisions or changing programming or procedures. This study also found that advisors who had been in the profession longer were more satisfied, possibly because those who are not satisfied leave the profession sooner. Recognition and career development were found to be areas where advisors were not satisfied, signaling an area where institutions, and advising administrators, could make improvements that might increase advisor job satisfaction and potentially decrease advisor turnover. The results from all of Donnelly's work on academic advisor job satisfaction indicate that advisors

are generally satisfied with their jobs but relations with supervisors and advising administrators are an area that could use improvements.

These findings suggest that partnerships between advisors and their advising administrators could have an important effect on academic advisor job satisfaction, especially in large public institutions. Each of the studies in this literature review point to the importance of relationships with supervisors, including employee empowerment, supervisor support of employees, and allowing employees control in their work environment, as important factors in job satisfaction and turnover. In academic advising, respect from administrators, involvement in decision making, and autonomy in their work are all important aspects of partnership with administration. These three aspects of advisor and administrator relations are aligned with the findings of the studies mentioned here, lending credibility to the current proposal that these three areas are critical to advisor job satisfaction, even though they are set in different industries.

Summary

In this chapter, Person-Organization Fit Theory is presented as a theoretical framework for the study and several theoretical foundations of retention that solidify academic advising's place in retention initiatives are discussed. Leadership in academic advising is presented, drawing heavily on Northouse, Bennis, and Bush along with other leadership theorists. Studies that explore job satisfaction in a variety of industries as well as within academic advising are presented to glean important points for consideration in the proposed study. From industries outside of higher education, studies indicate that supervisor/employee relationships are an important factor in job satisfaction. In student affairs, studies reveal that while practitioners are generally satisfied with their work in the

field of student affairs, turnover rates are still high. Student affairs practitioners want to be more involved in decision making and seek higher levels of respect for what they do within higher education institutions, especially their own. They are also concerned with the quality of relationships with their supervisors. Studies of academic advisor job satisfaction reveal that advisors enjoy their work with students but would like more influence within their higher education institutions. Throughout these studies, some advisors indicated that they had too little autonomy while some indicated they had too much autonomy and too little guidance from their supervisors. Supervisor/advisor relationships are an important part of academic advisor job satisfaction as mentioned in several of the studies summarized earlier in this chapter.

In the next chapter, the methodology used in the study will be discussed. The participants and their selection, the data collection instrument and collection process, and the statistical analyses are described so an accurate picture of the study emerges.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The study is a quantitative study designed to gather information about the job satisfaction of professional academic advisors and their partnerships with administrators. Fit with the work environment, of which relationships with administrators are a major part, is critical for employee job satisfaction according to Person-Organization Fit Theory. In this study, the concept of positive supervisor-employee relations as a component of increased job satisfaction across several industries is supported by several previous studies mentioned in the literature review. As far as positive supervisor relationships improving advisor job satisfaction, a few studies have looked at elements of supervisor-advisor relationships, but none have focused exclusively on the relationship between advisors and their administrators as this study does. Based on the review of the literature, it is hypothesized that positive partnerships with administrators increases advisor job satisfaction.

Since the hypotheses in the study state that there are positive correlations between advisor job satisfaction and three other variables—respect by administration, involvement in decision making, and autonomy—the study is a correlational relationship study. Correlational studies examine the relationships between

variables and can be used to test hypotheses as long as the hypotheses have a theoretical basis (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2006). Relationship studies are a type of correlation study that look at relationships between a selected set of complex variables. Such studies are not intended to establish causality, but rather the correlational relationship between variables that may indicate a causal relationship that could be explored further in future studies (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2006). In this chapter, the structure of the proposed study will be presented including context, access, participant selection, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Question

Does being a partner with administration in academic advising lead to increased satisfaction with academic advising for advisors in public, full-time four-year, more selective, higher transfer-in institutions?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is a positive correlation between advisor job satisfaction and advisors' perception of respect by administration.
2. There is a positive correlation between advisor job satisfaction and advisors' perception of their involvement in the decision making process.
3. There is a positive correlation between advisor job satisfaction and advisors' perception of autonomy in their work.

Null Hypotheses

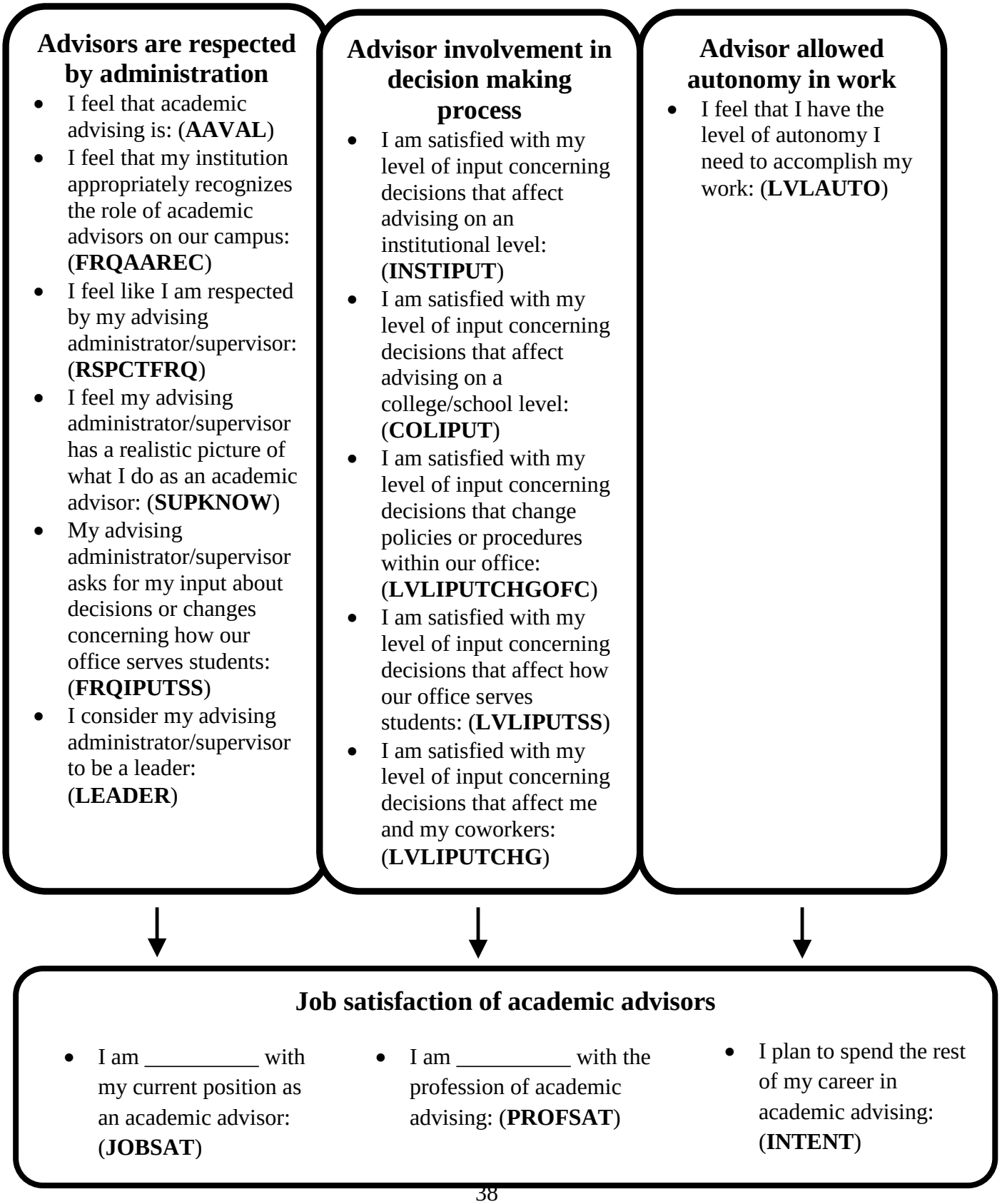
1. There is no correlation between advisor job satisfaction and advisors' perception of respect by administration.

2. There is no correlation between advisor job satisfaction and advisors' perception of their involvement in the decision making process.
3. There is no correlation between advisor job satisfaction and advisors' perception of autonomy in their work.

Variables and the Questions Used to Measure

In Figure 2 presented below, the variables and questions used in the survey instrument to measure them are presented visually. The short variable names in parentheses are used to identify the variables throughout the study.

Figure 2: Variables and the Questions Used to Measure Them



Context and Access

In this study, the population includes all academic advisors in all American colleges and universities. The sample consists of advisors from the 42 American higher education institutions that fit the Carnegie Foundation's FT4/MS/HTI classification. This classification identifies colleges and universities that are full-time, four-year, moderately selective, highly transfer-in institutions (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2009). These institutions have at least 80% of undergraduates as full-time students, 20% of undergraduates are transfers, and freshman test scores are in the top fifth of bachelors-granting schools. These 42 schools are also public institutions. This classification was chosen based on the researcher's personal experience working in an institution of higher education classified as FT4/MS/HTI located in the Midwestern United States. In addition, because these institutions have high undergraduate and transfer student populations, the literature and prior research indicate that they rely heavily on academic advising, and these are just the kind of institutions that would benefit most from assisting in a study that could yield valuable information on ways to improve academic advisor job satisfaction. Improving advisor job satisfaction could ultimately translate into improved advising services and ultimately increased advisor and student retention, areas of interest for the majority of higher education institutions in current economic times.

Participants & Selection

The study population included academic advisors at institutions classified as FT4/MS/HTI by the Carnegie Foundation system. The institutions selected are also

publically controlled as opposed to being private or for profit institutions. While the target of this study was primarily professional academic advisors who are not full-time instructional staff, there was no way to guarantee that respondents did not include faculty advisors. However, to identify the professional advisors from which this study sought to gather responses, the instrument asked participants about the type of advisors at their institution and participants who identified themselves as faculty were excluded from the sample.

Dillman's (2009) tailored design method was used to guide decisions made as data were collected by survey in this study. Tailored design strives to encourage a broad spectrum of participation while minimizing overall error due to survey methods. This method does not lay out one procedure for every type of survey, but rather advocates tailoring the survey and its implementation to the particular survey situation. No matter the techniques used, trust must be created between the researcher and respondents, and the costs and benefits of participation must be attended to if the survey is to be successful.

The 42 institutions included in the study were identified using the search tool on the Carnegie Foundation website by selecting the combination of "public" control and the "FT4/MS/HTI" classification. Forty two institutions are actually listed; however, the institution where the researcher currently works was removed from the list and was used to pilot test the instrument to reduce any potential bias. From the list of the remaining 41 institutions, academic advisors were identified using each institution's website. Once the academic advisors were identified, they were contacted by e-mail directly prior to data collection asking for their assistance with the study. This e-mail explained the purpose of

the study, gave the data collection timeline, explained how the results would be used, and detailed the time commitment involved. The advisors were then sent an informational e-mail including informed consent and the link to the electronic survey to be completed at their earliest convenience. During the study, no IP addresses were collected that could link respondents to their results so that confidentiality of the advisor participants was maintained. Since academic advisors do have somewhat frequent turnover, there was no way to know prior to the study exactly how many advisors would be present at these institutions to participate during the data collection period. Once the advisor e-mails were gathered from each institution's website it was determined that 831 advisors were part of the sample.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in the study was a survey designed by the researcher for this study to address the three research hypotheses. The Survey of Advisor Perceptions of Supervisor Relations and Job Satisfaction is presented in Appendix A. Since these questions have not been previously used, a pilot study was conducted to ensure that the questions were clear and gathered the intended data, so an estimate of time required could be found, and any technical issues could be addressed. Dillman (2009) suggests a pilot study be done whenever a new instrument or significantly different implementation procedures are used. This is especially critical with web-based surveys where there is great potential for problems due to variations in both hardware and software that will be used by respondents to view and complete the survey. The pilot study also allows for valuable feedback on the aesthetic and functional properties of the web survey in addition to issues regarding question order and wording. Correcting such errors discovered during

the pilot study can yield dividends in both time and effort during the main data collection period.

It is important to note that the instrument did not provide a definition of academic advising, so members of the sample were able to use their personal definition of academic advising when providing responses. Those definitions could have varied widely based on their perceptions and personal experiences. The instrument also did not provide an opportunity for participants to respond freely about the instrument or anything else they wanted to comment on or discuss.

The pilot study sample included professional academic advisors from across all seven colleges of the researcher's own FT4/MS/HTI institution since they are readily available and this institution has already been excluded from the data analysis of the larger study to combat any potential bias issues. Twenty five advisors participated in the pilot study; although they are from the same institution they have a wide variety of experience and backgrounds that garnered the feedback needed to improve the instrument for the larger sample.

Crohnbach's Alpha was utilized to estimate internal consistency reliability since the instrument used in the study was created by the researcher specifically for this study. Essentially, Crohnbach's Alpha looks at how the items on a test relate not only to the overall test but to other items on the test (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006). Since this instrument has items with more than two scores (Likert scale that has a number assigned to each choice), Crohnbach's Alpha is appropriate to use. For the Survey of Advisor Perceptions of Supervisor Relations and Job Satisfaction, Crohnbach's Alpha estimated

internal consistency reliability at 0.874. This indicates that the 18 non-demographic survey items were measuring similar things.

Data Collection

An advantage of relationship studies is that data collection can be done quickly and with a minimal amount of effort on the part of participants (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2006), making this a good choice for a study of professional academic advisors who have a myriad number of demands placed upon their time, as previously discussed. Also, the study collected data in the early- to mid-summer timeframe in an effort to make participation more convenient for advisors, as this is generally a lighter work time for professional academic advisors.

After the pilot study, revisions were made to the survey instrument to improve its clarity based on feedback from the pilot participants. Two weeks prior to the main survey distribution, academic advisor e-mail addresses were gathered from the respective institutional websites. These e-mail addresses for academic advisors at the FT4/MS/HTI institutions were used to contact these advisors by e-mail to advise them of the upcoming study and solicit their support and participation in the study. Eight days prior to data collection, the advisors were e-mailed a pre-notice to alert them to the upcoming survey (Appendix C). At the beginning of the survey period, each of the advisors received an e-mail with instructions, informed consent, and the survey URL (Appendix D). They were also assured of the anonymity of their responses and that responses would not be linked to an individual academic advisor or to a specific institution. At no point in the survey process were IP addresses collected that could link prospective respondents to their results, maintaining confidentiality of the participants.

As detailed in the timeline in Appendix B, reminders were sent out at regular intervals over the seven week data collection period (Appendices E-G). The Dillman Method (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009) was used to guide the data collection portion of the study. This procedure was used to secure as many responses as possible since advisors often vacation at some point in the summer months and a shorter data collection period might have missed valuable responses.

Data Analysis

In correlational relationship studies, the goal is to correlate scores from a main variable with scores from other variables in the study (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2006). The study sought to correlate scores on the job satisfaction primary variable with scores from the three other variables addressed by the hypotheses: respect, decision making involvement, and autonomy. The Pearson *r*, or product moment correlation coefficient, was used as the statistical analysis as it is appropriate for the continuous interval variables found in the study. Based upon the theoretical foundations in the literature review, it is hypothesized that the relationship between the primary variable and each of the other three variables will be a linear one, where change in one is associated with a change in the other. The Pearson *r* is generally considered to be one of the most stable correlation coefficients, so long as the variables are linearly related. The Pearson *r* yields a coefficient of -1.00 to +1.00, indicating both directionality and strength of the relationship between the variables. Descriptive and correlation analyses were performed using the SPSS statistical package, Version 18.0. Correlations are subsequently presented in a tabular format so visual comparisons can be quickly and easily made. Data relevant to the hypothesis variables are plotted to ensure that a linear relationship is

in fact displayed and confirm that the Pearson *r* is the most appropriate correlation coefficient for the study.

Summary

This quantitative study sought to gather data about the job satisfaction of academic advisors in three specific areas of partnerships with administrators. These three areas—respect, involvement in decision making, and autonomy—were identified in the literature as important components of advisor job satisfaction. It is hypothesized that a positive relationship between these three elements of partnerships with administrations and job satisfaction exists. This correlational relationship study examined data gathered from 42 FT4/MS/HTI institutions, one of which served as the sample for a pilot study since the web survey being used was a newly created instrument. Dillman's (2009) tailored design method served as a guide to the creation of the survey as well as the implementation of the survey. The statistical analysis used is the Pearson *r* product moment correlation coefficient as it is appropriate for continuous interval variables hypothesized to have a linear relationship (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006). The Pearson *r* indicates both strength and directionality of relationships which is what the study investigated.

In the next chapter, a description of the sample will be presented to gain understanding about the academic advisors who responded to the survey. The results of the statistical analyses used to investigate the relationships between advisor job satisfaction, advisors' perceptions of respect by administration, advisors' perceptions of their involvement in decision making, and advisor's perceptions of autonomy in their work will also be presented.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Academic advising is a helping and service profession within higher education that has high likelihood for advisor burnout and subsequent turnover. Advising is often viewed as a low status higher education function when compared with faculty and administrative roles, leading advisors potentially to feel less valued within their institutions. This study examined the job satisfaction of professional academic advisors related to three key areas: respect by administration, involvement in decision making, and autonomy. In this chapter a brief description of the participants is provided as well as the results of the survey and statistical analyses. These results are organized in terms of the three research hypotheses:

1. There is a positive correlation between advisor job satisfaction and advisors' perceptions of respect by administration.
2. There is a positive correlation between advisor job satisfaction and advisors' perceptions of their involvement in the decision making process.

3. There is a positive correlation between advisor job satisfaction and advisors' perceptions of autonomy in their work.

Description of Participants

The sample consisted of professional academic advisors at one of 42 FT4/MS/HTI public higher education institutions as classified by the Carnegie Foundation. A pilot study at the researcher's own institution yielded 25 academic advisor responses and several suggestions on how to improve the survey instrument. Since the survey instrument was created for this study by the researcher, Crohnbach's Alpha was used to estimate internal consistency reliability at 0.874. This indicates that the 18 non-demographic survey items were measuring similar considerations (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2006).

Out of 48 surveys sent to viable addresses at the pilot institution, 25 responses were received over the one week pilot survey period, yielding a 52.08% response rate. This sample of professional academic advisors from a mid-western Carnegie FT4/MS/HTI public institution were mostly female (76%), mostly Caucasian (64%), and most had earned a Master's degree (76%). Ages from under 25 years old to 70 years old were represented, with the greatest concentration in the 26-30 year old category (20%), and the majority (60%) were 40 years old or younger. Salaries for these advisors ranged from $25,001 to $45,000 per year, with the majority (62.5%) earning $33,001 to $39,000 per year. At the pilot institution, the majority of the sample (72%) reported being academic advisors for five years or less, with 80% reporting advising at their current institution for five years or less. In both years as an advisor and years as an advisor at their current institution, three to five years was the most reported category, with 28% and

32% respectively. Educational backgrounds represented included business, education, physical sciences, arts and humanities, human environmental sciences, and law, with physical sciences (12), education (8), and arts and humanities (8) being most often reported. No academic advisors in the pilot reported educational backgrounds in agriculture or the social sciences. Major areas advised by the pilot respondents represented a broad cross section of majors offered at the institution, with social sciences (5), education (4), undecided/exploratory students (4), and special populations (4) being the largest groups. Respondents were allowed to report multiple areas for both their own educational background and the areas they advise.

Out of 831 surveys sent to viable addresses during the main study, 318 responses were received over the seven week study period, yielding a 38.3% response rate. Sixteen responses were removed due to the respondent identifying a primarily faculty role, and twelve were removed due to identifying a primarily advising administrator role. Since the current study looks at professional academic advisors, this was done to isolate just professional academic advisor responses. This resulted in an N = 290. The sample of professional academic advisors from 41 Carnegie FT4/MS/HTI public institutions were mostly female (74.6%), mostly Caucasian (84.2%), and most had earned a Master's degree (70.3%). Ages from under 25 years to 70 years were represented, with the greatest concentration in the 26-30 year old category (19.5%) and the majority were 50 years old or younger (69.5%). Salaries in the sample ranged from under $20,000 to more than $61,001 per year, with the majority (61.2%) earning $33,001-$49,000 per year. More than half of the sample reported they had been academic advisors for seven years or less (58.4%), with one to three years being the most commonly reported (20.4%). As for

time advising at their current institution, 51.6% of the sample reported they had been there for three to five years, with one to three years again being the most frequently reported (24.5%). Educational backgrounds varied across the spectrum of higher education offerings, with physical sciences (135), education (119), and arts and humanities (91) garnering the most responses. The major area advised also represented a broad cross section of higher education majors, with undecided/exploratory students (102), social sciences (89), arts and humanities (80) and pre-professional (78) being the largest groups. Respondents were allowed to report multiple areas for both their own educational background and the areas they advise.

Professional academic advisors from the Carnegie FT4/MS/HTI public institutions who responded to the pilot and main studies gave similar responses to the majority of the demographic survey items. With respect to time in the field, gender, and educational level, they were also demographically similar to the large study of academic advisors conducted by NACADA in 2000 which can be seen in Table 1. Where the NACADA survey measurement levels differed, their measurements are seen in parentheses.

Table 1: Comparison of Pilot, Main Study , and 2000 NACADA Survey Samples

Demographic Characteristic	Pilot Study	Main Study	2000 NACADA Study
Gender			
Female	76.0%	74.6%	76%
Male	24.0%	25.4%	23%
Ethnicity			
Caucasian	72.7%	84.2%	81%
Other Ethnicities	27.2%	15.7%	18%
Highest Degree Earned			
Master's Degree	76.0%	70.3%	62%
Other Degrees	24.0%	29.6%	35%
Age			
26-30	20.0%	19.5%	16% (21-30)
50 and younger	80.0%	69.5%	69%
Number of Years Advising			
1-5 years	52.0%	38.8%	37%
5-7 years	16.0%	15.1%	24% (6-10)
Number of Years Advising at Current Institution			
1-3 years	28.0%	24.5%	N/A
3-5 years	32.0%	20.1%	
5-7 years	12.0%	12.9%	

*Percentages may not total or may exceed 100%

The differences in age, salary, educational background, and majors advised can be attributed to the pilot being conducted at one institution as opposed to 41 institutions in the main study. One institution would logically have a narrower spectrum of majors, and fewer advisors overall allows for less chance of any one age or educational background being present. Many institutions, including the pilot institution, use salary bands to determine pay to a large extent, so one institution using this method would naturally have a more compressed salary range. This overview indicates that a similarly broad range of academic advisors from Carnegie FT4/MS/HTI public institutions participated in both the pilot and main studies.

Pearson *r* Introduction

For purposes of reporting and interpretation in this study, Pearson *r* correlation coefficients from 0.51 to 0.70 are considered moderate positive correlations, 0.31 to 0.50 are low positive correlations, and 0.00 to 0.30 is little or weak correlation (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 2002). Since correlations with advisor job satisfaction (JOBSAT) were correlated at a greater level than satisfaction with the profession (PROFSAT), and intent to remain in the profession (INTENT), 95% confidence intervals were calculated between JOBSAT and the other variables for respect, decision making, and autonomy. These confidence intervals were established by transforming the Pearson *r* coefficients into Fisher's *z* using a conversion website. The intervals were then calculated and converted from *z* back to *r* using the same conversion website (http://onlinestatbook.com/analysis_lab/r_to_z.html). Since the *r* values each fall into their respective confidence interval ranges, it can be said that these correlations would include the true parameters of the population 95% of the time.

Respect by Administration

The Pearson *r* correlation was used to examine the relationship between advisors' perceptions of respect by administration and advisor job satisfaction. Six questions were used to examine respect by administration and three were used to examine advisor job satisfaction (see Appendix I). Correlations and significance are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Advisors are Respected by Administration

		JOBSAT	PROFSAT	INTENT
AAVAL	Pearson r	0.331**	0.290**	0.190**
	r^2	0.110	0.084	0.036
	N	285	287	289
	% of shared variance	11.0	8.4	3.6
	z_r	0.344		
	95% Confidence Interval	0.436, 0.217		
FRQAAREC	Pearson r	0.422**	0.308**	0.246**
	r^2	0.179	0.095	0.061
	N	286	288	290
	% of shared variance	17.9	9.5	6.1
	z_r	0.450		
	95% Confidence Interval	0.518, 0.316		
RSPCTFRQ	Pearson r	0.597**	0.289**	0.301**
	r^2	0.356	0.084	0.091
	N	286	288	290
	% of shared variance	35.6	8.4	9.1
	z_r	0.688		
	95% Confidence Interval	0.670, 0.512		
SUPKNOW	Pearson r	0.557**	0.299**	0.269**
	r^2	0.310	0.089	0.072
	N	285	287	289
	% of shared variance	31.0	8.9	7.2
	z_r	0.628		
	95%Confidence Interval	0.636, 0.466		
FRQIPUTSS	Pearson r	0.510**	0.252**	0.272**
	r^2	0.260	0.064	0.074
	N	284	286	288
	% of shared variance	26.0	6.4	7.4
	z_r	0.563		
	95% Confidence Interval	0.595, 0.414		
LEADER	Pearson r	0.597**	0.329**	0.310**
	r^2	0.356	0.108	0.096
	N	284	286	288
	% of shared variance	35.6	10.8	9.6
	z_r	0.688		
	95% Confidence Interval	0.617, 0.441		

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (one tailed)

All of the correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (one tailed), although many are only weak correlations with satisfaction with the profession of advising (PROFSAT) and intent to stay in academic advising (INTENT). Stronger correlations are shown between current advising position (JOBSAT) and the respect measures. Satisfaction with current advising position is moderately positively correlated with feeling respected by administrators (RSPCTFQ), administrators having a realistic picture of the advisor's job (SUPKNOW), frequency of input on how students are served (FRQIPUTSS), and considering the advising administrator to be a leader (LEADER).

Advisor Involvement in Decision Making

The Pearson *r* correlation was used to examine the relationship between advisors' perceptions of involvement in decision making and advisor job satisfaction. Five questions were used to evaluate advisor involvement in decision making from the individual level up through involvement in institutional decision making and correlated with the same three job satisfaction questions used previously (see Appendix I). Correlations and significance are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Advisor Involvement in Decision Making Process

		JOBSAT	PROFSAT	INTENT
INSTIPUT	Pearson r	0.340**	0.244**	0.213**
	r^2	0.116	0.060	0.045
	N	284	286	288
	% of shared variance	11.6	6.0	4.5
	z_r	0.354		
	95% Confidence Interval	0.444, 0.227		
COLIPUT	Pearson r	0.434**	0.287**	0.243**
	r^2	0.188	0.082	0.059
	N	281	283	285
	% of shared variance	18.8	8.2	5.9
	z_r	0.465		
	95% Confidence Interval	0.528, 0.329		
LVLIPUTCHG OFC	Pearson r	0.505**	0.326**	0.267**
	r^2	0.255	0.106	0.071
	N	280	282	284
	% of shared variance	25.5	10.6	7.1
	z_r	0.556		
	95% Confidence Interval	0.505, 0.408		
LVLIPUTSS	Pearson r	0.532**	0.286**	0.315**
	r^2	0.283	0.082	0.099
	N	284	286	288
	% of shared variance	28.3	8.2	9.9
	z_r	0.593		
	95% Confidence Interval	0.614, 0.438		
LVLIPUTCHG	Pearson r	0.560**	0.361**	0.345**
	r^2	0.314	0.130	0.119
	N	282	284	286
	% of shared variance	31.4	13.0	11.9
	z_r	0.633		
	95% Confidence Interval	0.639, 0.470		

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (one tailed)

All of the Pearson *r* correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (one tailed), although many of the correlations are slight, especially in the areas of satisfaction with the profession (PROFSAT) and intent to remain in the profession (INTENT). Correlations are stronger (low and moderate) between the five involvement in decision making measures and satisfaction with current advising position (JOBSAT), ranging

from 0.345 to 0.555. Advisor satisfaction with current advising position is low positively correlated with input in decisions that affect advisors on the institutional (INSTIPUT), college/departmental (COLIPUT), office change (LVLIPUTCHGOFC), and moderate positively correlated with service to students (LVLIPUTSS), and individual levels (LVLIPUTCHG). As the decisions affect the day to day conditions the advisor experiences, the correlations become stronger.

Advisor Allowed Autonomy in Their Work

Pearson *r* correlations were used to examine the relationships between advisors' perceptions of the autonomy allowed in their work and advisor job satisfaction. One question was used to measure advisor autonomy, and then correlated with the same three questions previously used to measure advisor job satisfaction (see Appendix I). Pearson *r* correlations and significance levels are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Advisor Allowed Autonomy in Work

		JOBSAT	PROFSAT	INTENT
LVLAUTO	Pearson r	0.479**	0.225**	0.290**
	r^2	0.229	0.051	0.084
	N	285	287	289
	% of shared variance	22.9	5.1	8.4
	z_r	0.522		
	95% Confidence Interval	0.568, 0.379		

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (one tailed)

All of the Pearson r correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (one tailed); however, the highest correlation is between level of autonomy and satisfaction with current advising position (JOBSAT), and it is a low positive correlation. The other two correlations are fairly weak, indicating that level of autonomy does not relate as strongly

to satisfaction with the profession of academic advising (PROFSAT) or intent to remain an academic advisor (INTENT).

Pearson *r* Summary

Pearson *r* correlations in each of the three areas of advisors' perceptions of respect by administration, advisors' perceptions of involvement in the decision making process, and advisors' perceptions of autonomy in their work displayed positive, significant correlations with advisor job satisfaction. The strongest correlations in each area in relation to the three job satisfaction measures were with advisor satisfaction with the current academic advising position while weaker correlations were displayed for satisfaction with the profession of academic advising and intent to remain in academic advising. Based on the Pearson r correlations, the three null hypotheses can be rejected and the three research hypotheses can be accepted with respect to advisor job satisfaction with the current advising position, but not with satisfaction with the profession of academic advising or with intent to remain an academic advisor.

t Tests

To further explore the significant correlations yielded by the Pearson *r* analysis, *t* tests were calculated to see if there were significant differences between groups of advisors on the correlations found to be moderately positively correlated. The six moderately positive correlations examined are: respect by advising administrator/supervisor (RSPCTFRQ), advising administrator/supervisor has a realistic picture of advisor duties (SUPKNOW), input about decisions or changes concerning how the office serves students (FRQIPUTSS), considering the advising administrator/supervisor to be a leader (LEADER), satisfaction with level of input

concerning decisions that affect how the office serves students (LVLIPUTSS), and satisfaction with level of input concerning decisions that affect the individual and coworkers (LVLIPUTCHG). The data were split into groups according to the following: age under 40 years and age over 40 years, salary under $41,000 per year and salary over $41,001 per year, overall years as an advisor less than five years and overall years as an advisor more than five years, and years spent advising at the current institution less than five years and years spent advising at the current institution more than five years. These four categories were chosen for two reasons. First, age, salary, and length of service are factors widely believed to influence job satisfaction (Bolin, 2008; Bilge, 2006; & Bokemeier & Lacy, 1987). The categories used to separate the sample into two groups for the *t* tests were selected based on where breaks occurred in the data. For age, 40 years was chosen as a separation point because it is the end of the first third of the average working lifespan, and it included the majority of the sample as well as the category (26-30 years old) reported most often in the study. In the salary category, $41,000 was chosen as the separator because it split the sample nearly in half. For the two categories involving years in advising, five years was chosen as the separation point because it included the category most often reported (one to three or three to five years) by the respondents. Second, data gathered in this study were from a mostly female, mostly Caucasian, and mostly Master's educated sample, so comparisons on these factors would be unreliable based on such small numbers of the other groups.

Since a standard *t* test is not reliable for testing differences in correlation coefficients without transformation, transformed *r* to *z* values using Fisher's method were used to perform the *t* tests. Table values for *t* were at the 0.05 level one tailed since the

study has directional hypotheses and were calculated using the same conversion website used to transform the *r* values to *z* values (http://onlinestatbook.com/index.html). Table 5 contains the *t* test results.

Table 5: *t* Test Results for Moderately Positive Correlations

	r	z	N	r	z	N	t test	table	df
Age Under 40				**Age Over 40**					
RSPCTFRQ	0.585	0.670	163	0.607	0.704	121	-1.571	0.059	278
SUPKNOW	0.555	0.626	162	0.554	0.624	121	0.143	0.443	277
FRQIPUTSS	0.518	0.574	162	0.485	0.530	120	**3.143**	0.001	276
LEADER	0.605	0.701	161	0.578	0.659	121	**3.000**	0.002	276
LVLIPUTSS	0.526	0.585	162	0.524	0.582	120	0.214	0.415	276
LVLIPUTCHG	0.551	0.620	162	0.572	0.650	120	-2.143	0.017	276
Salary Under $41,000				**Salary Over $41,000**					
RSPCTFRQ	0.603	0.698	149	0.611	0.711	136	-0.867	0.193	279
SUPKNOW	0.559	0.631	148	0.571	0.649	136	-0.018	-0.018	278
FRQIPUTSS	0.538	0.601	147	0.535	0.597	136	0.267	0.395	277
LEADER	0.614	0.715	148	0.582	0.665	135	**3.333**	0.001	277
LVLIPUTSS	0.514	0.568	149	0.591	0.679	134	-7.400	0.000	277
LVLIPUTCHG	0.537	0.600	146	0.601	0.695	165	-6.333	0.000	275
Overall Adv Years < 5				**Overall Adv Years > 5**					
RSPCTFRQ	0.564	0.639	130	0.621	0.727	155	-5.867	0.000	279
SUPKNOW	0.426	0.455	129	0.644	0.765	155	-20.667	0.000	278
FRQIPUTSS	0.456	0.488	128	0.571	0.649	155	-10.733	0.000	277
LEADER	0.570	0.648	130	0.620	0.725	153	-5.133	0.000	277
LVLIPUTSS	0.480	0.523	130	0.590	0.678	153	-10.333	0.000	277
LVLIPUTCHG	0.467	0.506	129	0.633	0.746	152	-16.000	0.000	275
Institutional Adv Years < 5				**Institutional Adv Years > 5**					
RSPCTFRQ	0.572	0.650	191	0.645	0.767	95	-7.313	0.000	280
SUPKNOW	0.493	0.540	190	0.675	0.820	95	-17.500	0.000	279
FRQIPUTSS	0.457	0.494	189	0.614	0.715	95	-13.813	0.000	278
LEADER	0.579	0.661	189	0.635	0.750	95	-5.563	0.000	278
LVLIPUTSS	0.511	0.564	190	0.577	0.658	94	-5.875	0.000	278
LVLIPUTCHG	0.540	0.604	190	0.601	0.695	92	-5.688	0.000	276

All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (one tailed)
Bolded values indicate significant *t* test

In the age category, two significant differences were found between those advisors who were under 40 years old and those who were over 40 years old. Input about decisions or changes concerning how the office serves students (FRQIPUTSS) and considering the advising administrator/supervisor to be a leader (LEADER) were more highly correlated with job satisfaction for those under 40 years old, although both variables were positively correlated with job satisfaction for each age group. In the salary category, only one variable showed a significant difference between those advisors making under $41,000 per year and those making more than $40,001 per year. Considering the advising administrator/supervisor to be a leader (LEADER) was more highly correlated with job satisfaction for those earning under $41,000 per year, although considering the administrator to be a leader was moderately positively correlated with job satisfaction for each salary group. In the categories for overall years as an academic advisor and years as an academic advisor at the current institution, no significant differences were found between the less than five years and more than five years groups on any of the six variables. Based on the results of these *t* tests, the null hypotheses would be rejected for the age and salary categories and accepted for the overall years as an academic advisor and years as an academic advisor at the current institution.

In the next chapter, a discussion of the results along with interpretations and implications for practice will be presented.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The final chapter restates the research problem and summarizes the research methods used to conduct the study. Results are interpreted and connections made to research, theory, and practice. The chapter concludes with recommendations for additional research.

Problem Statement

As a helping and service profession within higher education, academic advising is plagued by the realities of burnout and substantial turnover. Carstensen and Silberhorn (1979) spoke to the perception that not only is academic advising a low-status function within higher education institutions, but it is also lacking in support and recognition. This is still particularly true today, especially for professional academic advisors who are more likely than faculty to be underpaid and overworked (Murrell, 2005). In an environment that includes tight timelines, multiple responsibilities, complex reporting relationships, and a large investment of empathy and emotional energy by the professional academic advisor, job satisfaction can quickly decline. Such a decline in job satisfaction can serve as negative reinforcement, ultimately leading professional academic advisors to become unhappy and leave their advising position, the

advising profession, or both. Few studies have examined job satisfaction specifically within the population of professional academic advisors, and those studies available looked broadly at advisor job satisfaction across institutional types or at the relationship between advisor job satisfaction and student satisfaction with advising. This study examined the relationship between professional academic advisor job satisfaction and partnerships with academic advising administration, as it relates to advisors' perceptions of respect by administration, advisors' perception of involvement in the decision making process, and advisors' perceptions of autonomy in their work.

Review of Methodology

Since the hypotheses state that there are positive correlations between advisor job satisfaction and three other variables—respect by administration, involvement in decision making, and autonomy—the study is a correlational relationship study. Correlational studies examine the relationships between variables and can be used to test hypotheses as long as the proposed hypotheses have a theoretical basis (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2006). The study sample included professional academic advisors at institutions classified as FT4/MS/HTI public institutions by the Carnegie Foundation system. Forty two institutions fit this classification at the time the study was conducted, one of which was used for the pilot study, yielding 41 institutions to participate in the main study. Advisor email addresses were gathered from each institution's website, and emails concerning study participation were sent throughout the study according to Dillman's (2009) tailored design method. During the study, no IP addresses were collected that could link prospective respondents to their results so that confidentiality of the advisor participants was maintained.

The instrument used in the proposed study is a survey designed by the researcher to address the three research hypotheses. The Survey of Advisor Perceptions of Supervisor Relations and Job Satisfaction is presented in Appendix A. Since these questions were not previously used, a pilot study was conducted to ensure that the questions were clear, gathered the intended data, and was reliable. The pilot study sample included professional academic advisors from across all seven colleges of the researcher's own FT4/MS/HTI institution since they were readily available and this institution was already excluded from the data analysis of the larger study to combat any potential bias issues. Twenty five advisors participated in the pilot study; although they were from the same institution they have a wide variety of experience and backgrounds that garnered the feedback needed to improve the instrument for the larger sample. Feedback from the pilot participants was largely positive and did not result in significant structural changes to the instrument. Crohnbach's Alpha, performed on the pilot instrument as it was sent to the pilot participants, estimated internal consistency at 0.874, indicating the 18 non-demographic questions were measuring similar considerations (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006).

After the pilot study, revisions were made to the survey instrument to improve its clarity based on feedback from the pilot sample. Two weeks prior to the main survey distribution, academic advisor e-mail addresses were gathered from the respective institutional websites. The Dillman method was used to guide email interactions with the participants before and during the survey period (appendices D-H). At no point in the survey process were IP addresses collected that could link prospective respondents to their results or institutions, maintaining confidentiality of the participants.

This study sought to correlate scores on the job satisfaction primary variable with scores from the three other variables addressed by the hypotheses: respect, decision making involvement, and autonomy. The Pearson *r*, or product moment correlation coefficient, was used as the statistical analysis because it is appropriate for the continuous interval variables found in the study. The Pearson *r* yields a coefficient of -1.00 to +1.00, indicating both directionality and strength of the relationship between the variables. Based upon the theoretical foundations in the literature review, it was hypothesized that the relationship between the primary variable and each of the other three variables would be a linear one. Descriptive and correlation analyses were performed using the SPSS statistical package, Version 18.0.

Summary of Results

- The pilot study sample and the main study sample were similar in demographic characteristics with the majority self identifying as Caucasian, female, and Master's degree educated
- A wide variety of educational backgrounds and major areas advised were reported in both samples
- Correlations in the areas of respect by administration, involvement in decision making, and autonomy showed a significant, positive relationship with satisfaction with the current advising position (job satisfaction)
- Weaker correlations were displayed between respect by administration, involvement in decision making, and autonomy when correlated with satisfaction with the advising profession (professional satisfaction) and intent to make a career out of academic advising

- For those under 40 years old, input about how the office serves students (FRQIPUTSS) and considering the administrator to be a leader (LEADER) were more highly correlated with job satisfaction, although both age groups showed a positive correlation with each of the two variables
- For those making less than $41,000 per year, considering the advising administrator to be a leader was more highly correlated with job satisfaction than for those making over $41,001 per year
- No significant differences were found based on length of time advising overall in relation to respect by advising administrator/supervisor (RSPCTFRQ), advising administrator/supervisor has a realistic picture of advisor duties (SUPKNOW), input about decisions or changes concerning how the office serves students (FRQIPUTSS), considering the advising administrator/supervisor to be a leader (LEADER), satisfaction with level of input concerning decisions that affect how the office serves students (LVLIPUTSS), and satisfaction with level of input concerning decisions that affect the individual and coworkers (LVLIPUTCHG) and job satisfaction
- No significant differences were found based on length of time advising at the current institution in relation to respect by advising administrator/supervisor (RSPCTFRQ), advising administrator/supervisor has a realistic picture of advisor duties (SUPKNOW), input about decisions or changes concerning how the office serves students (FRQIPUTSS), considering the advising administrator/supervisor to be a leader (LEADER), satisfaction with level of input concerning decisions that affect how the office serves students (LVLIPUTSS), and satisfaction with

level of input concerning decisions that affect the individual and coworkers (LVLIPUTCHG) and job satisfaction.

Discussion

In this section, interpretation of the results is presented, followed by discussion of the relationships to prior research and theory. Implications for practice in academic advising administration and recommendations for future research are also discussed. This study was done with a specific sample, professional academic advisors at Carnegie classified public FT4/MS/HTI institutions in the United States, so it is important to note that these results are not generalizable to all professional academic advisors.

Interpretation of the Results

Professional academic advisors are helping professionals who value the relationship and interactions they have with students, colleagues, faculty, and their advising administrators. Because academic advising is not a high status or high paying field, advisors are heavily motivated by intrinsic rewards. Advisors who feel that they are partners with administration in assisting students in meeting their educational goals exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction. When advisors feel respected by their advising administrator, included in the decision making process, and are afforded the autonomy needed to do their work they are more likely to feel such partnership with their administrators.

The results of this study are meaningful in light of Person-Organization (P-O) Fit Theory. Person-Organization (P-O) Fit Theory is based heavily on Holland's Assumption of Congruence (Perdue, Reardon, and Peterson, 2007), which states that individuals are most satisfied when their Holland type (Realistic, Investigative, Artistic,

Social, Enterprising, or Conservative) matches that of their work environment. P-O Fit Theory states that job satisfaction and commitment to the organization are functions of congruence in values, personality, and work environment, as adapted by Westerman and Cyr (2004) into their Integrative Model of Person-Organization Fit.

In the context of academic advising, it can be argued that respect by administration indicates values congruence for academic advisors, environment congruence encompasses the advisor being involved in decisions affecting their work environment, and personality congruence is indicated by advisors being allowed autonomy in their work. Academic advisors value a reciprocal, respectful relationship due to the helping, relationship-oriented nature of their work and when this mutually respectful relationship exists they experience values congruence. Academic advising involves continually expanding the advisor's knowledge base and learning new ways to accomplish duties; putting this new knowledge to work engaging in the decision making process with their advising administrator is part of who they are, indicating personality congruence. Academic advising is a very individualized job and a high level of autonomy is expected by advisors, but they still expect support to be available when they need it. This need for combined autonomy and support is more likely to be met when a positive and respectful relationship exists with the advising administrator, leading to work environment congruence. When an employee views the fit between themselves and the work environment as good, they tend to not only be more satisfied but also to perform better and be recognized for such performance (Bretz & Judge, 1994). Theoretically, advisors who have a good fit in these three areas of congruence through their relationship

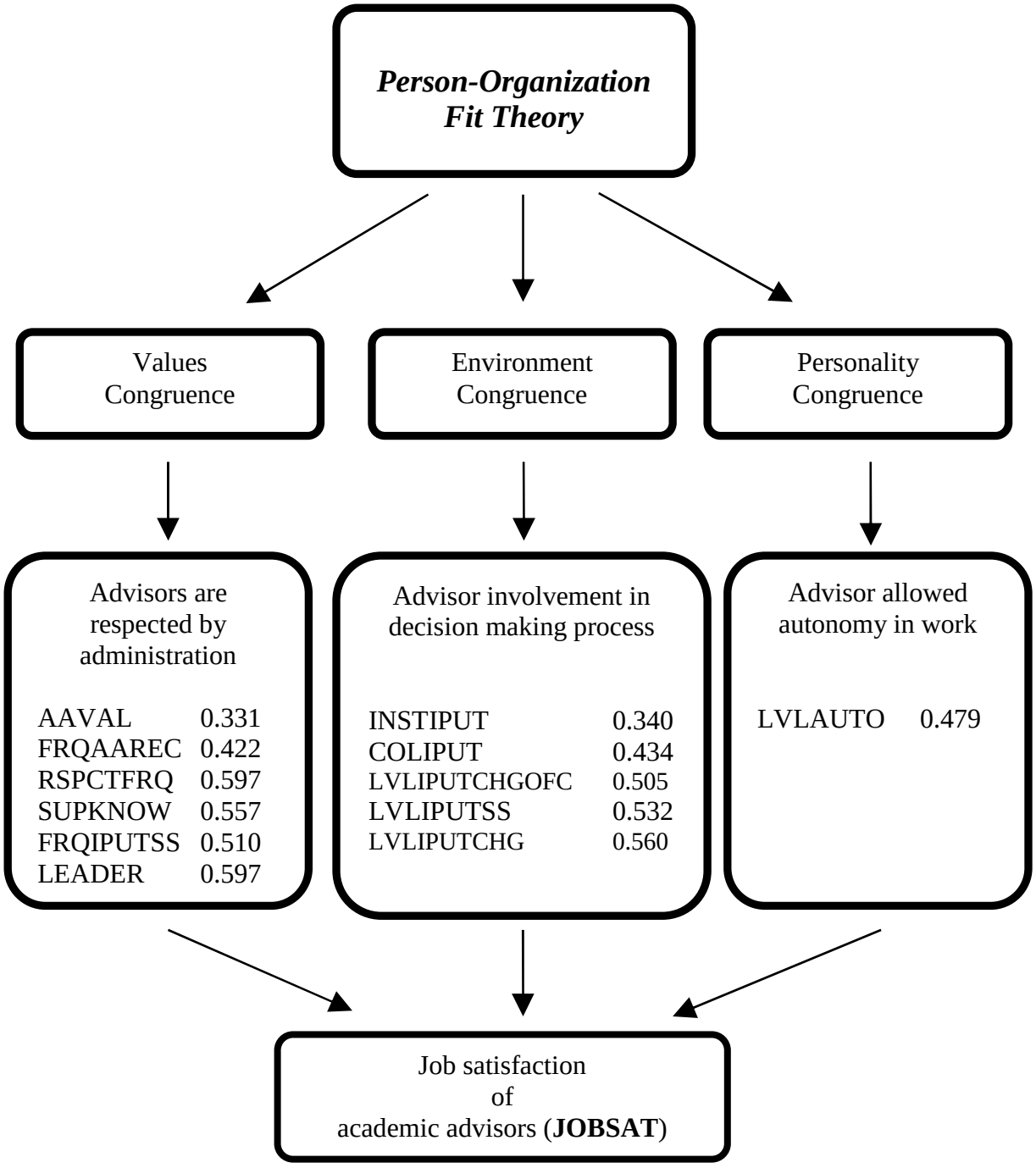
with their advising administrator should be more satisfied, perform at a higher level, and be more likely to stay in advising.

Results of this study support the conceptual Model of Advisor Perceptions of Supervisor Relations and Job Satisfaction—which is presented on the following page as Figure 1—because the Pearson *r* correlations in each of the three areas of advisors' perceptions of respect by administration, advisors' perceptions of involvement in the decision making process, and advisors' perceptions of autonomy in their work displayed positive, significant correlation with advisor job satisfaction. Based on the Pearson *r* correlations reported in Chapter 4, the three null hypotheses can be rejected and the three research hypotheses can be accepted with respect to advisor job satisfaction with the current advising position, but not with satisfaction with the profession of academic advising or with intent to remain an academic advisor where weaker correlations were displayed. The *t* test results suggest that age and salary combine with several of the respect and involvement in decision making measures to play a role in job satisfaction, although time as an advisor and time advising at the current institution do not show significant differences in these areas. This shows that partnerships with administration that facilitate congruences in values, environment, and work environment are an important factor in academic advisors' satisfaction with the current advising position, which is where advisors have the most effect on student retention.

Moderately positive correlations found in the current study show that a relationship exists between these variables that not only could be used to improve advisor job satisfaction but also to provide support for the conceptual Model of Advisor Perceptions of Supervisor Relations and Job Satisfaction advanced in this discussion.

Improving advisor job satisfaction could ultimately lead to better academic advising and increased student retention, which are major goals throughout higher education today.

Figure 3: Conceptual Model of Advisor Perceptions of Supervisor Relations and Job Satisfaction with Pearson *r* values



Most of the findings in this study were anticipated; however, the lack of correlations between respect, decision making, and autonomy and satisfaction with the profession of advising and intent to remain in the profession were somewhat unanticipated. While it would seem that satisfaction with the current advising position would lead to satisfaction with the profession and a desire to remain in the profession for the duration of their career, several factors could have an effect on this. First, the average academic advisor in this study was young, with the greatest concentration of advisors in the 26-30 year old category in both the pilot and main studies. This age group has not grown up with the expectation that they will remain in the same profession for the majority of their career as past generations have, so they may more actively seek change. Perhaps this lack of intent to stay in the profession of academic advising should not be viewed as being a negative reflection on job satisfaction but simply as a generational norm. Second, the majority of advisors in both the pilot and main studies had been advising seven years or less, with one to three years being the most commonly reported category in the main study. This indicates that they have not been advising for very long, so perhaps they have not been in the profession long enough to make a judgment on satisfaction with or intent to remain in the advising profession. The lack of correlation in these two areas indicates that while job satisfaction of advisors is correlated with the respect, decision making, and autonomy variables for the current position, these factors may not influence satisfaction with the profession or intent to remain an advisor as was originally anticipated.

Another unanticipated finding concerns the *t* tests that were performed to further investigate the moderately positive correlations found in this study. Years spent as an

advisor at the current institution and overall years advising appeared to have no correlation with the six correlations examined. It could be anticipated that there would have been significant differences for those with less than five years and those with more than five years in each category, but there was not. Age of the advisor and salary did have a few significant differences, but not in the anticipated direction. It could be expected that those who were older and earned more would have greater expectations for their administrator to be a leader and involve the advisor in decision making, but that was not the case in this study. The younger advisors (under 40 years old) and those who earned less than $41,000 per year were more satisfied when they saw their administrator as a leader and were more involved in decision making. Perhaps these younger advisors were looking more for a leader to pattern themselves after than the older advisors. These unanticipated findings should be investigated further in future studies.

Relationship to Prior Research

Results of this study align with results of many of the studies mentioned in Chapter Two. Those similarities, as well as a few differences, are presented here in the order of their appearance in Chapter Two. This structure has been chosen since many of the studies relate to more than one of the variables in the current study.

Stinglhamber and Vandenberghe (2003) found that when supervisors value employee contributions and provide opportunities to reap intrinsic rewards employees were more attached to their supervisors. Professional academic advisors in the current study exhibited moderately positive correlations between job satisfaction and feeling respected by their advising administrator as well as their advising administrator asking for their input on services to students. This indicates that when employees feel valued by

their supervisor, including when academic advisors feel valued and respected by their advising administrator, they have higher levels of job satisfaction.

Sparr and Sonnentag (2008) found that increased personal control over decision making on the job contributed to higher levels of job satisfaction. In the current study of professional academic advisors, the correlations became stronger between advisor involvement in the decision making process as the hierarchical level became more local to the advisor. Starting with weak positive correlations for input on the institutional level, correlations became progressively stronger through college and office level input, until moderately positive correlations were found for input in how students are served and input in decisions affecting the advisor and their coworkers. This reinforces Sparr and Sonnentag's results because the decisions that affect academic advisors on a more personal level were more highly correlated with job satisfaction in their current position.

Harris, Wheeler, and Kacmar (2009) found that empowerment of employees contributed to increased job satisfaction. Results of the current study of professional academic advisors indicate that empowerment of these advisors through providing them with autonomy in their work and involving them in decisions on a level that affects their day to day work environment is positively correlated with job satisfaction. Harris, Wheeler, and Kacmar also looked at decreased turnover intentions related to increased empowerment, but the current study of advisors found weak or no correlation between empowerment and intent to make a career out of academic advising.

Renn and Hodges (2007) found that new student affairs professionals struggled with relationships, fit, and competence in their first year on the job. Academic advisors in the current study showed moderately positive correlations between satisfaction with

their current advising position and feeling respected by their advising administrator as well as viewing their advising administrator as a leader. This reinforces Renn and Hodges findings that fit and relationships are important contributors to job satisfaction of student affairs professionals, extended to include professional academic advisors.

Bender (2009) found that involvement in decision making was an important component of job satisfaction for student affairs practitioners, and the current study of advisors echoes this finding. Especially on the individual and office levels, advisor input in decision making was moderately positively correlated with advisor job satisfaction. Her study also found high levels of job satisfaction among student affairs practitioners but high numbers did not necessarily plan to remain in the field. This seems to be mirrored by the professional advisors in the current study, as correlations were stronger with current advising position than with the profession of advising or intent to remain in academic advising as a career.

Malaney and Osit (1998) found that involvement in decision making and open lines of communication with supervisors were important to student affairs practitioners. The current study of academic advisors indicates this is also the case for professional academic advisors, especially when the decisions concern the advisor, their coworkers, and how their office serves students.

Lynch (2002) found that advisors working in large, public institutions were dissatisfied with institutional support of academic advising. The current study looked at public institutions, many of which were large, and only 8.5% of advisors in the main study felt advising was appropriately recognized by their institution, while 39.6% felt it was most of the time. Since less than half of the professional academic advisors in this

study felt advising was regularly recognized on their campuses, this reinforces Lynch's finding that institutional support of academic advising is an area that needs improvement, especially in large, public institutions.

Epps (2002) found that the 18 advisors in her qualitative study reported good relationships with supervisors, and advisors in the current study echoed these findings. She also mentioned that advisors in her study felt they were not involved enough in decision making at higher institutional levels. In the current quantitative study of advisors they reported little input at these higher institutional levels, but correlations with job satisfaction were only low positively correlated, indicating that perhaps advisors in the current study were not as concerned with having input at higher levels of the institution.

Murrell (2005) found that most advisors in her study were satisfied with their level of autonomy and that there was a positive relationship between advisor autonomy and student satisfaction. While the current study did not explore student satisfaction, 61.2% of the advisors felt they had the level of autonomy needed to accomplish their work "a lot" of the time. This indicates that for the most part these professional academic advisors were satisfied with the autonomy they are afforded in their current position, reinforcing Murrell's finding concerning advisor autonomy.

Donnelly (2009) found that advisors in his study reported improved supervisor relations could improve their job satisfaction. In the current study of academic advisors, feeling respected by administrators, administrator knowledge of the advisors' job, administrators asking for input from advisors, and advisors considering the administrator to be a leader were all moderately positively correlated with advisor job satisfaction.

These correlations with indicators of respect by and positive relations with advising administrators bolster Donnelly's findings that advisors would be more satisfied if these relations were improved.

The sample in the current study is unique when compared to the previous studies mentioned here because it focuses on a specific Carnegie institutional classification. Several of the previous studies were conducted in industries outside of higher education and several were done with student affairs practitioners, not specifically professional academic advisors. Of the studies mentioned here that were conducted with the population of academic advisors, two included advisors from across all institutional types, one study was a small, qualitative study of 18 advisors, and one drew its sample from Midwestern community colleges. The current study focuses on professional academic advisors from 42 public FT4/MS/HTI institutions as classified by the Carnegie Foundation, making it unique in terms of sample in relation to previous studies. Based on this unique perspective, the study contributes to the research base in three ways. First, it provides a look at professional academic advisors at a specific type of higher education institution that serves large numbers of American post-secondary students. Second, it looks at the relationships between academic advisors, their administrators, and job satisfaction, incorporating a leadership aspect not previously explored in this population. Third, it provides direction for current and future advising administrators as they seek ways to improve relationships with their academic advisors and ultimately improve service to students within these institutions.

While the studies summarized here and in Chapter Two were conducted with various populations in a variety of different contexts, they each provide valuable

background and relate to the current study of professional academic advisors. Even though the results of the current study were not always the same as these previous studies, many of the results were similar. The current study confirms that respect by administrators, involvement of advisors in the decision making process, and autonomy and empowerment of advisors are all important elements in professional academic advisor job satisfaction.

Theoretical Implications

In this study, being respected by administrators, being involved in decision making, and having autonomy were shown to be important elements in advisors' satisfaction with their current advising position. As previously discussed, these correspond well with the Person-Organization (P-O) Fit Theory which states that employees tend to be more satisfied when they feel congruence with their work environment, especially in the areas of values and personality. Feeling like a partner with their administrator through being respected and involved in decision making can be an important part of academic advisors finding congruence with their work environment. Such congruence could ultimately lead to higher performance and increased job satisfaction, just as P-O Fit Theory advocates.

Academic advisors tend to choose this profession due to altruistic motivations and effective administrators will use this to their advantage in leading (McCaffery, 2004). Advisors value personal relationships, and they tend to strive for harmony with fellow advisors, administrators, and staff. Transformational leadership (Bush, 2003) seeks to build on individual strengths to elevate each member of the group, and advising administrators who are viewed as leaders by the advisors they supervise are

transformational in that they model participation in professional development and growth as a professional while encouraging their colleagues to do the same, increasing their knowledge base as well. This transformative style raises academic advising quality and the job satisfaction of advisors in the unit, increasing retention and decreasing burnout. One of the most crucial ways advising administrators lead their colleagues is through modeling personal and professional development and by facilitating discussions about current advising issues both formally and informally (McClellan, 2004). In her discussion of mentoring new professionals, Herr (1994) mentions flexibility and "recognition of individual differences" (p. 84) as important parts of a mentoring program, but these principles are just as salient when advisors are mentored by their advising administrators. Advisors in the current study showed moderately positive correlations between job satisfaction and viewing their advising administrator as a leader, aligning with theoretical considerations associated with transformational leadership.

Collegiality is one of the hallmarks of the university environment (Bryman & Lilley, 2009), and collegiality among advisors and their advising administrators not only provides a venue for the sharing of ideas and debriefing, but also a general feeling of goodwill within the office setting. Roper (2002) states that it is important to be a champion for colleagues, both in congratulating their successes and in providing feedback to help them improve, as well as helping to support them in conversations with others. Advising administrators are in a position to advocate for support, recognition, and rewards for advising, both in their units and across campus, elevating the importance of advisors throughout the institution. This is an important skill for advising administrators to master, especially since monetary rewards for advisors are often hard to secure, but

praise and feedback are free rewards that make advisors feel valued and respected. Such actions help advisors feel respected and valued by their advising administrators, which the current study found to be positively correlated with advisor satisfaction in their current advising position.

Advisors as partners of administration involves advisors participating with their advising administrators to provide the best possible service to students, and it incorporates the core values of responsibility to the institution and to higher education as a whole. Whether advisors consider the administrators above them, such as unit directors and the president of the institution, as leaders or not, the hierarchical nature of most higher education institutions requires advisors to follow these administrators. These administrators control resources for advising units, as well as setting the standards for effective advising at the institution. The quality of the followership experience for advisors is one of the most important aspects of advisor retention, and experiences vary widely in institutions across American higher education. Since advising is typically not a high earning or high prestige field, having an administration populated with what advisors consider supportive leaders can greatly enhance the advisor's satisfaction with advising. Part of the difficulty for advisors in their relationship with advising administrators has to do with their ambiguous role within most institutions. Most advisors are considered to be staff employees, but advising is a profession that requires quite a bit of autonomy, so while they expect clear direction from administration as staff typically does (McCorkle & Archibald, 1982), they also expect that the advising session itself and their relationships with students will remain their own domain. This makes it difficult for both the advising administrator and the advisor as they try to operate within

the bureaucratic framework that dominates most higher education institutions. Another disconnect that can cause difficulty is that due to the nature of advising, advisors may subscribe meaning to things that others in the bureaucracy do not see as meaningful, but because advisors appreciate their importance effective advising leaders will validate advisor's ascription of meaning to them (Sergiovanni, 1984). In the current study, advisors showed positive correlations between their advising administrator having knowledge of what they do as an advisor and job satisfaction, reinforcing theory that while autonomy is important, advisors would like their administrators to know what the advisor is doing with this autonomy.

Implications for Practice

Dalton (2003) discusses a number of aspects of management and leadership in student services administration, and many of his principles can apply to academic advising services. Leadership is important because advising is a demanding profession and advisors can be prone to burnout, resulting in high turnover, especially in offices where the support of administration is weak (Dalton, 2003). Due to their training in human development and other lifespan theories advisors expect their leaders to model personal and professional development, and effective administrators encourage autonomy of advisors in their work without depriving them of necessary and desired support (Dalton, 2003). Dalton (2003) mentions that "leaders who are perceived as fair" (p. 401) earn their advisors' loyalty, trust, and respect and can expect a higher level of personal sacrifice from their advisors. The current problem is that many administrators are trained in bureaucratic and Taylorian leadership styles while the new group of advising professionals, who tend to be younger, do not operate well in such stifling environments

(Dalton, 2003). Results from the current study indicate that advisors are more satisfied when they see their administrator as a leader, and this is even more important for those advisors who are 40 years old or younger.

To truly improve advising quality, administrative support must be present, along with financial backing (Steingass & Sykes, 2008). Such supportive administrators provide continuous improvement for academic advising and recognition of advisors who take on additional training and responsibilities. As part of a cooperative survey between the American College Testing Program (ACT) and the National Academic Advising Association, ACT surveyed 820 institutions about their academic advising programs in 1979 (Carstensen & Silberhorn, 1979). The study found that honesty, assisting employees in their endeavors, talking to employees about what was going on in their world, and sheltering staff from the institutional bureaucracy were important qualities in administrators. This translates into advising leadership because academic advising is an autonomous profession but advisors still need support from their supervisors to accomplish their duties. King (1984) states that advising administrators need to give advisors enough freedom to create meaningful counseling relationships with students as they guide them down their educational paths, something that is important to professionals who have graduate degrees and expect to operate with some degree of autonomy in their work. Enabling and facilitating administrative styles are often most helpful for advising administrators both with faculty and with professional advisors. The recommended style for advising administrators advanced by King (1984) is the "Integrated Manager" (p. 352). This administrator sets goals, emphasizes consensus, and

utilizes shared responsibilities to get the job done, all of which are valuable traits in academic advising since it tends to be a collegial environment (Bush, 2003).

Managing and leading the advising unit through change is a large and critical part of an academic advising administrator's job, and such change creation should be a responsive process that involves faculty, staff, and administrators having a positive perception of change in their institutions (Lick, 2002). Such visionary, positive, and transforming change is what administrators of advising units need to implement if they are to transform advising services into the developmental advising programs that are the linchpin in student success and retention. This transformative atmosphere also creates fulfilling careers for academic advisors, increasing job satisfaction and advising quality while reducing turnover. Sandeen (1985) reminds advising administrators that change created from within the unit is often much easier than change instigated by parties external to the advising unit. Within the highly bureaucratic climate in which colleges and universities operate, academic advising administrators often find that creating buy-in within their unit for program changes prior to mandates from university administration encourages a smooth transition and minimal declines in service to students during periods of change. By respecting advisors' autonomy and including them in decisions that affect how the office operates, administrators create an environment that can lead to increased job satisfaction, as indicated by many of the positive correlations in this study.

A creative, dedicated administrator can often come up with some sort of fairly inexpensive reward for high quality advising, increasing motivation of advisors. Several authors (Hunter & White, 2004, Tuttle, 2000, & King, 1993) were concerned with the lack of recognition and rewards for both professional and faculty advisors, something that

has become a critical issue in advising. Professional advisors generally do not have the same status as faculty (King, 1993) as they are widely considered untenurable professional staff (Hunter & White, 2004). This lack of value placed on academic advising by institutions for both faculty and professional advisors not only impedes the quality of advising provided to students but also the desire of faculty and staff to become effective academic advisors. Institutions need to examine and revamp recognition and reward structures for both types of advising if it is to be used as an effective tool in increasing student retention. Hunter and White (2004) suggest one way to reward advising is to elevate professional academic advisors out of the staff classification and into the tenure line, similar to what many universities have done with academic librarians in an effort to increase their status. Fairly simple rewards, even something as simple as a premium parking space, can be a valuable reward to recognize and give a little something extra to those advisors who really shine with their efforts to improve student success (Hunter & White, 2004). Another way to reward advisors is to allow them time to be involved in a professional organization for academic advisors, such as NACADA. This national organization provides workshops, conferences, and other resources for advisors to use in their practice, as well as a professional network of fellow advisors to share and trade ideas with (M2 Presswire, 2002). There is also a state arm of the organization in each of the states that generally hosts a few conferences and activities each year with topics relevant to what is going on in that state in the higher education arena. These are a great way to meet and network with other advisors that work at feeder schools or other universities that an advisor may talk to on the phone or by e-mail when helping a student, but would otherwise may not be able to meet.

Specific, timely recognition for advising efforts by administrators of advising units is another inexpensive way to reward and recognize advisors for their service that can help keep them motivated and engaged in helping students. Another reward is release time from advising to attend classes toward a higher degree or to research and write on topics in academic advising or in their academic discipline. Having advisors who have published or presented elevates the reputation of the entire advising unit and can be used as leverage for new programs or resources by advising unit administrators with their associate deans and other university administrators. Most advisors know that when they enter this profession they are not going to make lots of money or be famous, but the appreciation of students and administrators tends to be quite valuable in lieu of monetary type rewards. Investing in and rewarding advisors who perform well is another way for administrators to show they respect the contributions of the advisors they supervise, and this respect is something the advisors in this study indicated correlates with their job satisfaction.

Phillips (1992) uses Abraham Lincoln as an example of an effective leader who is generally considered to have been well-liked and effective. A number of the points made about how Lincoln led can be readily applied to effective academic advising administration. First, Lincoln's emphasis on honesty and integrity applies clearly to administrators of academic advising units because advising is a helping profession that focuses on providing information to various constituencies and advisors tend to have a strong desire to be treated as if they can be trusted with information from their administrators. When this trust is not present it is detrimental to the climate of the department, which translates into dissatisfaction and decreased quality of advising.

Second, Lincoln believed strongly in going into the field and observing firsthand what impact his policies were having and exactly what his people were doing (Phillips, 1992). This was not so much to check up on them but rather to improve his understanding of the job at hand. This is a very important activity for advising administrators because it is hard to make decisions concerning resources and evaluate programs if there is not a clear understanding of what advisors are actually doing. An administrator who truly understands what their advisors do and who is willing to jump in and help in times of need is viewed more favorably by their advising staff and more likely to have buy-in when they need it. Third, Lincoln's style of persuasion over coercion (Phillips, 1992) is a good style for advising administrators to develop as it is much easier to get people to go along with unpopular or unpleasant decisions when they feel like it is their idea, not just something handed down from administration. Finally, encouraging innovation is another area that academic advising administrators should work into their leadership style because higher education is constantly changing, from budget pitfalls to diversified student bodies to changing institutional priorities, and advising units continually need to change and update the ways in which they serve students. Since academic advisors are one of the few groups that regularly have contact in a non-threatening way with students they are often aware of the most current issues in the student body, and advising administrators can use this knowledge to better the advising provided by the unit. Encouraging advisors to provide input and innovative ideas not only keeps the advising unit on the forefront of change, but it also allows advisors to feel valued and that their ideas are worthwhile. All of these pieces taken from Lincoln's style pay dividends in

improving the climate, camaraderie, and job satisfaction among advisors and this is seen in the correlations present in the current study.

Taken together with the positive correlations displayed in the current study, these implications all point to the need for academic advising administrators to be transformative leaders who use their power to build up academic advising across the institution, transforming the advisors they lead into respected and valued members of the academic community.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research could expand upon this study in several ways. First, the study could be done at other types of institutions as advisors at different classifications of institutions might experience these variables differently, yielding a different correlation with advisor job satisfaction. Second, since this study looked at professional academic advisors, a similar study of faculty advisors could be done to see if the same elements affect their satisfaction with the advising portion of their position. Third, feedback from advising administrators could be incorporated to see how they perceive their relationships with the academic advisors they supervise. Fourth, an investigation of the effects of advisor educational background could be done to see how their background relates to respect, involvement in decision making, autonomy, and job satisfaction. Fifth, an examination of majors advised could be done to see if the majors that the advisor works with make a difference in their job satisfaction. Sixth, data concerning advising load could be used to see if advising load has an influence on job satisfaction in light of the other variables this study examined. Seventh, a comparison of academic advisors located within a student services office, as opposed to a major or departmental office, could yield

valuable information since the dynamics of interactions between the advisor and the advising administrator could be different depending on the setting. Finally, the instrument could be revised in future studies to provide definitions of key terms (i.e.: academic advising and advising administrators) and open-ended, free response questions for participants to share whatever they deemed relevant.

In conclusion, this chapter interpreted the results and linked the results to prior research and theory. Recommendations for future research were also discussed for those interested in pursuing this line of inquiry. Demonstrated in the results of this study, the importance of transformative leadership in academic advising administration is reinforced.

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APPENDIX A:

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

Survey of Advisor Perceptions of Supervisor Relations and Job Satisfaction
Created by Researcher

Survey of Advisor Perceptions of Supervisor Relations and Job Satisfaction

1. I feel that academic advising is:
    a. A highly valued part of higher education
    b. Moderately valued in higher education
    c. Neither valued or devalued in higher education
    d. Minimally valued in higher education
    e. Significantly undervalued in higher education

2. I feel that academic advising:
    a. Is a very important part of student retention
    b. Is a moderately important part of student retention
    c. Is neither an important or unimportant part of student retention
    d. Is not an important part of student retention
    e. Has no effect on student retention

3. My advising administrator/supervisor asks for my input about decisions or changes concerning how our office serves students:
    a. Always
    b. Often
    c. Sometimes
    d. Rarely
    e. Never

4. I am satisfied with my level of input concerning decisions that affect how our office serves students:
    a. I have a lot of input
    b. I have a moderate amount of input
    c. I have some input
    d. I have little input
    e. I have no input

5. I am satisfied with my level of input concerning decisions that affect me and my coworkers:
    a. I have a lot of input
    b. I have a moderate amount input
    c. I have some input
    d. I have little input
    e. I have no input

6. I am satisfied with my level of input concerning decisions that change policies or procedures within our office:
    a. I have a lot of input
    b. I have a moderate amount of input
    c. I have some input
    d. I have little input
    e. I have no input

7. I am satisfied with my level of input concerning decisions that affect advising on a college/school level:
    a. I have a lot of input
    b. I have a moderate amount of input
    c. I have some input
    d. I have little input
    e. I have no input

8. I am satisfied with my level of input concerning decisions that affect advising on an institutional level:
    a. I have a lot of input
    b. I have a moderate amount of input
    c. I have some input
    d. I have little input
    e. I have no input

9. I feel like I am respected by my advising administrator/supervisor:
    a. Always
    b. Most of the time
    c. Sometimes
    d. Rarely
    e. Never

10. I feel that my institution appropriately recognizes the role of academic advisors on our campus:
    a. Always
    b. Most of the time
    c. Sometimes
    d. Rarely
    e. Never

11. Does your campus have any awards for recognition of academic advising?
    a. Yes, many
    b. Yes, some
    c. Yes
    d. No
    e. Don't know

12. I feel that I have the level of autonomy I need to accomplish my work:
    a. I have a lot of autonomy
    b. I have a some autonomy
    c. Autonomy is not needed in my work
    d. I have little autonomy
    e. I have no autonomy

13. I feel my advising administrator/supervisor has a realistic picture of what I do as an academic advisor:
    a. Always
    b. Most of the time
    c. Sometimes
    d. Rarely
    e. Never

14. I consider my advising administrator/supervisor to be a leader:
    a. Always
    b. Much of the time
    c. Sometimes
    d. Rarely
    e. Never

15. I am _____ with my current position as an academic advisor:
    a. Very satisfied
    b. Minimally satisfied
    c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
    d. Minimally dissatisfied
    e. Very dissatisfied

16. I am _____ with the profession of academic advising:
    a. Very satisfied
    b. Minimally satisfied
    c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
    d. Minimally dissatisfied
    e. Very dissatisfied

17. I plan to spend the rest of my career in academic advising:
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Mostly agree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Strongly disagree

18. I feel my job as an academic advisor takes a toll on my personal health and well-being:
    a. All of the time
    b. Much of the time
    c. Some of the time
    d. Rarely
    e. Never

19. My role is:
    a. Professional academic advisor
    b. Primarily a faculty member
    c. Advising administrator
    d. Other, please give title: _____

20. I have been an academic advisor for:
    a. Less than one year
    b. 1 year to 3 years
    c. 3 years to 5 years
    d. 5 years to 7 years
    e. 7 years to 9 years
    f. 9 years to 11 years
    g. 11 years to 13 years
    h. 13 years to 15 years
    i. More than 15 years

21. I have been an advisor at my current institution for:
    a. Less than one year
    b. 1 year to 3 years
    c. 3 years to 5 years
    d. 5 years to 7 years
    e. 7 years to 9 years
    f. 9 years to 11 years
    g. 11 years to 13 years
    h. 13 years to 15 years
    i. More than 15 years

22. I am a member of: (Please select all that apply)
    a. NACADA (National Academic Advising Association
    b. NASPA (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education)
    c. ACPA (College Student Educators International)
    d. ACA (American Counseling Association)
    e. Professional association specific to my academic discipline
    f. Other: _____
    g. No professional associations

23. I am:
    a. Female
    b. Male

24. My age is:
    a. 25 or under
    b. 26-30
    c. 31-35
    d. 36-40
    e. 41-45
    f. 46-50
    g. 51-55
    h. 56-60
    i. 61-65
    j. 66-70
    k. Over 70
    l. Prefer not to answer

APPENDIX B

TIMELINE FOR STUDY

Timeline for Study

M	May 17	Start Pilot
M-F	May 17-21	Pilot Study M May 17—E-mail invitation with URL & Access Code R May 20---Final reminder e-mail stating study ends F May 21 F May 21—Pilot data collection ends
M-F	May 24—May 28	Analysis of Pilot data and ready survey for distribution
T-F	June 1-July 9	Survey period T June 1—E-mail invitation with URL & access Code M June 14—First Reminder e-mail M June 28—Second Reminder e-mail W July 7---Final reminder e-mail stating study ends F July 9 F July 9—Data collection ends

APPENDIX C

PRE-NOTICE E-MAIL

Pre-Notice E-mail

To be sent Monday, May 24, 2010

Eight Days Prior to Start of Data Collection

E-mail Subject Line: Academic Advisor Job Satisfaction and Partnerships with

Administration

Next Tuesday you will receive an e-mail requesting your participation in a web-based survey that is part of my dissertation research at Oklahoma State University. I am pursuing my Doctorate of Education in Higher Education and have been an academic advisor at OSU for the past six years. My experiences as an advisor have inspired me to do research for my dissertation that I hope will ultimately expand the research base on academic advisor job satisfaction and partnerships between advisors and administrators.

The research question guiding this research is: Does being a partner with administration in academic advising lead to increased satisfaction with academic advising for advisors in public, full-time, four-year, more selective, higher transfer-in institutions? The 24 item Likert scale and multiple choice survey should take 10 minutes to complete. Your response is important so that a broad representation of advisors from across this Carnegie institution type can be included in this study.

I know that academic advisors have many demands on their time and I appreciate your willingness to consider participating in this study. Thank you in advance for your time and be sure to look for the survey e-mail next week!

Sincerely,

Sarah Chabinak
Doctoral Student
Oklahoma State University
Ed.D. in Higher Education program

APPENDIX D

COVER E-MAIL

Cover E-mail

To be sent Tuesday, June 1, 2010

with Survey Link

First Day of Data Collection

E-mail Subject Line: Academic Advisor Job Satisfaction and Partnerships with

Administration

I am sending this e-mail to request your participation in a web survey about academic advisor job satisfaction and partnerships between advisors and administrators. You have received this e-mail because your institution's website indicates you are an academic advisor. As an academic advisor at a public, full-time, four-year, more selective, higher transfer-in institution, your personal insight into advisor job satisfaction and partnerships with administration would be very helpful.

This survey should take 10 minutes to complete.

Results from this survey will be used to see if correlations exist between advisor job satisfaction and several elements of partnerships with administration. Your answers are confidential and will only be reported as aggregate results not individually identifiable or identifiable by institution. While your participation is strictly voluntary, I hope you will be willing to share your experiences and thoughts.

If you have any questions about this study I can be reached at (405) 880-3054 or at sarah.chabinak@okstate.edu.

Please click on the following link to participate in the web survey: (link not yet available). I appreciate your time and thank you very much for participating in this study.

Sincerely,

Sarah Chabinak
Doctoral Student
Oklahoma State University
Ed.D. in Higher Education program

APPENDIX E

FIRST REMINDER E-MAIL

First Reminder E-mail

To be sent Monday, June 14, 2010

Two Weeks After the Start of Data Collection

E-mail Subject Line: Academic Advisor Job Satisfaction and Partnerships with Administration

Two weeks ago you should have received a link to a web survey about academic advisor job satisfaction and partnerships between advisors and administrators by e-mail. If you have already taken the time to complete the survey, thank you very much for participating.

If you have not yet had an opportunity to complete the survey, please consider doing so. Your individual perspective as an academic advisor is very valuable and much appreciated. All responses will be kept confidential and the survey should take 10 minutes to complete.

To access the web-based survey, please click on this link (link not yet available).

If you have any questions about this study I can be reached at (405) 880-3054 or at sarah.chabinak@okstate.edu.

Sincerely,

Sarah Chabinak
Doctoral Student
Oklahoma State University
Ed.D. in Higher Education program

APPENDIX F

SECOND REMINDER E-MAIL

Second Reminder E-mail

To be sent Monday, June 28, 2010

with Survey Link

Four Weeks After the Start of Data Collection

E-mail Subject Line: Academic Advisor Job Satisfaction and Partnerships with Administration

In the past month I have sent several e-mails about a study concerning academic advisor job satisfaction and partnerships between advisors and administrators. If you have already completed the survey, thank you very much for your participation and input.

If you have not yet had an opportunity to complete the survey, please consider doing so soon. The survey closes in two weeks, on Friday July 9. To access the web-based survey, simply click on this link (link not yet available).

The proposed study seeks to examine the correlation between professional academic advisor job satisfaction and partnerships with academic advising administration. Your participation is important because as an academic advisor your unique perspective is very valuable and much appreciated.

All responses will be kept confidential and the survey should take 10 minutes to complete.

If you have any questions about this study I can be reached at (405) 880-3054 or at sarah.chabinak@okstate.edu.

Thank you very much for your time and input. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sarah Chabinak
Doctoral Student
Oklahoma State University
Ed.D. in Higher Education program

APPENDIX G

FINAL REMINDER E-MAIL

Final Reminder E-mail

To be sent Wednesday, July 7, 2010

Two Days Before Data Collection Ends

E-mail Subject Line: Academic Advisor Job Satisfaction and Partnerships with Administration

Last month you should have received a link to a web survey about academic advisor job satisfaction and partnerships between advisors and administrators by e-mail. If you have already taken the time to complete the survey, thank you very much for your participation.

If you have not yet had an opportunity to complete the survey, please consider providing your input. The survey will end in two days, on Friday July 7. Your personal perspective as an academic advisor is very valuable and much appreciated. All responses will be kept confidential and the survey should take 10 minutes to complete.

To access the web-based survey, please click on this link (link not yet available).

If you have any questions about this study I can be reached at (405) 880-3054 or at sarah.chabinak@okstate.edu.

Sincerely,

Sarah Chabinak
Doctoral Student
Oklahoma State University
Ed.D. in Higher Education program

VITA

Sarah Elizabeth Chabinak

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Dissertation: ARE WE IN THIS TOGETHER? PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN ACADEMIC ADVISORS AND ADVISING ADMINISTRATORS AND THEIR RELATION TO ADVISOR JOB SATISFACTION

Major Field: Higher Education Administration

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education in Higher Education Administration at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in December, 2010.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Counseling and Student Personnel at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK in 2005.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Family Relations and Child Development, Individual, Family and Community Service at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK in 2002.

Experience:

Senior Academic Counselor, Spears School of Business, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 2004 to present.

Professional Memberships:

Oklahoma Academic Advising Association (OACADA), 2005 to present.

Name: Sarah Elizabeth Chabinak Date of Degree: December, 2010

Institution: Oklahoma State University Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: ARE WE IN THIS TOGETHER? PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN ACADEMIC ADVISORS AND ADVISING ADMINISTRATORS AND THEIR RELATION TO ADVISOR JOB SATISFACTION

Pages in Study: 114 Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major Field: Higher Education Administration

Scope and Method of Study: This study examined the relationship between professional academic advisors' job satisfaction and perceptions of respect by administration, involvement in decision making, and autonomy. 290 professional academic advisors from 41 public FT4/MS/HTI Carnegie classified institutions participated in the quantitative study that used a researcher-created instrument. The statistical procedure used was the Pearson *r* correlation and *t* test to investigate moderately positive correlations.

Findings and Conclusions: The majority of advisors who participated in this study identified as Caucasian, female, and Master's degree educated. A wide variety of educational backgrounds and major areas advised were reported by the participants. Correlations in the areas of respect by administration, involvement in decision making, and autonomy showed a significant, positive relationship with satisfaction with the current advising position (job satisfaction). Weaker correlations were displayed between respect by administration, involvement in decision making, and autonomy when correlated with satisfaction with the advising profession (professional satisfaction) and intent to make a career out of academic advising. For those under 40 years old, input about how the office serves students (FRQIPUTSS) and considering the administrator to be a leader (LEADER) were more highly correlated with job satisfaction, although both age groups showed a positive correlation with each of the two variables. For those making less than $41,000 per year, considering the advising administrator to be a leader was more highly correlated with job satisfaction than for those making over $41,001 per year. No significant differences were found based on length of time advising overall or length of time advising at the current institution in relation to the variables examined.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Dr. Stephen P. Wanger