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UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

A COMPARISON OF THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LEVELS OF COMMITMENT AND LEVELS OF PROFESSIONAL SOCIALIZATION AND HOW THEY RELATE TO COLLEGE STUDENT PERSISTENCE

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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A COMPARISON OF THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LEVELS OF COMMITMENT AND LEVELS OF PROFESSIONAL SOCIALIZATION AND HOW THEY RELATE TO COLLEGE STUDENTS' PERSISTENCE

A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of Illustrations

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationships between professional socialization, professional commitment, and college students' intent to persist toward degree attainment. The subjects (182) were first-year, students at a small, private, church-supported university. The methodology included: ANOVA, Pearson's *r*, factor analysis, and partial correlation coefficient. The data collection tool constructed for this study included: the Professional Socialization Inventory Checklist (PSIC), the Commitment Inventory Checklist (CIC), the Intent to Persist Scale (IPS). The results revealed that professional socialization, commitment, and the intent to persist were independent of each other. Except for the independent relationships between the Intent to Persist Scale (IPS) and the other two (2) instruments, the results correlated with the literature review. Future research is proposed using the two (2) instruments along with an expanded version of the Intent to Persist Scale.

Chapter 1

During the last 100 years, high attrition rates among American college students at both private (35-45%) and public (40-50%) colleges and universities have remained unchanged. If this problem is not reduced or resolved within the next five years, the outcomes could significantly influence the American society's ability to play an active role in meeting the challenges presented by a rapidly changing and highly complex national market as well as the challenges evolving from the international market. Current changes and projected changes both within America's boundaries and world wide will require an increased number of college graduates. For example, as the competition for natural resources increases, international influences on the American society will increase within the next several years. Also, changes in the political structures of Europe and the advancement of some underdeveloped countries have increased international interactions and exchanges. Meeting these challenges and maintaining the integrity of certain American traditions will require a more educated citizenry.

Economical constraints and social movements along with technological advancements have aided in the forging of a more global perspective. The complexity and rapidity of the changes evolving from global

concerns will place significant demands on societies within the global system. Societies will need to merge with a global market while maintaining their unique qualities and traditions. As societies move toward a more global system, American leaders and other world leaders will need to look to different disciplines to help in the development of strategies to build the foundation for a stable global market. Educators, economists, historians, sociologists, psychologists, and others will need to work together to meet future needs.

Education has always been considered a primary method of resolving social problems and meeting societal needs. In the past, America has generally been the front runner in dealing with international issues. More highly-educated Americans will be needed to meet the challenges of the transition to a world market. Institutions of higher education along with other facets of the American society will be faced with the task of increasing the number of college graduates. Outcomes of high attrition rates among American college students could result in several major unfavorable influences on the future of the American society. First, the American Council on Education has predicted a significant increase in ethnic groups such as Hispanic-Americans, Native-Americans, and African-Americans by the year

2000. Presently, a disproportionate number of the college dropouts are among these groups. If the current trend continues, America's new majority will lack the skills and knowledge to meet the challenges of a complex, rapid-paced, and dynamic world market. Second, during the last twenty years, enrollment of nontraditional students (25 years old or above, living off campus, part-time enrollees, and working more than 20 hours per week) has increased by 40 percent. Two out of five students enrolled in undergraduate studies are nontraditional students (Bean & Metzner, 1986). The attrition rates of nontraditional students tended to be higher than those of traditional students. Bean and Metzner (1986), Metzner and Bean (1987), and Terenzini, et al. (1994) predicted nontraditional students' enrollment among institutions of higher learning will increase significantly in the next several years. Research on the underlying causes of nontraditional students' attrition rate is very limited. If the current trend continues, another significant group of Americans will be unprepared to contribute to the development and maintenance of a world market.

Third, programs designed to reduce the thirty-five to fifty (35-50%)percent first-year traditional student attrition rates have been ineffective (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Tinto, 1987; Tracey & Sedlacek, 1987).

Orientation programs, retention programs, and financial aid programs implemented during the last twenty years have not significantly reduced the attrition rate. Fourth, most research studies focusing on college students' persistence or attrition utilized models designed by Spady (1970) and refined by Tinto (1975). The Spady (1970) and the Tinto (1975) models were unilateral and unidirectional. Although several models evolved from the Spady (1970, 1971) and the Tinto (1975) models, the primary concepts within the models have not been explicitly defined. Also, the outcomes of the research studies have not significantly provided colleges and universities with appropriate evidence needed to build and implement programs that would decrease college students' attrition rates. Although the literature review revealed the need to change this approach, most research studies on traditional college students' persistence or attrition have continued to involve the unilateral and unidirectional models. Finally, the evidence evolving from past research studies revealed the major concepts associated with college student persistence were: commitment; social integration; academic integration; satisfaction; precollege characteristics; person-environment fit; and others. One method that could reduce the attrition rates of college students would include research studies that focused on an in-depth analysis

of the concepts believed to represent the process of college students' persistence or attrition. Construction and testing of instruments evolving from the conceptual analysis should provide more accurate data collection tools. Also, future research studies could include closer examinations of the relationships among the concepts associated with persistence or attrition rates of college students. This would not be possible without a closer examination of the concepts. An overview of seven traditional college student persistence or attrition models extending from 1970-1988 was presented in the next paragraphs. The models were compared and contrasted along with a projected future model that combined the common and unique components of each model.

Several traditional college students' persistence or attrition models evolved during the last twenty-five years. Before 1970, research on college student attrition or persistence was scattered. In 1970, Spady introduced the College Student Dropout Model. Since then, most of the research on college student attrition or persistence has been based on the Spady model (1970) with some revisions, rearrangements, additions, and deletions. Although the research has been extensive, the research outcomes have not provided educators with information sufficient to aid in developing more effective

student retention programs. The models needed to be strengthened so that they can be used by faculty and staff to design effective programs to reduce the current college students' attrition rates. The seven models most commonly used by researchers included: 1) the Spady Student Dropout Model (1970); 2) the Spady Undergraduate Dropout Process (1971); 3) the Tinto Student Dropout Model (1975); the Tinto Institutional Departure Model (1987); the Bean Dropout Syndrome Model (1985); 6) the Bean Metamodel of Student Retention (1986); and 7) the Stoecker, Pascarella and Wolfie General Causal Model (1988). In one form or another, all of the models addressed satisfaction, person-environment fit, commitment, academic integration, social integration, and precollege characteristics.

The Spady Models (1970, 1971) identified the following components of the college student dropout process: personal characteristics; congruence between students and the college environment; social integration; academic integration; satisfaction; and institutional commitment. Although Spady (1970, 1971) discussed academic integration in the narrative of the articles, it was not included in the models' illustrations. The Tinto Student Dropout Model (1975) was similar to the Spady Models. Tinto (1975) deleted satisfaction, added precollege schooling, intent to persist, goal commitment, and

institutional commitment. Tinto (1975) placed commitment before student interaction with faculty, staff and peers, after academic integration, and after social integration. Spady (1970, 1971) placed commitment after satisfaction. The Tinto Institutional Departure Model (1987) was very similar to the Tinto Student Dropout Model (1975) except the Institutional Departure Model included external commitments and addressed the informal and formal aspects of the academic system and social system. The Bean Dropout Syndrome Model (1985) was similar to the Spady Model (1970). The model focused more on student socialization than all of the other six models. According to Bean (1985), socialization, an integrative process, merged both academic activities and social activities. The Bean Metamodel of Student Retention (1986) differed from the Spady Models (1970, 1971) and the Tinto Models (1975, 1987). Bean (1986) described external factors as environmental pulls, listed parameters associated with academic integration and social integration, and added organizational variables. Bean (1986) also inserted student attitudes that included: satisfaction, self-development, and others. Bean (1986) included in the Metamodel of Student Retention many items discussed in the narratives of the articles accompanying the Spady models (1970, 1971) and the Tinto models (1975, 1987). Finally, Stoecker,

Pascarella and Wolfie (1988) developed the General Causal Model. They added institutional characteristics such as size, selectivity, and predominate race to the Tinto Institutional Departure Model (1987). They also added academic major. They indicated institutional characteristics, predominant race, and college major could influence the persistence of certain student groups.

In summary, all of the models were unidirectional, multidimensional, and progressive. The models provided a logical and an organized framework for studying college students' persistence or attrition. Weaknesses of the models involved the lack of definitions of the concepts and the unidirectional flow of events. Because the persistence models were very complex, most researchers examined only two or three of the major variables at one time. Outcomes of this approach revealed knowledge of the relationships between college students' intent to persist toward degree attainment to interactions with faculty, staff, and peers, between precollege elements, different cultural groups, academic integration, and social integration.

Current trends of college student persistence or attrition could influence the economic and social advancement of the American society. Therefore, decreasing the current college student attrition rates is an

important focus for higher education and for other facets of the American society. The thirty-five to fifty percent (35-50%) attrition rates among first-year college students is considered excessive and harmful for a nation needing to compete in a complex, rapid-paced, and highly competitive global market. It was predicted that nontraditional students would constitute a higher percentage of the college student population within the next several years. Decreased attrition rates among nontraditional students' are perceived as significant to America's future. Also, the disproportionate number of student dropouts occurring in rapidly growing minority populations could result in a new majority without the skills, expertise, and knowledge needed to compete on a global market. Prior efforts to decrease college student attrition rates have been ineffective. Several limitations existed among the models used to examine traditional college student attrition or persistence. For example, the need existed for more research on the internal variables of the models and the influence of the external variables on college student persistence or attrition. The variables needed to be more fully defined and analyzed. Perhaps a thorough analysis of the dimensions associated with college student persistence or attrition could reveal hidden variables that need to be addressed. Finally, the status of research of college students'

persistence and attrition included a massive amount of information. Research is needed to reduce this volume of information to a more usable framework of knowledge or eventually a more stable theoretical base. Because of the differences between nontraditional and traditional college-aged students', this study was restricted to traditional college-aged students along with three major concepts common to all seven of the traditional college students' persistence or attrition models. Commitment and professional socialization were subjected to a rigorous conceptual analysis. Outcomes of the analysis were used to construct the instruments used to collect data for the study. In the following paragraphs, a brief discussion of the processes utilized to conduct the conceptual analysis was provided.

The literature was rich with research studies on college students' persistence or attrition, but failed to include conceptual analysis of the variables within the models and analysis of the external variables. For example, while many research studies examined social integration and academic integration, none of the researchers conducted conceptual analyses of the concepts. Conceptual analysis could yield overlapping elements and elements that separate the concepts. Also, many research studies discussed commitment. None of the researchers included conceptual

analysis of the variable. Conceptual analyses of the concepts could have revealed critical attributes; deterrents; antecedents; individual characteristics; behaviors; subconcepts; procedures; predicted outcomes; and enhancers. Outcomes of conceptual analysis of each concept could provide a more stable framework for designing and testing data collection tools. Data collection instruments closely aligned with conceptual analysis of major concepts could provide pathways, frameworks, or strategies for building theories. Rigorously developed theories could provide more stable foundations for designing and implementing orientation programs and student retention programs.

Educational literature addressing college student persistence or attrition was void of research studies with commitment or professional socialization as a focus. Information on commitment and professional socialization was collected from published research studies in fields such as sociology, psychology, and business administration. The content of these articles was combined with information from educational literature to structure the literature review. For example, psychologists Shore and Wayne (1993) suggested commitment occurred in clusters. That is, when one commitment was made, equally competing commitments were likely to exist at the same

time. Although not specifically stated, many educational researchers implied students dealt with several competing and complementary commitments during the college experience (Pascarella, 1980; Spady, 1970, 1971; Tinto, 1975). Therefore, it appeared that a multi-disciplinary approach offered a more appropriate method for studying or researching college students' persistence or attrition.

Many of the components of the seven traditional college students' persistence models warranted in depth study. Since academic integration, social integration, and commitment were believed to be related to college students' intent to persist toward degree attainment, this study examined the relationships among the three concepts. Because separation of academic integration and social integration seemed arbitrary, academic integration and social integration were combined under the umbrella of professional socialization. Professional socialization was defined as the process in which students developed and utilized appropriate knowledge, skills, norms, values, attitudes, and behaviors. Acquiring these elements were necessary to become a member of the new environment and acquire elements associated with a specific professional role. Most references hat academic integration and social integration were reciprocal, overlapping, and interrelated.

Commitment included but was not limited to goal commitment and institutional commitment. Research instruments designed to measure commitment, professional socialization, and the intent to persist were absent from the literature. Therefore, three instruments were designed to aid in collecting data necessary to meet the purposes of the study. Data collection tools were designed to estimate the degree of the subjects' commitments and the degree of the subjects' professional socialization. Because the definitions of students' intent to persist were clear and concise, the intent to persist was not subjected to the same rigorous conceptual analysis as commitment and professional socialization. Students' intent to persist was defined as enrolling in the next semester, attending class, and meeting course assignments. The Commitment Inventory Checklist (CIC), the Professional Socialization Inventory Checklist (PSIC), and the Intent to Persist Scale (IPS) were used to collect the data (see Appendices F and G).

Purpose:

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships existing among professional socialization, commitment, and college students' intent to persist toward degree attainment.

Definition of Terms:

The following definitions were constructed from portions of the information discovered during the literature review:

1. College Student Persistence:

a. Continuous movement toward a college degree by following a structured plan of study under the guidance of mentors or agents.

b. Completion of a college degree within a four-year period, under specific conditions (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Spady, 1970, 1971; Terenzini, et al., 1994; Tinto, 1975, 1987).

c. Strong desire to attain a college degree using the knowledge, skills, and techniques gained from professional socialization to follow the planned pattern of activities associated with degree attainment (Bean, 1982, 1985, 1986; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Stage, 1989; Tinto, 1975, 1987, 1988).

d. Logical, sequential steps leading to the completion of a college degree. Such as enrolling for the next semester, attending class, and meeting course requirements. (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Spady, 1970, 1971; Tinto, 1975).

e. A process was characterized by movement toward degree attainment while encountering, overcoming, or adapting to obstacles, problems, or challenges under varied conditions within a prescribed, sequential four-year period.

2. Professional Socialization:

a. Structured, purposeful, progressive, sequential, interactive process utilized to assist students in their development, and utilization of appropriate knowledge, skills, norms, values, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to implement the college student role, a selected professional role, and the projected role of a college graduate in the greater society (Bauer & Green, 1994; Bean, 1985, 1986; Feldman, 1977; Hardy & Conway, 1988; Morrison, 1993; Pinder & Schroeder, 1987).

b. Process which included opportunities to learn, apply, or integrate the mores, norms, values, and traditions of a non-native environment into one's personal schema (Bauer & Green, 1994; Bean, 1985, 1986; Feldman, 1977; Hardy & Conway, 1988; Morrison, 1993; Pinder & Schroeder, 1987).

3. Commitment:

a. Sequential, progressive, interactive process resulting in determination to achieve a goal such as attaining a college degree (Tubbs, 1993; Tubbs, Boehne & Dahl, 1993).

b. To demonstrate or express a consistent and progressive willingness or interest in making sacrifices and investments specific to goal achievement (Bauer & Green, 1994; Dunham, Grube & Castaneda, 1993; Shore & Wayne, 1993).

c. An intense desire or determination to obtain a college degree which is accompanied by an emotional bond or strong affiliation with the institution (Becker, 1960; Dunham, Grube & Casteneda, 1994; Hackett, Bycio, & Hausdorf, 1994; Matheiu, 1991; Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Tinto, 1975; Tubbs & Dahl, 1991; Tubbs, 1993).

d. Exhibiting a continuous, goal-oriented, progressive determination or will to achieve a goal within a specific period based on a need, desire for self-fulfillment, or desire to serve others (Dunham, Grube & Casteneda, 1994; Farkas & Tetrick, 1989; Hollenbeck, Klein, O'Leary & Wright, 1989).

e. Self-initiated, consistent determination or effort to follow through with a jointly planned pattern of activities performed under specific conditions within a specifically designated time frame (Dunham, Grube & Castaneda, 1994; Hollenbeck, Klein, O'Leary & Wright, 1989; Matheiu, 1991; Tubbs, Boehne & Dahl, 1993).

Significance of Study:

Many college student persistence models indicated the importance of relationships between professional socialization and commitment along with the combined influence on college students' persistence. First, a study focused on the relationships between professional socialization and commitment and their impact on students' intent to persist could yield critical information for reducing college students' persistence or attrition. Second, since research on the levels of commitment and the levels of professional socialization associated with college students' persistence were noticeably absent from the higher education literature, a study with this focus could contribute to the current knowledge base. Third, increased understanding of these variables could aid staff, administrators, and faculty in improving student retention programs. For example, if conceptual analysis

of commitment and professional socialization revealed college students encountered multiple role transitions, institutions could develop ongoing programs to help students increase their abilities to deal efficiently with the emotional impact imposed by the many role transitions. Fourth, if the faculty possessed more in-depth knowledge of professional socialization and commitment, perhaps they could integrate these elements into their teaching and advisement activities. Finally, a thorough exploration of commitment, professional socialization, and the intent to persist could reveal hidden extraneous variables that may be interfering with the success of current student retention programs.

Assumptions:

1. Analyses of relevant concepts are necessary for effective research on college student persistence.
2. College student persistence is dynamic, cyclical, and bidirectional.
3. Developmental levels of college students influence persistence.
4. The nature of the college environment influences persistence.
5. High levels of professional socialization, high levels of commitment, and high levels of students' intent to persist are needed for continued movement toward degree attainment.

6. A strong, positive correlation exists between levels of professional socialization, levels of commitment, and levels of students' intent to persist.

7. A high correlation exists between students interaction with the college community, levels of professional socialization, and levels of students' intent to persist.

8. Strong, positive correlations exist among the following demographic variables and professional socialization, commitment, and the intent to persist: high socioeconomic brackets, high academic abilities, culture, gender, and college major.

Hypotheses:

Commitment to degree attainment was presumed to have a direct and positive relationship to students' intent to persist. Therefore, students scoring high on the Commitment Inventory Checklist (CIC) would also score high on the Intent to Persist Scale (IPS). Since professional socialization was presumed to have a direct and positive relationship with students' intent to persist, students scoring high on the Professional Socialization Inventory Checklist (PSIC) also scored high on the Intent to Persist Scale (IPS). Since commitment and professional socialization were presumed to be overlapping

and interrelated, students scoring high on the Commitment Inventory Checklist (CIC) also would also score high on the Professional Socialization Inventory Checklist (PSIC). Conversely, students scoring low on the Commitment Inventory Checklist (CIC) also scored low on the Intent to Persist Scale (IPS). Students scoring low on the Professional Socialization Inventory Checklist also scored low on the Intent to Persist Scale (IPS). Finally, students scoring low on the Commitment Inventory Checklist also scored low on the Professional Socialization Inventory Checklist.

Variables:

Technically professional socialization and commitment were considered constructs. However, for purposes of this study, they were referred to as variables. This research study contained two independent variables (commitment and professional socialization) and one dependent variable (intent to persist). Since the outcomes of the literature review suggested commitment and professional socialization had unique and shared components, the variables were presented separately. Because all seven college students' persistence models presented commitment and professional socialization as antecedent to the intent to persist, the concepts were studied independently with an examination of their influences on the intent to persist.

Research Questions:

1. How were the demographic variables related to commitment?
2. How were the demographic variables related to professional socialization?
3. How were the demographic variables related to the intent to persist?
4. What were the relevant variables associated with commitment?
5. What were the relevant variables associated with professional socialization?
6. What were the relevant variables associated with the intent to persist?
7. How were commitment and professional socialization related?
8. How was commitment related to the intent to persist?
9. How was professional socialization related to the intent to persist?
10. How were commitment and professional socialization related to the intent to persist?

Sample:

Since previous studies associated with professional socialization, commitment, and traditional college-aged students' intent to persist were associated with specific student characteristics, the target population included subjects with the following characteristics: first-year, second semester,

traditional college student age (18-24), campus residents, full-time, 2.00 or above GPA, single, nonparental, and working less than 20 hours per week. Subjects were selected from a small, private, church-supported, predominantly Caucasian-American university located in the central plains of the United States.

CHAPTER II: Literature Review:

The literature review was structured around five major goals. The first goal explored existing models, constructs, concepts, and variables associated with college student persistence or attrition. The second goal included the relationships among the variables or concepts within the models. Because of the complexity and the massive spectrum of college students' persistence or attrition models, the literature review focused on two major concepts existing within college student persistence or attrition models: commitment and professional socialization. The third goal included comparing and contrasting commitment and professional socialization. The fourth involved the relationships between commitment and students' intent to persist along with exploration of the relationships between professional socialization and students' intent to persist. The fifth examined the conditions under which students were mostly likely or least likely to persist. The final goal explored relationships among the students' characteristics, professional socialization, commitment, and their intent to persist.

Research studies on college student persistence or attrition were abundant in the educational literature. The literature presented an extensive discussion of the variables, but lacked explicit definitions and sufficient for

investigating possible relationships among the variables. Higher education publications were especially void of research studies on college student persistence or attrition with commitment or professional socialization as the focus. A review of the literature revealed substantial research studies on commitment in disciplines such as sociology, psychology, and business administration. Unlike literature addressing commitment, literature addressing professional socialization was not as substantial. Since most of the research studies on commitment and professional socialization existed in sociology, psychology, and business administration, information from these resources was utilized to develop a framework for defining, expanding and organizing information existing in the higher education literature. The literature was presented in three sections. The literature review included an overview of seven traditional college students' persistence or attrition models, a comparison of the seven traditional models and seven nontraditional models, and a conceptual analysis of commitment and professional socialization.

An Overview of Traditional College Student Persistence Models:

Traditional college-aged student persistence models appearing most often in the literature were: Spady's Sociological Model of the Dropout

Process (1970); Spady's Undergraduate Dropout Process Model (1971); Tinto's Student Dropout Model (1975); Tinto's Institutional Departure Model (1987); Bean's Student Dropout Syndrome Model (1985); Bean's Metamodel of Student Retention (1986); and Stoecker, Pascarella and Wolfie's General Causal Model (1988). Spady (1970, 1971) (see Figures 1.1 and 1.2) defined persistence as degree completion in four years. Subsequent models subscribed to this definition. Spady (1970, 1971) perceived colleges and universities as social systems in which students were socialized by agents such as faculty, staff, and peers. Spady (1970) conducted a meta-analysis

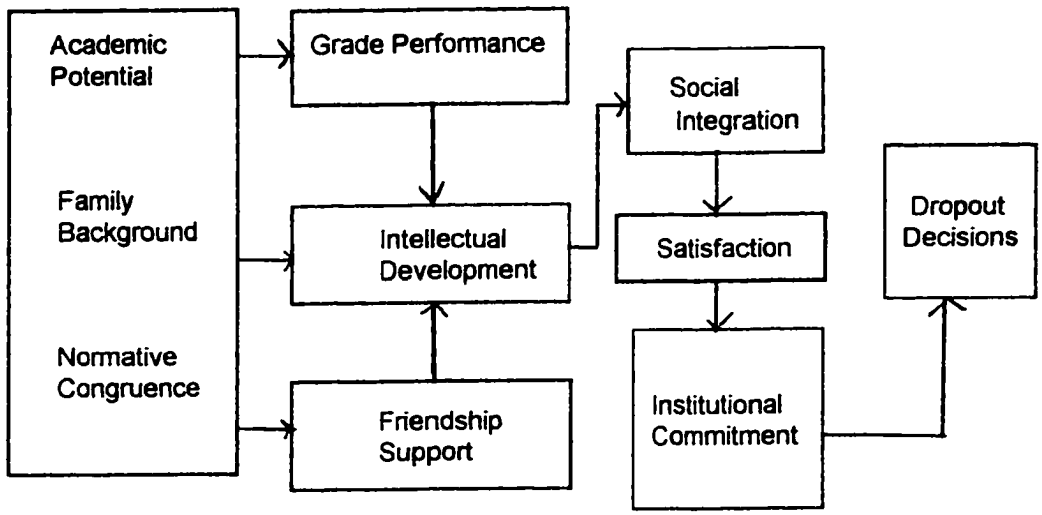

Figure 1.1: Spady's Sociological Model of the Dropout Process.

components of the college student dropout process: precollege backgrounds; characteristics; academic potential; student-environment congruence; grade performance; intellectual development; on-campus friendship support; social integration; satisfaction; and institutional commitment.

Spady (1970, 1971) defined social integration as attaining membership in the college environment. Developers of subsequent models accepted this definition. Spady (1971) later increased the number of interconnections between the components (see Figure 1.2). Other authors and researchers made various adjustments to the Spady Theoretically Based Model of Undergraduate Dropout Process (1971). However, the basic structure and underlying principles this model remained essentially unchanged. Although not included in the Spady Model (1971) design, student involvement linked the components of the Spady Models. Spady (1970, 1971) stipulated students involved in both the social system and the academic system of the college environment enhanced the development and maintenance of commitment and professional socialization. Also, student involvement

influenced students' intent to persist. Spady (1970, 1971) defined institutional commitment as an affiliation or feeling of kinship to the institution. Subsequent models utilized this definition as well.

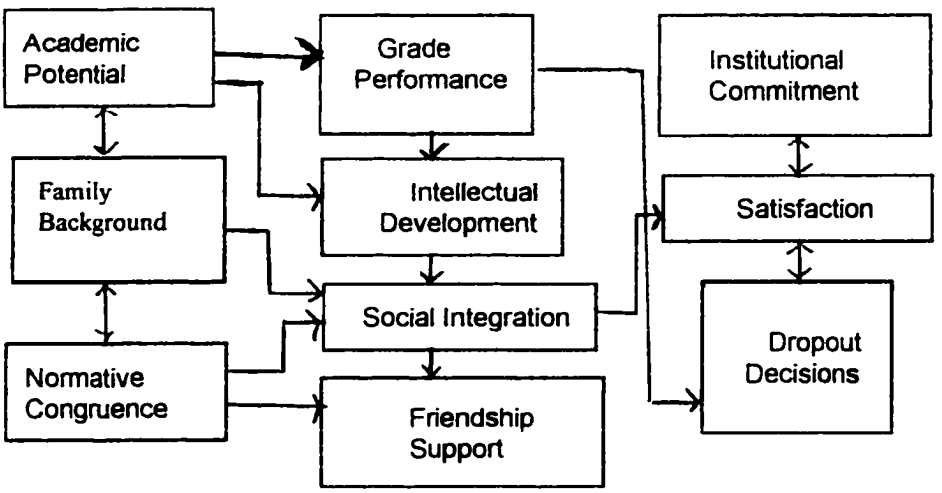

Figure 1.2: Spady's Model of the Undergraduate Dropout Process.

Tinto's Student Dropout Model (1975) placed commitment before and after the concepts academic integration and social integration. Tinto (1975) deleted satisfaction as a component and added precollege schooling, goal commitment, and levels of student-faculty interaction (see Figure 1.3). Tinto (1975) categorized the academic elements as academic integration and defined academic integration as an average grade-point average (GPA). Other models also used this definition.

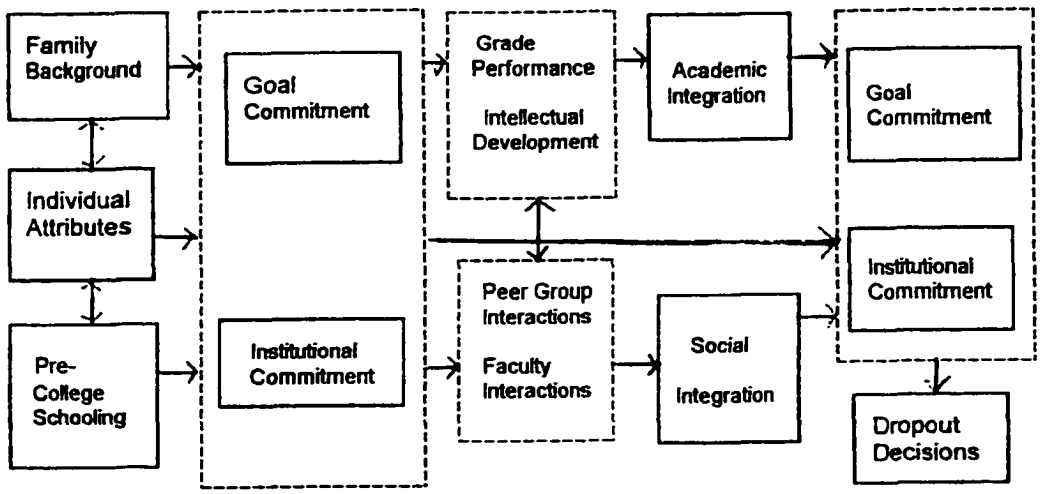

Figure 1.3: Tinto's Student Integration Model.

Tinto (1975) indicated student-peer interactions and student-faculty interactions were relevant to goal commitment, institutional commitment, academic integration, and social integration. During the college experience, faculty, staff, and peers interactions with students were an integral part of students' development. Goal commitment was added to the Spady Model (1970) because Tinto (1975) asserted individual commitment to degree attainment influenced students' enthusiasm and motivation toward course work and other activities related to degree attainment. Goal commitment was defined as the intense desire to obtain a college degree. The influences of

goal commitment on students' persistence or attrition were discussed by many researchers, but without conceptual analysis (Tinto, 1975; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Brower, 1992; Krotseng, 1992). Tinto (1975) placed more emphasis on the influences of external variables on college student attrition than did Spady (1970, 1971). External variables included elements such as relationships with parents and non-college peers. Tinto (1987) later revised the Student Integration Model and called it "Institutional Student Departure Model". In this model, the social system and academic system were separated into informal and formal dimensions. Tinto (1987) inserted external commitments (believed to compete with students' intent to persist) between academic integration, social integration, and departure decisions.

Bean (1985) revised the Tinto Student Integration Model (1975). Academic integration became part of what Bean called the socialization process. (see Figure 1.5). Bean (1985) asserted socialization was more representative of students' adaptations to the college environment than separating student experiences into academic integration and social

integration. Bean's Metamodel of Student Retention (1986) was not mentioned in the literature as frequently as the other six models. Except for the addition of organizational variables, environmental pulls, and student attitudes, the Metamodel of Student Retention (Bean, 1986) was similar to the

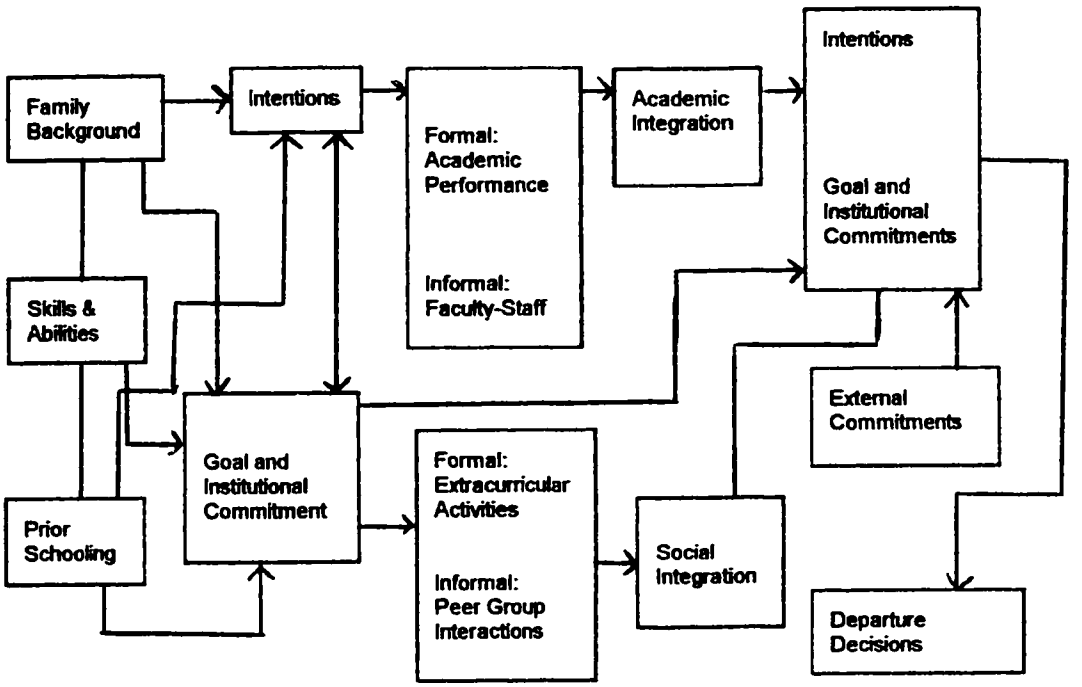

Figure 1.4: Tinto's Institutional Departure Model

Spady Models (1970, 1971) and the Tinto Models (1975, 1987) (see Figure 1.6). Organizational variables included admission procedures, courses offered, course scheduling, student and organizational policies

procedures, and others. Environmental pulls included lack of finances, opportunities to transfer, work roles, and friendship and family responsibilities. According to Bean (1986), students' attitudes included the degree of self-confidence, amounts of stress, and others (see Figure 1.6). Elements within environmental pulls, and organizational variables were discussed in the narratives of the other six models but were not included in the illustrations of the models.

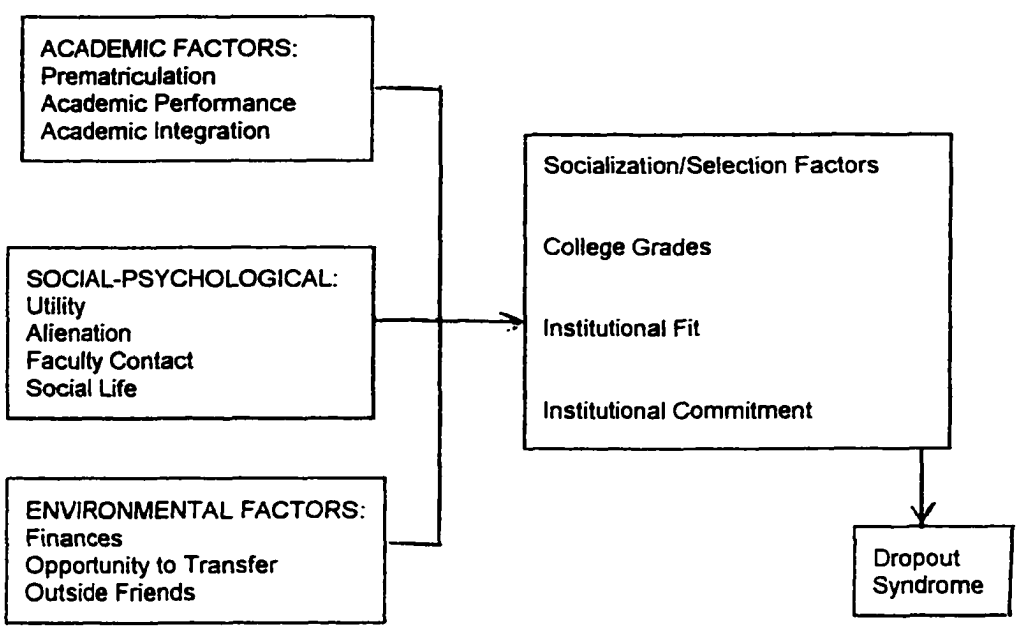

Figure 1.5: Bean's Undergraduate Dropout Syndrome Model

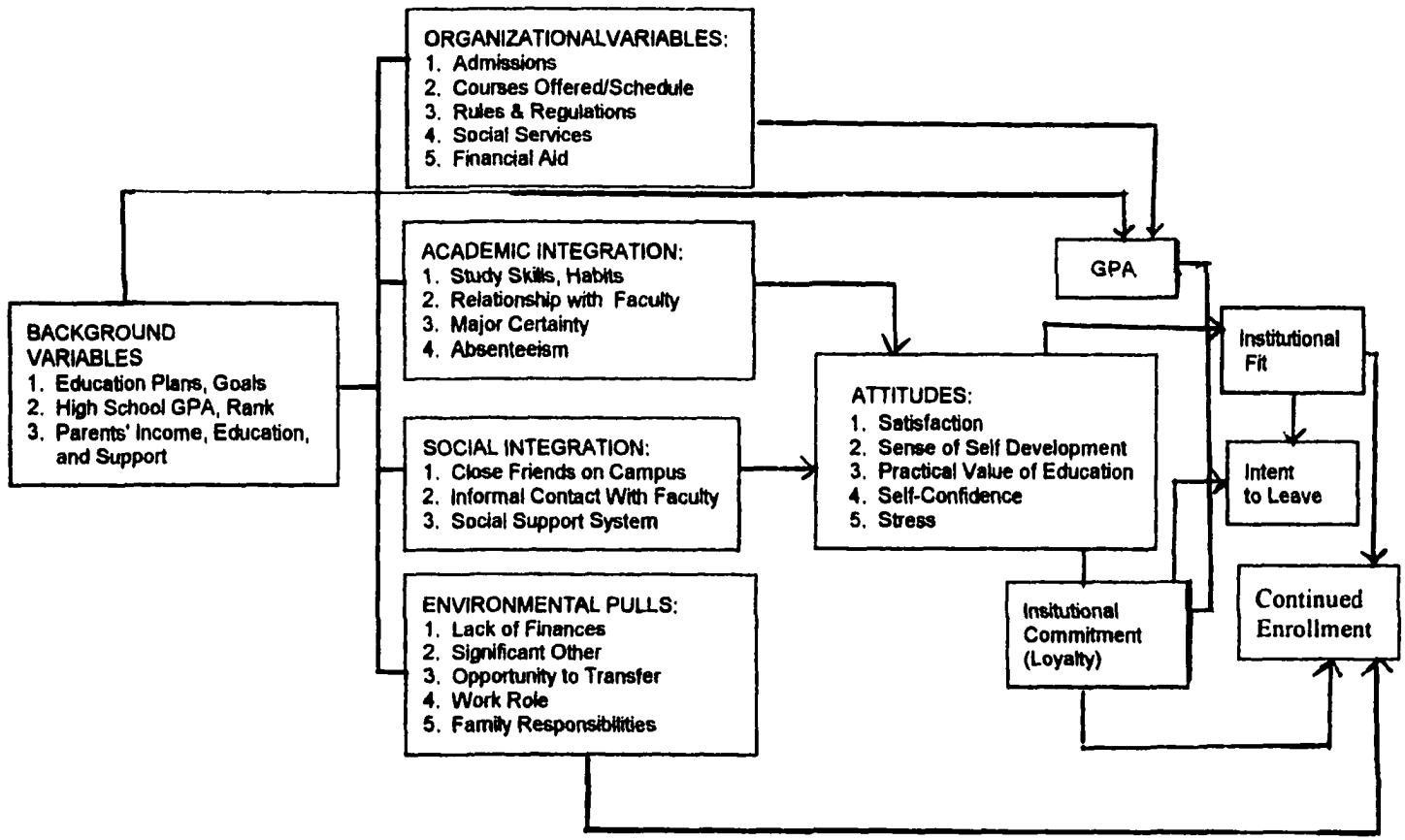

Figure 1.6: Bean's Metamodel of College Student Retention.

Finally, in the General Causal Model, Stoecker, Pascarella, and Wolfie (1988) added academic major and institutional characteristics to the Institutional Departure Model. Institutional selectivity, size, and predominant race of the student population were pertinent to persistence. Large institutions tended to have higher student-faculty ratios which resulted in lower levels of commitment and professional socialization which resulted in higher attrition rates. Under-representation of minority races on college campuses correlated with lower levels of commitment, and inadequate social integration resulting in higher attrition rates. Minority students tended to have higher attrition rates at predominantly Caucasian-American colleges and universities (Pascarella, 1985; Tracey & Sedlacek, 1987). Many researchers indicated the lack of role models and the lack cultural support which resulted in decreased ability of minority students' to acclimate to the college environment.

College major was added because in some disciplines students tended to be more highly socialized than in other disciplines. For example,

social sciences majors tended to be more highly socialized. Students in the hard sciences or in disciplines such as law and architecture tended to have higher grade point averages (GPAs). and higher levels of persistence. Hence, college major was relevant to persistence toward a college degree.

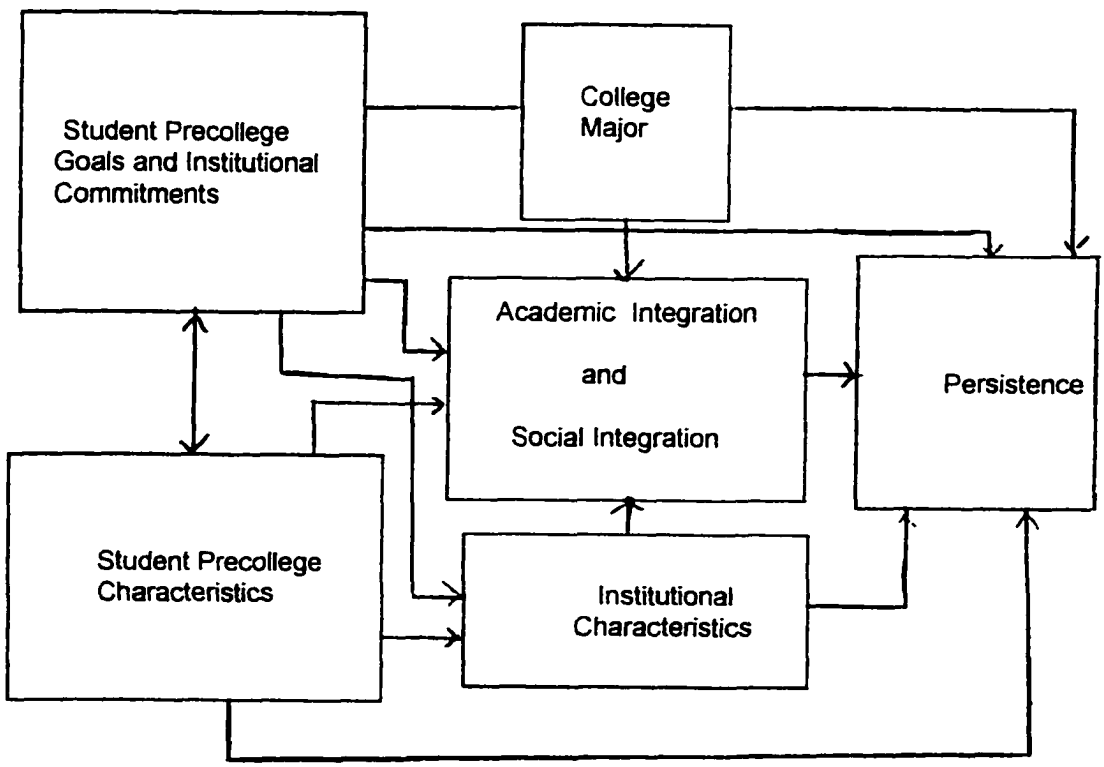

Figure 1.7: General Causal Model

In summary, the seven traditional college student persistence models had several parameters in common (see Appendix A). If the unique and

similar characteristics of the seven traditional college student models were combined along with the author's ideas, the new model would include the following: 1) academic college major; 2) precollege characteristics; 3) initial and subsequent levels of the intent to persist; 4) initial and subsequent levels of commitment; 5) initial and subsequent levels of student development; 6) initial and subsequent levels of faculty, staff and peer interactions; 7) initial and subsequent levels of professional socialization; 8) initial and subsequent responses to institutional characteristics; 9) initial and subsequent external commitments; 10) and initial along with subsequent levels of student involvement. If the narratives accompanying the models were integrated into the models' illustrations, the new model would reflect more dynamic interplay between the components within the models. For example, the narrative accompanying the Tinto Institutional Departure Model (1987) indicated that subsequent goal commitment and institutional commitment increased according to the quality and levels of students' interactions with faculty, staff and peers (see Figure 1.4). Bidirectional flow of events occurred between

student-faculty interaction and academic integration rather than the unidirectional flows represented by the Spady Model (l970) and the Tinto Model (1987). For example, a student could initially exhibit a lack of understanding of the critical thinking skills required to complete a specific course. The student interacted frequently with the faculty about the problem. During the semester, the student vacillated between clear understandings to being dumb-founded by some of the content. Gradually, as the student became more academically integrated, the ability to think critically increased. Cyclical movement between frequent interactions with the faculty was followed by increased student understanding of the academic requirements (academic integration) occurred throughout the academic year as opposed to unidirectional movement from student-faculty interaction to academic integration. Also, the Bean Metamodel of Student Retention (1986) presented organizational variables, academic integration, social integration, and environmental pulls as antecedent to student attitudinal elements. Since students frequently encountered certain organizational elements, external

elements, social elements, and academic elements throughout the college experience, bidirectional flow of events occurred rather than unidirectional. That is, as the quality and volume of student-faculty interactions increased, students' satisfaction levels increased. As students developed stable and productive relationships with faculty, staff, and peers, their acclimation to the college environment increased. As they became more acclimated to the college environment, they became more proficient in meeting personal needs, fulfilling personal expectations, achieving personal goals, along with achievement of university goals.

Combining the unique and common characteristics of the seven models might result in a more comprehensive and applicable college students' persistence model. Using a model with common and unique combined could result in a more stable and a more usable knowledge base to guide the development of traditional student persistence retention programs. However, designing and testing a new traditional college-aged student persistence model extended beyond the scope of this study.

Because traditional and nontraditional college-aged students differed in behaviors, precollege characteristics, expectations, obligations, and many other elements, the study sample consisted of traditional college-aged students. The next section presented a comparison of characteristics, needs, expectations, and responses of the nontraditional and traditional college students (see Appendix B). The next section offered a comparison of the seven traditional college student persistence or attrition models and the Bean and Metzner Conceptual Model of Nontraditional Student Attrition (l986).

A Comparison of Nontraditional and Traditional College Student Persistence:

The Bean and Metzner Conceptual Model of Nontraditional Student Attrition (1986) included: background and defining characteristics; academic variables; environmental variables; social integration variables; academic outcomes; psychological outcomes; and the intent to leave (see Figure 1.8). The primary differences between the Bean and Metzner Model (1986) and the traditional student persistence or attrition models included the model components and how the students were defined. First, nontraditional

students were defined as being 25 years or older; enrolled part-time; employed more than 20 hours per week; living off campus; married; and having significantly more family, work, and community responsibilities. However, traditional college-aged students were defined as 24 years or younger, enrolled full-time, employed less than 20 hours per week, living on campus, and single with fewer external obligations and responsibilities. Second, unlike traditional students, social integration was not as important to the persistence of nontraditional students. Spady (1970, 1971), Tinto (1975. 1987), and Bean (1985, 1986) indicated social integration was paramount to traditional college student persistence. Nontraditional students were more interested in the academic offerings of the institution than its social activities (Bean & Metzner, 1986). Nontraditional students generally met their social needs in the external environment (Bean & Metzner, 1986; Metzner & Bean, 1987).

Most extracurricular activities in the college environment tended to be designed for the traditional college-aged students. Most nontraditional

students would not be interested in attending sorority or fraternity parties or other types of traditional campus activities. Also, most sports, such as basketball and football had age restrictions and required extensive hours of practice and travel. Nontraditional students enrolled in college to improve job skills or to obtain a degree. They were less interested in the social activities on college campuses (Bean & Metzner, 1986; Metzner & Bean, 1987). Third, the environmental variables commonly associated with persistence of nontraditional students included elements such as financial needs, hours of employment, external support, family responsibilities, and opportunities to transfer. These elements were not particularly common to traditional college-aged students. The nontraditional students were more likely to be self-supporting and responsible for the welfare of others. By contrast, traditional college-aged students were less likely to be responsible for the welfare of others and more likely to be single and attended college through the assistance of grants, loans, scholarships, parental support (Bean, 1985; Bean & Metzner, 1986). For nontraditional students, family responsibilities and

hours of employment were directly related to the time and funds available for education. Nontraditional students relied primarily on the external environment for support. Therefore, external support was more closely aligned with persistence of nontraditional students. (Bean & Metzner, 1986). Because traditional college-aged students spent more time on campus, the support within the college environment was related more to the degree of persistence. Fourth, the psychological responses of nontraditional students related closely to institutional utility, satisfaction, goal commitment, and stress (see Figure 1.8). Since nontraditional students allotted less time for on-campus activities and interactions with socializing agents, they had less opportunity to learn informal methods for utilizing campus resources. Bean and Metzner (1986) indicated efficiency of organizational procedures was paramount to nontraditional students' persistence. Nontraditional students spent less on campus. They relied on formal organizational methods to assist them in gaining access to campus resources. Therefore, it was very important for formal organizational processes to be efficient so that the

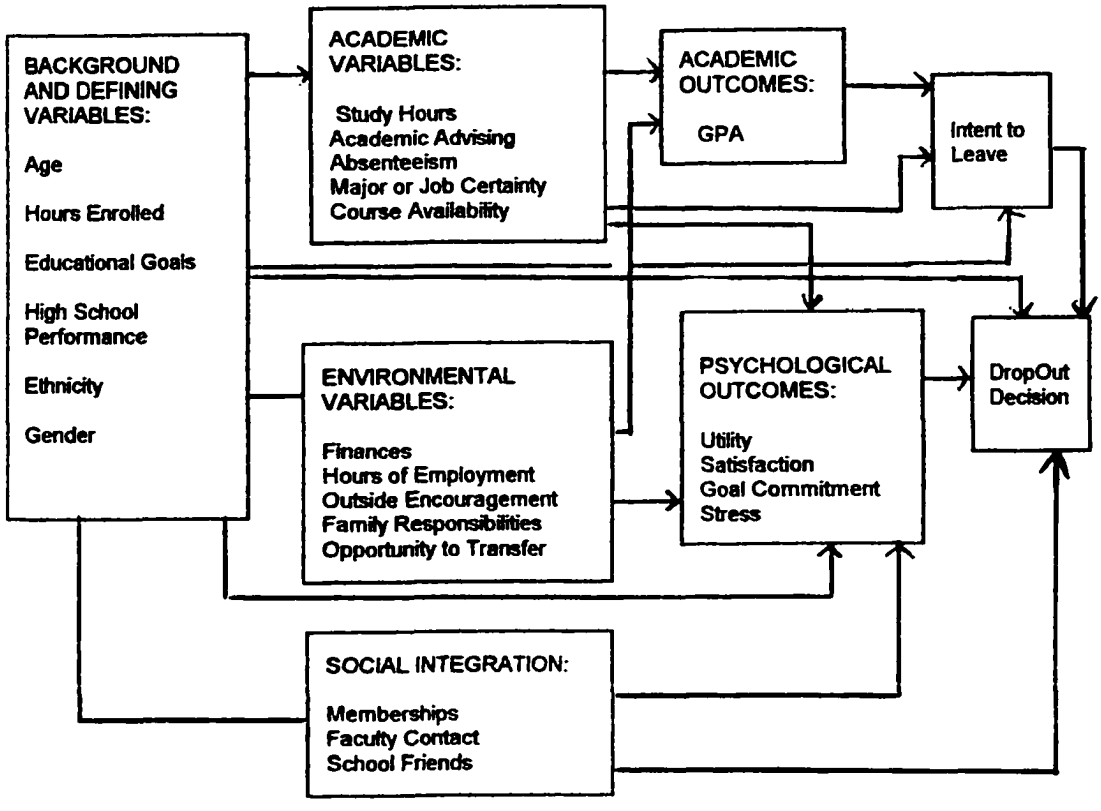

Figure 1.8: Bean and Metzner's Conceptual Model of Nontraditional College Student Attrition

nontraditional students could gain access to campus resources. In addition, stress was more closely associated with nontraditional persistence than traditional students (Bean & Metzner, 1986; Metzner & Bean, 1987). Nontraditional college students tended to lead more complex lifestyles than traditional students. For example, nontraditional students had to balance their professional life with their academic work. Fifth, because nontraditional

students' interactions with faculty, staff, and peers tended to be minimal, they were less likely to be influenced by educational activities within the college environments. Because of high levels of interaction with faculty, staff, and peers and high levels of involvement in on-campus activities, changes in cognitive and social mores were more likely to occur in traditional college-aged students than nontraditional students (Spady, 1970, 1971; Bean, 1985, 1986). Competing external commitments, limited study time, and limited interaction with faculty, staff, and peers could significantly reduce nontraditional college student persistence.

Finally, the nature of the nontraditional students influenced their needs, responses, and expectations of the college community. Because their on-campus time was limited, nontraditional students needed the institution to provide easy access to its resources through formal intraorganizational systems. Also, the nontraditional students required more support from the external environment than from the college community. The unique characteristics of the nontraditional students included commitment to

employment and the stress associated with striking a balance between study time and family responsibilities. Therefore, nontraditional students needed to have more effective study skills and study habits. Finally, because of the unique needs, expectations, and responses of nontraditional students to the college experience, traditional college-aged student persistence models were inappropriate for studying nontraditional students' intent to persist.

In summary, seven traditional college student persistence models were explored during the literature review. The models were unique in some aspects and similar in others (see Appendix A). However, the literature review revealed that most of the models evolved from the Spady Sociological Model of the Dropout Process (Spady, 1970). An overview of the models disclosed college major; goal commitment; satisfaction; external commitments variables; academic integration; social integration; institutional commitments; organizational variables; institutional characteristics; student-environment fit; students' backgrounds and characteristics; and the intent to persist or dropout decisions were significant to traditional college-aged students'

persistence. Since the nature and characteristics of nontraditional and traditional college-aged students differed, elements influencing traditional college student persistence and nontraditional college students varied. For nontraditional students, pursuing a college education was one of many major commitments. Pursuing a college degree was generally the primary focus of traditional college-aged students. According to Bean and Metzner (1986), nontraditional college students were confronted with several major competing commitments. Because of the differences between traditional college-aged students and nontraditional college students, this study limited the population to traditional college-aged students.

The traditional college student persistence models were very complex. Therefore, this study focused on two major components: professional commitment and professional socialization and how they influenced the intent to persist toward degree attainment. The next section provided conceptual analyses of commitment and professional socialization, extensive discussion of the relationships between each concept, and the intent to persist.

An Overview of Commitment, Professional Socialization, and College Students' Intent to Persist:

Analysis of commitment and professional socialization included the following components: definitions, unique characteristics, similarities, correlates, and how their interactions were related to first-year students' intent to persist. This section was structured around six major goals. The first goal focused on defining commitment and professional socialization. The second goal included exploration of the unique and similar characteristics of the variables. A third goal involved exploring how the similarities and differences of commitment and professional socialization influenced college students' intent persist. The fourth goal involved an examination of the correlates linking commitment to professional socialization along with how the correlates influenced students' intent to persist. The last goal examined how knowledge of commitment and professional socialization could be utilized to project the conditions most conducive to college students' persistence. This section explored the conditions most conducive or least conducive to the

development of commitment and professional socialization along with their influence on students' intent to persist toward degree attainment.

Commitment:

As discussed in the introduction, commitment involved but was not limited to goal commitment and institutional commitment. Construction of the definitions evolved from information discovered during the literature review (see Definitions of Terms). One definition of commitment included an unwillingness to lower the desires, determinations, or efforts aimed at completing a college degree (Begley & Czajka, 1991; Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1992; Tubbs, 1993). A second definition of commitment involved self-initiated, consistent determinations to follow through with a jointly planned pattern of activities performed under specific conditions within a designated time frame (Dunham, Grube & Castaneda, 1994; Hollenbeck, Klein, O'Leary & Wright, 1989: Matheiu, 1991; Tubbs, Boehne & Dahl, 1993). Many references defined commitment as an interactive, dynamic, and sequential process (Pascarella, 1985; Spady, 1970, 1971; Tinto, 1975, 1987, 1988).

Establishing and maintaining a sufficient degree off commitment correlated with appropriate levels of interactions with faculty, staff, and peers. Initially, stereotypical perceptions and minimal levels of experience influenced the students' levels of commitment (Becker, 1960; Thornton & Nardi, 1972; Tinto, 1988). At this point, students demonstrated fluctuating levels of commitment which ranged from thoughts of withdrawal to a fierce determination to pursue a college degree (Thornton & Nardi, 1972; Tinto, 1988). Subsequent commitments eventually stabilized and students were not as easily persuaded to change their decisions.

For purposes of this study, the definition of commitment included an intense desire to pursue or obtain a college degree accompanied by a strong emotional bond with the institution along with consistent determinations or efforts to follow through with a jointly planned pattern of activities performed under specific conditions within a designated time frame (Matheiu, 1991; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Tinto, 1975; Tubbs, 1993). Some of the characteristics associated with

commitment included: clustering of commitments, independent and complex activities, reasons for making the commitment, and progressive sequencing.

First, Matheiu (1991), Begley and Czajka (1993), and Bauer and Green (1994) indicated commitment occurred in clusters. During the college experience, students generally dealt with a series of concurrent and equally valued commitments. Students faced commitments that were both complementary and competitive. Parents, noncollege peers, and job obligations significantly influenced the students' utilization of time available for academic and social activities. Complementary commitments included supportive parental relationships, supportive college peers, and supportive love relationships. According to the literature review, support of friends and family had a positive influence on college student persistence. Second, initiating and sustaining sufficient levels of commitment required many independent and complex activities (Astin, 1993; Becker, 1960; Dunham, Grube & Castaneda, 1994; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Tinto, 1975, 1987; Tubbs, 1993). That is, balancing external commitments with commitments to

degree attainment could be very challenging. Completing a college degree required setting priorities between various commitments and interests. Third, the literature review revealed individuals tended to make commitments to a college degree for three major reasons: 1) needs for financial advancement or security, 2) desires for self-fulfillment, 3) and desires to serve others. For example, commitments to degree attainment correlated with students' desires to increase their socioeconomic status, to provide for dependents, to secure future employment, or to secure multiple career choices (Astin, 1993; Dunham, Grube, Castaneda, 1994; Hollenbeck, Klein, O'Leary & Wright, 1989; Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Commitments to degree attainment could be associated with the desire for self-fulfillment (Begley & Czajka, 1993; Tubbs & Dahl, 1991; Tubbs, 1993). For example, some students desired to attain status in a particular profession or to respond to an inner drive to perform at the highest level possible. Also, students often pursued a specific degree because of a desire to serve their fellow human beings or to preserve the environment (Dunham, Grube &

Castaneda, 1994; Hackett, Bycio & Hausdorf, 1994). Students may pursue a medical degree with the intention of opening a free clinic in an inner city area or in an underdeveloped country to offer services to individuals who cannot afford medical care or do not have access to adequate medical care. Students motivated by the shrinking wildlife habitat may pursue a degree in zoology.

Fourth, Becker (1960) indicated commitment often occurred in progressive sequences or levels. For example, entry levels of commitment were exemplified by student attending class, meeting course requirements, and meeting with faculty regarding course assignments. However, when students assumed responsibilities for tracking their progress, this was considered an advanced level of commitment. Separating elements contributing to degree attainment from those interfering with degree attainment indicated a higher level of commitment. Establishment of balance between academic and social activities indicated students were committed to the acquisition of the skills and knowledge required to practice within the

specific discipline. Fifth, employees' commitments to company goals contributed to long-term employment (Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993). When applied to college student persistence, student commitment to the institution contributed to their continued pursuit toward degree attainment (Tinto, 1987).

In conclusion, commitment to degree attainment related directly to student commitment to institutional goals and the need for self fulfillment. Degrees of commitment occurred in progressive sequences, at varying levels, and in clusters. The reasons students made commitments to degree attainment related to continued pursuit toward degree attainment. During the college experience, several valued commitments occurred at the same time. Commitment to the institution related directly to persistence. The degree of commitment tended to be higher, if faculty, staff, and peers exhibited high degrees of institutional commitment. Unlike professional socialization, maintenance of levels of commitment required very little dependence on socializing agents. the next paragraphs provided an extensive discussion of professional socialization.

Professional Socialization:

Because of the interrelatedness of social integration and academic integration, professional socialization included both academic integration and social integration. Academic integration was defined as having at least a "C" grade point average (GPA) accompanied by students' perception of increased intellectual development (Brower, 1992; Grosset, 1991; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Tinto, 1975) One definition of social integration included procurement of social mores acceptable within the college environment (Bean, 1985; Christie & Dinham, 1991; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Tinto, 1975). Outcomes of both processes correlated with students' experiencing a sense of belonging within the college community. Wentzel (1991) indicated academic integration required social skills, and social integration required academic skills. Therefore, it was possible for academic integration and social integration to occur antecedent, concurrent, and subsequent to each other. For example, approaching a faculty member regarding course assignments (academic integration) required social skills such as initiating

and terminating a conversation with an authority figure in an appropriate manner. Campaigning for an office in a campus organization (social integration) required cognitive skills (academic integration) necessary for planning and financing the campaign as well as social skills needed to approach strangers (other students) and to ask for political and financial support. Therefore, for purposes of this study, social integration and academic integration existed under the umbrella of professional socialization.

Several definitions of professional socialization were constructed from the literature review (see Definition of Terms). First, professional socialization encompassed descriptors such as dynamic; sequential; interactive; purposeful; contextual; unifying; flexible; stable; timely; and a progressive chain of events with accompanying behaviors (Bean, 1985; Hardy & Conway, 1988; Morrison, 1993; Thornton & Nardi, 1972; Tinto, 1988; Weidman, 1979). Second, parameters of professional socialization entailed a process occurring in sequences through interaction with socializing agents such as faculty, staff, and peers (Bean, 1985; Hardy & Conway, 1988; Morrison, 1993). Socializing

agents provided guidelines for acquisition of norms, values, attitudes, and behaviors necessary become a member of the college community as well as becoming a member of the specific profession (Bauer & Green, 1994; Bean, 1985; Brown, Alpert & Brady, 1988; Creasia & Parker, 1991; Hardy & Conway, 1988; Morrison, 1993; Thornton & Nardi, 1972; Tinto, 1988). According to Tinto (1975) and Pascarella and Terenzini (1991), peers were the primary socializing agents.

Third, professional socialization was further defined as a series of events which provided opportunities for newcomers to learn approved mores within a particular social system (Bean, 1985; Morrison, 1993; Thornton & Nardi, 1972). One primary purpose of professional socialization included to assisting the newcomer with role acquisition within a non-native environment (Bean, 1985). Fourth, professional socialization was perceived as an interactive process where the newcomer and the socializing agents shared the responsibility for role acquisition. That is, professional socialization occurred at higher levels, if the students actively participated in the activities.

In other words, students should be active participants in the acquisition of the norms, values, and attitudes within the college environment. In order to acquire the skills, knowledge, and behaviors necessary to function proficiently in the college environment, students must consistently interact with the socializing agents (Bauer & Green, 1994; Bean, 1985; Morrison, 1993).

Sixth, many researchers described professional socialization as a process in which newcomers attained membership in a new community (Christie & Dinham, 1991; Morrison, 1993; Stage, 1989). That is, professional socialization was global and encompassed formal and informal activities within both social and academic systems (Cabrera, Nora, Castaneda & Hengler, 1992; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Tinto, 1975, 1987). The college or university assisted the students as they transcended the novice role to a becoming a practicing professional. The college student role was viewed as transitional (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

Seventh, professional socialization was considered a timely, dynamic, and on-going process. If this principle were applied to college

students' persistence, effective orientation programs would require socializing agents to pace the volume, the nature, and quality of information according to the students' level of development (Bean, 1985; Bauer & Green, 1994; Morrison, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Seventh, since professional socialization was characterized as a progressive and on-going process, faculty, staff, and peers assisted the newcomers as they moved from one level of the process to another. For example, first-year students entered college with a stereotypical view of the college student role and the professional role (Thornton & Nardi, 1972; Tinto, 1988). When the students moved to the college campus, their perceptions became more realistic.

If professional socialization of college students were perceived as a progressive and on-going process, then the current "lump sum" orientation programs offered by many colleges and universities would be considered inappropriate (Bean, 1985; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Terenzini et al., 1994; Tinto, 1975, 1987). Appropriate orientation programs would include long-term plans to assist students in meeting their needs throughout the

college experience. During initial orientation periods, socializing agents would attempt to offer basic information such as enrollment, housing, parking, and class attendance at a pace the students can acquire and utilize. If professional socialization were perceived as a progressive, well-sequenced process, then providing too much information in a restricted time frame, or information that was too complex for students to assimilate and utilize would impair the development of professional socialization.

Eighth, the purposes of professional socialization were to add new members to the student population and to the specific discipline. Also, this process provided society with educated individuals interested in contributing to the welfare of its members. Ninth, professional socialization was depicted as a contextual process. Hence, the information and the techniques utilized by socializing agents varied across disciplines, settings, as well as varing across student characteristics such as: gender, culture, and socioeconomic status (Bean, 1985; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Morrison, 1993). For example, professional socialization of medical students in an underdeveloped

country would be different from that in a large urban metropolitan medical center. Professional socialization of special education students would be different from that of student morticians. Tenth, flexibility within the process was necessary to accommodate the unique parameters listed above along with unique student characteristics and needs. Eleventh, professional socialization was viewed as a unifying process. Therefore, students' personal goals, institutional goals, and goals of the specific discipline needed to merge in order for the student to gain membership in the new environment.

Finally, the exhibition of certain behaviors indicated the students were moving from one level of professional socialization to another. For example, when students exhibited increased automatization within the social and academic systems, the students were achieving an increased degree of professional socialization (Bauer & Green, 1994; Morrison, 1993; Thornton & Nardi, 1972). During the early experiences on college campuses, students were information-seekers and looked to others for explicit directions and guidance. However, professional socialization evolved when students

became a viable source of information to themselves and others. When students demonstrated an increased sense of independence in meeting assignments, exhibited more creativity, exhibited less duplication or regurgitation of information provided by others, and became more self-directed, the students had reached a sufficient level of professional socialization.

In summary, professional socialization was defined as a purposeful; on-going; contextual; sequential; multiformed chain of events; interactive; timely; unifying; flexible; stable; and progressive process with accompanying behaviors. Also, professional socialization required active participation by the students. It encompassed formal and informal activities within the academic and social systems of the college environment. The process required trained, well-oriented, dedicated, and motivated socializing agents. The process required a period of transition to bridge the gap between the novice and the professional. During the early stages of professional socialization, students focused more on how to function within the college environment. As the

students became more socialized to the college environment, they focused more on becoming a professional. Professional socialization included recognition and management of conflicts between stereotypical perceptions of the role of the college student as well as the specific professional role. Effective professional socialization needed to be an organized and properly paced process. All of the processes, concepts, subconcepts, components, skills and techniques associated with professional socialization aimed at helping the students gain the necessary skills and knowledge needed to persist toward attainment of a college degree within a four year time period.

A Correlation of Commitment, Professional Socialization, and the Intent to Persist:

Adequate levels of commitment and professional socialization related directly to students' intent to persist toward degree attainment. The literature on the whole could not agree on whether commitment was antecedent to professional socialization or vice verse (Becker, 1960; Dunham, Grube & Castaneda, 1994; Hackett, Bycio & Hausdorf, 1994; Meyer, Allen & Smith,

1993; Morrison, 1993; Thornton & Nardi, 1972). All of the seven traditional college student persistence models except Spady (1970, 1971) presented commitment as an antecedent as well as an outcome of professional socialization and vice verse. Spady (1970, 1971) presented commitment as an outcome of professional socialization. The Tinto Institutional Departure Model (1987) presented commitment as both an antecedent and an outcome to professional socialization. Spady (1970), Bean (1985, 1986), and Tinto (1987) also presented the variables as having an unidirectional relationship. Neither of them allowed for vacillations in the levels of commitment nor in the levels of professional socialization. Students tended to persist if they were committed to the norms, values, attitudes, and behaviors deemed acceptable to the institution (Spady, 1970; Bean, 1985; Tinto, 1975). Also, students tended to persist if they were committed to the specific curriculum associated with obtaining a degree at the particular institution. (Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993; Spady, 1970; Tinto, 1975, 1987; Tubbs and Dahl, 1991). Completion of a college degree required consistent degrees of commitment. Fluctuating

levels of commitment could be exemplified by inconsistent attendance patterns, study habits, tardiness, and inconsistent participation in extracurricular activities. Professional socialization resulted in increased abilities to resolve conflicts between previous views of college life and current experiences. If students were to complete their college degree, appropriate assistance by faculty, staff and peers was crucial (Thornton & Nardi, 1972; Tinto, 1988). The following paragraphs offered a general comparison of aspects that aligned professional socialization and commitment with students' intent to persist.

Commitment versus Professional Socialization

The differences between commitment and professional socialization involved the definitions, the nature of the concepts, the degree of participant interaction, the purposes, the immediacy and the types of rewards, and the relationships to students' intent to persist. First, the definition of commitment included the urge, desire, determination, or motivation to obtain a college degree. Professional socialization was defined as the formal and informal

pattern of activities that prescribed the pathway to degree attainment. Second, participant interaction during the series of events of the two concepts varied. For example, professional socialization was considered more interactive than commitment (Becker, 1960; Hackett, Bycio & Hausdorf, 1994; Matheiu, 1991; Morrison, 1993; Spady, 1970; Thornton & Nardi, 1972; Tinto, 1975). Commitment was initiated, established, and maintained more by inner feelings and individual needs than professional socialization. For example, students may decide to become medical researchers because a parent died at an early age from an incurable disease. The levels of students' commitments can be influenced by faculty, staff and peers, but their commitments often evolved from and were sustained by their inner drives. Although not the greatest influence, students may become more committed to degree attainment if faculty and staff demonstrated an interest in them, demonstrated proficiency in the performance of their duties, or displayed commitment to providing a quality education (Tinto, 1975; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Bauer & Green, 1994).

Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993) indicated that loyalty demonstrated by other employees and managers could result in higher levels of commitment in new employees. According to this principle, students' commitment to the institutions may increase if the students perceived that faculty and staff demonstrated strong allegiance to the institution. Institutional commitment among students could potentially increase, if their peers displayed a strong allegiance to the institution. Students' commitment to degree attainment could potentially increase if their peers demonstrated a high degree of enthusiasm toward degree attainment. Faculty, staff, and peers influenced student commitment indirectly but influenced professional socialization more directly. However, professional socialization required more interaction with faculty, staff, and peers than commitment (Tinto, 1975; Bean, 1985; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). The volume, quality, and sequencing of student-faculty interactions could influence performances in both the academic realm and the social realm (Bean, 1985; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). For example, sufficient interactions with the faculty provided students with guidelines for

developing behaviors representative of the appropriate demeanor needed when interacting with peers, other professionals, or clients or the individuals being served. Appropriate student-peer interactions and involvement in extracurricular activities increased student abilities to function within the student population and the development of interpersonal skills needed to maintain effective peer relationships. Low levels of professional socialization correlated with low levels of interaction with faculty, staff, and peers.

Third, commitment and professional socialization differed in their relationships to the students' intent to persist and they differed in complexity. Students' commitments provided the motivation for degree completion. Professional socialization provided a structured pathway to degree attainment. Persistence involved appropriate efforts to reach the goal. Professional socialization was more complex because it required extensive interactions among students, faculty, staff, and peers. Commitment revolved more around inner feelings and personal desires. Factors reinforcing the intensity of students' commitment and professional socialization differed.

Commitment was reinforced more by the students' desires to appear consistent and rational (Hollenbeck, Klein, O'Leary & Wright, 1989; Matheiu, 1991; Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1994). Professional socialization involved the granting of membership in the college community and the accompanying rewards and privileges (Bauer & Green, 1994; Morrison, 1993).

Fourth, maintenance of the commitment process and the professional socialization process probably occurred for different reasons. Students' commitment to degree attainment could evolve from a sense of obligation because parents, faculty, and staff demonstrated an interest in providing them with a quality education (Bauer & Green, 1994; Becker, 1960; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Tinto, 1988). Students often continued to pursue a college degree because they were stimulated by interactions with faculty, staff and peers. That is, professional behaviors displayed by faculty in academic and social settings often increased students' desire to become a member of the profession (Bauer & Green, 1994; Morrison, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Thornton & Nardi, 1972).

Fifth, the immediacy of rewards associated with professional socialization and commitment differed. Because commitment focused on long-term goals, rewards associated with commitment were more distant and less visible (Astin, 1993; Hackett, Bycio & Hausdorf, 1994; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Tinto, 1975, 1987; Tubbs, 1993; Tubbs, Boehne & Dahl, 1993). The rewards associated with professional socialization were much more accessible and visible than those associated with commitment (Becker, 1960; Brown, Alpert, Lent & Brady, 1988; Stage, 1989; Williams & Anderson, 1991). Rewards associated with professional socialization included elements such as winning an office in a campus organization, an outstanding student award, an acknowledgment for a GPA of 4.0, a high score on a completed project, or verbal praise from the faculty. Sixth, the relationship between commitment and the intent to persist differed from the relationship between professional socialization and the intent to persist. Commitment to degree attainment required students to make certain sacrifices and investments. Professional socialization assisted the students

in identifying the specific sacrifices and investments. Through professional socialization, the students learned how, when, where, and under what conditions the sacrifices and investments should be made. Also, commitment involved making the decision to pursue a degree and adhering to the decision. Professional socialization involved learning the minimal activities required for degree attainment.

Seventh, different factors interfered with commitment and professional socialization (Bauer & Green, 1994; Becker, 1960; Morrison, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Spady, 1970; Thornton & Nardi, 1972; Tinto, 1975, 1988). Elements competing with students' commitment to degree attainment included conflicts between commitments to parents, siblings, religious organizations, employment, and love relationships. On the other hand, elements competing with professional socialization involved students' previous perceptions of the college student role or the professional role. Commitment and professional socialization varied, but they appeared to be more similar than different.

Commonalities between Commitment and Professional Socialization

Several correlates and several characteristics linked commitment and professional socialization. Characteristics included elements that described the concepts. Correlates included elements that tended to occur at the same time but did not necessary reflect causation. Common characteristics of commitment and professional socialization included elements such as dynamic; sequential; interactive; progressive; purposeful; unifying; and occurring in clusters (Astin, 1993; Brower, 1992; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Tinto, 1975, 1987). First, both variables required the unification or merging of students' goals, institutional goals, and societal goals. Students desired a college degree and the institution provided the pathway for degree attainment. Society desired highly educated members, and the institution was interested in educating the new members (Bauer & Green, 1994; Becker, 1960; Morrison, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Spady, 1970, 1971; Thornton & Nardi, 1972; Tinto, 1975). Second, commitment and professional socialization tended to occur in clusters. Students often faced multiple

commitment and socialization processes which were potentially complementary or competing (Bauer & Green, 1994; Becker, 1960; Morrison, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Spady, 1970; Thornton & Nardi, 1972; Tinto, 1975). For example, commitments to parents, non-college or college friends, and intense love relationships often competed with commitment to degree attainment. During the development of professional socialization, many competing socialization processes occurred. During professional socialization, students were also being socialized into roles related to gender; adulthood; parenthood; citizenship; wager earner; taxpayer; marital partner; and many others. The developmental tasks associated with the gender role or the marital partner role may conflict with professional socialization. Professional socialization of a wealthy female student as a homicide detective may conflict with parental aspirations. Also, conflicts occurred among the amount of time needed for studies, on-campus extracurricular activities, and the amount of time required to maintain relationships with peers, love partners, non-college friends or parents. Dedicated, informed, and motivated

socializing agents needed to assist students in learning to balance the competing commitments and socialization processes that might reduce the levels of persistence.

Third, the purposes of professional socialization closely aligned with the purposes of commitment. Students needed to have the ability to function effectively as members of the college community as well as having a strong desire or motivation for degree attainment. Fourth, both commitment and professional socialization required some degree of interaction with the college environment. All of the seven traditional college student persistence models indicated a direct relationship existed between professional socialization (academic and social integration) and students' intent to persist. Content of the seven models also indicated commitment had an indirect relationship with college students' intent to persist. Fifth, commitment and professional socialization collectively influenced students' intent to persist. For example, as commitment to the institution increased and the levels of professional socialization increased, the influence of external variables

decreased. Therefore, professional socialization within the college environment aided in increasing commitment to the college community. Many well-established links existed between the common characteristics of commitment and professional socialization.

Correlates were defined as elements occurring simultaneously with commitment and professional socialization without sufficient evidence to indicate causation. The common correlates included person-environment fit, gender, culture, external factors, and institutional characteristics (Arbona & Novy, 1990; Astin, 1993; Ayres & Bennet, 1983; Brower, 1992; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Terenzini, 1994; Tinto, 1975, 1987). Person-environment fit influenced the development of both variables. Person-environment fit was indirectly related to commitment but directly related to professional socialization. Spady (1970), Tinto (1987) and Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) indicated some students with strong commitment to degree attainment could persist with a low person-environment fit. The quality of the experience would be lower, but persistence was possible. A direct relationship existed

between levels of persistence, the levels of professional socialization, and person-environment fit. High levels of professional socialization correlated with high levels of congruence between the students and the college environment (Bauer & Green, 1994; Morrison, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Spady, 1970; Tinto, 1975). Professional socialization occurred if students exhibited norms, values and attitudes similar to the college community (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Spady, 1970, 1971; Tinto, 1975).

Gender correlated with professional socialization and commitment. For example, a higher percentage of female students who exhibited successful academic performance withdrew from college more often than their male counterparts (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Spady, 1970; Tinto, 1975, 1987). That is, despite their successful academic performance, female students were less apt to persist. More males withdrew because of academic failure than females. The social aspect of professional socialization tended to be more significant to persistence among female than male students (Bean, 1985; Clarke, 1987; Pascarella & Chapman, 1983; Pascarella &

Terenzini, 1991). Male students were more concerned with the academic aspects of professional socialization. Higher levels of commitment tended to influence professional socialization of female students more than male students. Friendship support coexisted more with higher levels of commitment and professional socialization among female students than male students (Pascarella & Chapman, 1983; Spady, 1970). Persistence among female was influenced more by parental attitudes than male students. Influence of institutional commitment on levels of persistence was minimal for both genders (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Spady, 1970; Terenzini & Wright, 1987). Degrees of commitment increased over time for both genders. The relationship between gender and levels of commitment and professional socialization had a significant influence on college student persistence. More research was needed in this area. Sometimes the gender issues were compounded by the students cultural backgrounds and socioeconomic levels.

Students categorized in the middle income groups and above tended to persist more than students in other socioeconomic groups. Minority

students tended to be from lower income brackets. Lower income brackets often correlated with students' cultural backgrounds (Gerardi, 1990; Pascarella, 1985; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Sedlacek, 1987; Tracey & Sedlacek, 1987). Minority students tended to exist in the low income groups and were more likely to be first-generation college attendees. These students tended to enter college with lower GPAs, lower commitment, and lower person-environment fit. Given these elements, this group of students were less likely to persist (Arbona & Novy, 1990; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Low commitment levels in non-representative environments would likely result in impairment of commitment expansion and insufficient involvement or interactions within the environment. Lack of involvement, inadequate interactions with faculty and staff, insufficient numbers of cultural mentors and peers would likely result in low commitment levels and inadequate professional socialization. Under the above conditions, persistence was less likely for this particular group of students than for other groups (Arbona & Novy, 1990; Pascarella & Chapman, 1983; Pascarella,

1985; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Sedlacek, 1987; Tracey & Sedlacek, 1987). More research was needed to determine the relationships between cultural-ethnic orientations along with degrees of commitment and degrees of professional socialization. Also, exploration of the influences of elements of internal and external to the college environment on various minority students' intent to persist.

External forces influenced the levels of commitment and levels professional socialization and could have a positive or negative correlation with college students' persistence. External forces such as support from parents and noncollege friends could have a direct influence on degrees of commitment and degrees of professional socialization (Bauer & Green, 1994; Hatcher et al., 1991; Krotseng, 1991; Stage, 1989). Parents who attempted to maintain the status of previous child-parent relationships may perceive faculty, staff, and peers as adversaries. Students may experience cognitive dissonance when they attempt to set priorities between the demands of the two valued relationships. Parents who promoted autonomy in their children

may encourage the students to affiliate with the institution and to establish relationships with faculty, staff, and peers. (Christie & Dinham, 1991; Hatcher et al., 1994; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Spady, 1970; Tinto, 1975). Students with this type of parental support would be more likely to persist. Commitment to degree attainment and the activities required to reach the goal must take priority over the demands of external variables.

In summary, degrees of commitment and degrees of professional socialization were influenced by many factors which could have negative or positive influences on college students' persistence (see Appendix C). Some elements directly influenced professional socialization, but had an indirect influence on commitment. Some factors influenced both variables directly. Unique characteristics of commitment and professional socialization determined their impact on the levels of students' intent to persist. More research was needed on the possible existence of bidirectional relationships between the variables associated with college student persistence or attrition. More research needed to be conducted on the influence of external factors,

commitment, professional socialization, and their relationships to college students' persistence. Research investigating correlations among professional socialization, commitment, and students' intent to persist could add to the current body of knowledge. In the next section, the research methodology was presented.

Chapter III: Methodology

Research Design:

Subjects

The target population included subjects with the following characteristics: first-year; second semester; living on campus; traditional college-aged students (18-24); campus residents; full-time; 2.00 or above GPA; single; nonparents; and working less than 20 hours per week. The setting was a small private, church-supported, predominantly Caucasian-American university with a student population of 2500, located in the central plains. First-year, second semester students were selected because the attrition rate tended to be higher among this group of students than on other levels (Tinto, 1975, 1988). Older students were excluded because they tended to respond to the college experience differently than younger students (Bean & Metzner, 1986; Stage, 1989). Married students were also excluded because they tend to be less integrated into the college community and were more involved with personal commitments which competed with degree

attainment (Tinto, 1988; Stage, 1989). Students living off campus were excluded because they tended to be less involved in campus activities and had a lower affiliation with the institution than students living on campus (Bluming, 1989; Christie & Dinham, 1991). Living on campus provided greater opportunities to interact with faculty, staff, and peers as well as participating in extracurricular activities. Full-time status was selected because part-time students were less likely to persist (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). The population was limited to students with a 2.00 or above GPA because 80 percent of first year students who drop out of college have at least a 2.00 GPA (Tinto, 1975, 1987). Students without children were selected because parenthood was viewed as a commitment likely to compete strongly with degree attainment. Students working less than 20 hours were included in the population because students working more than twenty hours tended to have less for studying as well as having limited involvement in campus activities which often resulted in higher attrition rates (Astin, 1993; Bean, 1986; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

Other demographic data collected included: family income; levels of parents education; culture; gender; high school GPA; college GPA; ACT/SAT scores; and academic major (see Appendix D). Students in lower income brackets and whose parents had a high school diploma or less correlated with lower commitment levels, lower professional socialization levels, and tended not to persist. Minority students tended to be from the lower income brackets, were first-generation college attendees, and were thought to enter college with fewer academic skills than others students (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Sedlacek, 1987; Tracey & Sedlacek, 1987). Because of the gender differences associated with the college experience, gender information was collected. For example, female students tended to have higher initial commitments to degree attainment than male students. Highly committed female students valued higher levels of social activities and extensive informal interactions with the faculty. Female students were more likely to persist if they were highly socialized. Intent to persist among male students' correlated higher with academic concerns than female students.

Failing to separate data collected on male and female students would decrease the accuracy of theoutcomes. To assure that students who did not intend to persist were not related to academic failure, college GPAs was collected. The high school GPAs and ACT/SAT scores were collected because above average high school GPAs and ACT/SAT scores aligned with higher levels of college students' persistence. Sedlacek (l987) and Pascarella (1985a) indicated this was not true of African-American students.

Sample selection was conducted by mailing the inventories to all of the 402 first-year second semester students at their campus addresses. The Academic Center provided labels which included the students' campus addresses. The Academic Center Director indicated the return rate of questionnaires on this campus was approximately ninety percent. A ninety percent return rate resulted in a minimal sample size is approximately 350. The Director of the Academic Center indicated that in the past follow-up notification generally resulted in one hundred percent return of questionnaires.

Construction of Instruments

A portion of the Dick and Carey Model (1990), (an instruction design text), was utilized to construct the instruments. Use of the Dick and Carey Model helped identify the most relevant instruments items. The following process was utilized: 1) identification of major concepts; 2) identifications of primary focuses associated with the concepts; 3) identifications of measurable objectives associated with each concept; 4) and designing the actual inventory items (see Appendices F and G). Except for the items with numerical parameters, a Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree) was utilized with most of the items (see Appendices F and G). The Intent to Persist Scale (IPS) requested that the students rank the likelihood of their returning for the fall semester on a scale from 1 to 5. The instruments were presented in tabular form with items printed on both sides of two pages (see Appendices B and C). The survey instruments consisted of three pages. The cover letter and demographic form were printed on the front and back of one page.

Data Collection

Data were collected through the use of three instruments: the Professional Socialization Inventory Check list (PSIC) (Appendix F), Commitment Inventory Checklist (CIC) (Appendix G), and the Intent to Persist Scale (IPS) (Appendix F) along with a Demographic Sheet (Appendix H). The instrument content evolved from the literature review. The CIC included elements unique to commitment, such as family support and noncollege friends, the students' desire to appear rational and consistent, and the influence of peer and faculty displays of commitment to the institution. The PSIC included elements unique to professional socialization. Professional socialization included elements such as students feeling at home on the campus, students demonstrating increased ability to balance academic and social activities, the amount of extracurricular activities, and evidence indicating students' interactions with the faculty assisted in their adjustment to college. The IPS asked students to select a number from 1-5 which was most representative of their intent to persist (5 being the highest). Astin

(1993), Bean (1985), and Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) indicated some students do not persist because of lack of funds, marriage plans, transfers to another institution, and employment. Hence, the IPS also asked students to indicate if they were to dropped out of school would the decision be related to lack of funds, employment, transferring to another institution or, plans to marry. Collecting this data provided access to information about possible extraneous variables which could influence dropout decisions.

The original plan included mailing precontact cards. However, precontact postcards were not mailed during the second week February, 1996. The author made the announcement during chapel services, prior to delivering a chapel speech during Black Heritage Week. Students' attendance at this yearly scheduled chapel tended to be one of the highest of the year. Since the University has a mandatory chapel attendance policy, it was decided that announcing the forthcoming questionnaires would be sufficient. The University Registrar provided a list of students along with mailing labels. On the third Monday in March (1996), three hundred and eight

two (382) research packets were mailed via the internal university mailing system on February 16, 1996. One hundred packets were returned by March 7, 1996. Since the minimal target number was 267 (70%), a second set of two hundred (200) packets were mailed on March 10, 1996. Eighty research packets were returned by March 21, 1996. One hundred (100) research packets were mailed on March 23, 1996. It was decided that this would be the last mailing. By the April 11, 1996 deadline, a total of 220 (total of 58%) packets had been returned. Thirty (30) of the completed were discarded because of insufficient data, students living off campus, over the age of 24, or had married during the Christmas break or interim January period.

Ethical and Legal Considerations:

The ethical and legal implications were addressed in the cover letter (see Appendix I). Approval for research was obtained by including a cover letter in each of the packets. The cover letter requested participation, discussed the purposes of the study, the value of subject participation, assured confidentially, assured subject safety, and provided an avenue for

access to the research outcomes. The cover letter informed the student of their chances of winning a twenty-five-dollar gift certificate to a local department store if they returned the inventories by March 18, 1996. The data collection period was extended to April 11, 1996. The names of the returnees were placed in a bin. Due to a personal tragedy, the winner was announced on September 28, 1996. Because of the delay, a ten dollar bonus was added to the prize.

Statistical Methodology

The SPSS (computer software) was used to perform the data analysis. Discussion of the statistical methods was coordinated with each research question. The rationale for selecting each statistical method and how the method was utilized to answer each question was included in this chapter. The statistical methods selected were factor analysis, ANOVA, Pearson's *r*, and partial correlation coefficient.

Before addressing the analysis of the research questions, a discussion of the application of the analytic processes involved in the data analysis was

provided. First, factor analysis was selected for research questions 1 and 2. The computation resulted in reduction in the number of variables, assisted in determining the minimum of number of factors accounting for the variance within each variable, and assisted in identify the underlying structure of the original variables (Girden, 1996). Because several options were available when utilizing the different components of factor analysis, decisions were made regarding which options would be utilized for each of the following factor analysis components: the type of factor analysis; the type of extraction method; the type of rotation method; the factor loadings cut off point; the computation of communality estimates; the method for computation of factor scores; and computation of composite scores. Because the purposes of the study were to identify relationships among the major constructs associated with college student persistence, exploratory factor analysis was selected rather than confirmatory factor analysis.

The principle component extraction method was selected, because it addressed common and unique elements of the variables (Gorsuch, 1983;

Kim & Mueller, 1978; Norusis, 1993; Tan, 1992). With the other extraction methods the factor scores could only be estimated (Gorsuch, 1983; Comfrey & Lee, 1992). Principle component analysis assisted in determining the primary components accounting for the largest proportion of variability in all factor scores (Girden, 1996). Also, the principal component method could reveal a greater number of relevant clusters (Tan, 1992). If no principle components existed among the variables then, no correlations would exist among the variables. Since eigenvalues of 1.00 were considered more significant than scores below 1.00, the eigenvalue was set at 1.00 and above (Girden, 1996; Norusis, 1993). Therefore, when factor analysis was performed, the computer extracted variables with eigenvalues less than 1.00. Communalities aided in determining the amount of variance each individual variable shared with the other variables. According to Comfrey and Lee (1992), statistical data containing large communalities indicated a significant amount of the variance on a variable had been extracted by the factor analysis procedures. Small communalities indicated significant amounts

variance in a variable was unaccounted for by the specific factor. VARIMAX rotation method was selected to induce a clearer separation of the variables across each one of the factors (Comfrey & Lee, 1992).

The scale used to determine the cut off points for salient factor loadings extended from poor (.3) to excellent (.7) (Comfrey & Lee, 1992). For purposes of this study, the cut off point was set at .4. This cut off point was selected because this was considered a "fair" factor loading (Comfrey & Lee, 1992). A .4 factor loading indicated that 16% of the variance of the factor was accounted for by the variable and 84% of the variance was unaccounted for by the other variables. A factor loading of .5 was considered to be a "good" factor loading. A factor loading of .6 was considered to be a "very good" factor loading. A factor loading of .7 was considered to be an "excellent" factor loading. The higher the factor loading the greater the similarity between the variable and the factor (Comfrey & Lee, 1992).

The regression coefficient method was utilized to compute the factor scores. After the factor scores were computed, they were saved as new

variables on the original data base to be utilized for further statistical analysis. Factor scores were defined as combined scores of the factor loadings at .4 or above variable for every subject. The following formula was utilized to compute the factor scores: $Z_{f1\ N1} = B_a Z_{Va\ N1} + B_b Z_{Vb\ N1} + \ldots B_u Z_{VuN1ss}$

$Z_{f1\ N1}$ = the standard score of factor 1 for subject 1

B_a = standard regression coefficient for variable "a"

$Z_{v\ a\ N\ 1}$ = standard variable "a" score for subject 1

B_b = Standard score of variable "b"

Factor scores represented a composite of all of the variables loading on that factor (Comfrey & Lee, 1992; Gorsuch, 1983; Norusis, 1993). Factor scores range from -1 to +1. The factor scores were computed using "the save as variables" component on the regression coefficient menu item. After computation of the factor scores, a composite score of the factors was computed by finding the mean of the factor scores. The SPSS "compute" function was utilized to compute the composite score of the factor scores. The formula included: Mean ($F_1 F_2 F_3 F_4 F_5 F_6 F_7$). The scale used for ranking

the factor scores and the composite scores were ranked as follows: <.4 = poor, .4 = fair, .5 = good, .6 = very good, and .7+ = excellent. The composite scores were labeled and saved on the original data base to be used for further analysis. Finally, after accounting for 95% of the variances among the variables or when the last factor accounted for less than 5% of the variance, the factoring process was terminated (Comfrey & Lee, 1992). Factor scores and a composite of those scores were also utilized for data analysis of research questions 3 through 8. For more information on factor analysis see Gorsuch (1983), Comfrey and Lee (1992), and Norusis (1993).

Chapter IV: Data Analysis

Results:

Presentation of the results of this study was structured around the outcomes of each of the research questions. A brief discussion of the application of statistical methods to each research question was provided. The results of each question were followed by a summary of the outcomes. Presentation of the overall outcomes of the study was presented at the end of this section.

Research Question 1:

Factor analysis was used in the analysis of the relevant data associated with research question 1: What were the relevant variables associated with commitment? The analytic process included the following steps: 1) selection of the principal component extraction method with an eigenvalue of 1.00; 2) selection of the VARIMAX rotation method; 3) selection of the regression factor score method; 4) and selection of the "weighted z score" factor score computation method. Factor analysis of the variables was

initiated by selecting the data reduction component. The principle component method was selected from the extraction method menu and the eigenvalue was set at 1.00. The save as variables, the regression coefficient method, and the display the factor score coefficient matrix were selected. The VARIMAX rotation method was selected followed by selection of the display rotated factors menu. The list by size element was selected which provided chronological listing of the variable loadings. The variables were moved into the computation area and factor analysis was initiated. After the computation, factor loadings .4 or higher were assigned to the specific factor. When the factor score function was implemented, the factor score regression coefficients for each factor were automatically saved on the original data base. Variables with factor loadings of .4 or above were given labels. The SPSS labels were changed to the new labels by selecting the define variables component and changing the labels.

The first step in factor analysis of research question 1 reduced the 21 variables on the Commitment Inventory Checklist (CIC) to seven significant

factors. The discussion was restricted to factor loadings at .4 or above. The seven CIC factors were saved automatically on the original data base using the SPSS "save as variables" element on the "scores" menu.

CIC_1 had six loadings on or above .4. CIC_1 variable loadings included "proud to be a student here" (.66), "made the right choice" (.76), and "more determined now" (.55). Other variables having significant loadings on CIC_1 included: "hate to leave now that I know the system" (.74), "most students appear to be loyal" (.65), and "remaining because faculty work hard" (.73). Since the variables loadings on CIC_1 were representative of the subjects' attachment to the institution, CIC_1 was labeled "institutional commitment". CIC_2 had three factor loadings: "faculty commitment" (.83), "most students appear determined to get a degree" (.56), and "faculty are encouraging" (.72). Because the variables loading on CIC_2 were associated with faculty and peer commitments, CIC_2 was labeled "role models". CIC_3 had two variable loadings which included: "I like for people to think I'm decisive" (.83) and "I like for people think I'm reasonable" (.88). Because the variables reflected

students' concerns about how others perceived them, CIC_3 was labeled "self-image". CIC_4 had three variable loadings. CIC_4 variable loadings included: "high school friends support" (.75), "college friends support" (.66), and "family support" (.52). CIC_4 was labeled "support". CIC_5 had three significant variable loadings. Variables loading on CIC_5 included "degree will secure future" (.61), "degree will improve chances of getting good job" (.64), and "remaining because more graduates will be needed" (.69). CIC_5 was labeled "future security".

CIC_6 had two significant variable loadings. Variables loading on CIC_6 included "remaining because my family sacrificed" (.71) and "I would hate for people back home to discover I dropped out" (.72). Since the variables reflected adherence to commitment to degree attainment out of a sense of obligation to others, CIC_6 was labeled "obligation". Perhaps the variable "hate for people back home to find out I dropped out" loaded with this variable because "people back home" were aware of the sacrifices made by the families. One variable had a significant loading on CIC_7: "remaining

because earned credit might not transfer" (.88). CIC_7 was labeled "transfer risk". Spady (1970, 1971), Tinto (1975, 1987), and Pascarella & Terenzini (1991) suggested students' concerns about credit transfers often resulted in increased commitment to the institution. The SPSS labels of the seven factors were changed and saved with the following new labels: (CIC_1) institutional commitment, (CIC_2) role models, (CIC_3) self-image, (CIC_4) support, (CIC_5) future security, (CIC_6) obligation, and (CIC_7) transfer risk (See Table 1). Twenty (20) or eight-five percent (85%) of the CIC variables variable loadings were "good" to "excellent" (.5-.7). That is, fifty-five percent (55%) or eleven (11) of the CIC variables had excellent factor loadings (.7). Thirty percent (30%) of the CIC variables had very good factor loadings (.6). Fifteen percent (15%) of the CIC variables had good factor loadings (.5). Because "made investment and want benefits" was had poor to fair factor loadings (<.4) on all seven variables, it was eliminated.

The "weighted z score" method was used to compute the factor scores (Comfrey & Lee, 1992). This was the shorter computerized form of the

formula presented in the statistical methodology section. The factor loadings were multiplied by the corresponding factor score coefficient for each variable. The CIC factors were computed as follows: $Factor_1$ (V_8 .52 * .18 + V_9 .76 * .24 + V_{10} .64 *.27 + V_{11} .66*.25 + V_{20} .75 * .23 + V_{21} .74 * .23) = .91.

$Factor_2$ (V_4 .82 * .31 + V_5 .72 * .40 + V_6 .59 * .47) = .82

$Factor_3$ (V_{18} .89 * .54 + V_{19} .84 * .50) = .91

$Factor_4$ (V_1 .57 * .05 + V_2 .71 * -.33 + V_3 .61 * -.03) = -.23

$Factor_5$ (V_7 .61 * -.14 + V_{15} .67 * .07 + V17. 65 * -.05) = .08

$Factor_6$ (V_{13} .70 * .52 + V_{16} .72 * .49) = .72

$Factor_7$ (V_{14} .88 * .77) = .72

A (CIC_{cs}) composite score of the seven CIC factors was computed. The CIC composite score was computed as follows: Mean(F_{FS1}*F_{FS2}*F_{FS3}*F_{FS4}*F_{FS5}*F_{FS6}*F_{FS7}). Mean(.91*.82*.91*.-23*.08*.72*.68) =.74. The same scale used to rank the CIC factor loadings and factor scores was employed to rank the composite. The CIC_{cs} (.74) was ranked as an

excellent composite score. The CIC factor scores were ranked as follows: CIC_1 (institutional commitment = .91) excellent; CIC_2 (role models = .82) excellent; CIC_3 (self image = .91) excellent; CIC_4 (support = -.23) poor or marginal; CIC_5 (future security = .08) poor or marginal; CIC_6 (obligations = .72) excellent; and CIC_7 (transfer risks = .72) excellent.

Relationships among the CIC factors were generally negative (See Table 2). Institutional commitment (CIC_1) had a negative correlation with role models (CIC_2 = .67) and support (CIC_4.96). Self-image (CIC_3) had strong negative correlations with support (CIC_4. = -.73), role models (CIC_2 = -.73), and transfer risks (CIC_7 = -.21). Role models (CIC_2) had negative correlations with future security (CIC_5 = -.77), and obligations (CIC_6 = -.71). Future security (CIC_5) had a negative correlation with transfer risk (CIC_7 = -.84). Obligations had negative correlations with support (CIC_4 = -.24) and transfer risk (CIC_7 = -.99). It was apparent that the factors most common to commitment were parallel to each other rather than interrelated. More in depth discussion of the outcomes of the analysis research question 1 was

provided in Chapter V. The CIC composite score was given the symbol "CIC_{cs}", labeled "commitment", and saved. The CIC composite score was utilized in the analysis of several research questions.

Table 1

Summary of CIC Factors with Factor Loadings

CIC Variables	Variable Loadings
CIC_1 Institutional Commitment	
Made the right choice	.76
Hate to leave now that I know system	.74
Remaining because faculty work hard	.73
Proud to be a student here	.66
Most students appear loyal	.65
I am more determined now	.55

CIC_2 Role Models	
Faculty Commitment	.83
Faculty Encouraging	.72
Most students appear determined to get a college degree	.56
CIC_3 Self Image	
I like for people to think I'm reasonable	.88
I like for people to think I'm decisive	.83
CIC_4 Support	
High school friends support	.75
College friends support	.66
Family support	.52

CIC_5 Future Security	
Remaining because more graduates will be needed	.69
Degree will improve chances of getting a good job	.64
Degree will secure future	.61
CIC_6 Obligation	
I would hate for people back home to find out that I dropped out	.72
Remaining because my family sacrificed	.71
CIC_7 Transfer Risk	
Remaining because earned credit might not transfer	.88

Table 2

Relationships between CIC Factors

Factors	NegativeCorrelations
Institutional Commitment (CIC_1) and Support (CIC_4)	-.96
Institutional Commitment (CIC_1) and Role Models (CIC_2)	-.67
Self Image (CIC_3) and Support (CIC_4)	-.73
Self Image (CIC_3) and Role Models (CIC_2)	-.73
Self Image (CIC_3) and Transfer Risks (CIC_7)	-.21
Role Models (CIC_2) and Future Security (CIC_5)	-.77
Role Models (CIC_2) and Obligations (CIC_6)	-.71
Future Security (CIC_5) and Transfer Risks (CIC_7)	-.84
Obligations (CIC_6) and Support (CIC_4)	-.24
Obligations (CIC_6) and Transfer Risks (CIC_7)	-.99

Table 3

Factors Most Representative of Commitment

Factors	Factor Scores
CIC_1 Institutional Commitment	.91
CIC_2 Role Models	.82
CIC_3 Self Image	.91
CIC_4 Support	-.23
CIC_5 Future Security	.08
CIC_6 Obligations	.72
CIC_7 Transfer Risks	.72

Research Question 2:

Factor analysis was utilized in the analysis of the data relevant to research question 2: What were the relevant variables associated with

professional socialization? The analytic process was the same as for research question 1. The analysis of research question 2 resulted in eight factors. Eight PSIC factors were saved as variables on the original data base. $PSIC_1$ had twelve significant variable loadings (See Table 4). The variables associated with $PSIC_1$ included: "easy to make contact with faculty" (.72); "faculty encourage" (.70); "feel free to contact the faculty" (.62); "capable of getting degree" (.66); "easy to find what you need" (.66); "know whom to contact" (.66); "I am capable of getting a degree; "course work OK" (.55); "adequate activities for male and female students" (.48); "grades OK" (.45) ;"have time for study and fun" (.43); "socializing with the faculty helped me adjust (.40); and "most policies may sense" (.40). Since the variables loadings on $PSIC_1$ indicated the college environment matched the expectations of the subjects, $PSIC_1$ was labeled "congruence".

$PSIC_2$ had six significant variable loadings. Variables loading on $PSIC_2$ included "living on campus helps make friends" (.75); "adequate number of female faculty" (.62); "increasing comfort (.61); "have friends on

campus to talk to" (.52); "faculty and I have similar ideas" (.51); and "living on campus helps me keep up" (.43). All of the variables with high loadings on $PSIC_2$ addressed the social aspects of college life. $PSIC_2$ was labeled "social integration". $PSIC_3$ had four significant variable loadings. The variables loading on $PSIC_3$ included "more time with college friends than home friends" (.66), "beginning to feel at home" (.61), "can solve problems better now" (.55), and "miss home friends" (-.48). Since the variables appeared to be related to the subjects' degree of separation from the home environment, $PSIC_3$ was labeled "social separation".

$PSIC_4$ had three significant variable loadings. PSIC variables with adequate loadings on $PSIC_4$ included: "adequate number of activities for students of different cultures" (.75), students' ideas similar to mine" (.47), and "adequate number of faculty of different cultures" (.64). Because the variables addressed cultural diversity and the overall student culture, $PSIC_4$ was labeled "culture". $PSIC_5$ had four variable loadings which included: "like being on my own" (.65), "percentage of time spent involved in social

activities" (-.46), "enjoy developing campus relationships" (.40), and "extracurricular activities important to me" (.40). Since this variable addressed autonomy, $PSIC_5$ was labeled "independence". The subjects had decided to limit social activities but recognized the importance of them. Also, the subjects had begun to develop new relationships on the campus. $PSIC_6$ had three significant variable loadings. Variables with loadings on $PSIC_6$ included: "faculty expect more than high school instructors" (.78), "college courses require more than high school" (.56), and "value a college degree" (.46). Because the variables addressed the differences between college and high school requirements, $PSIC_6$ was labeled "academic separation". $PSIC_7$ had two significant variable loadings which included: "not sure college is worth all the hard work" (.74) and "need to learn to become a college student as well as a professional in my field" (.46). Because the variables could be associated with students' values, $PSIC_7$ was labeled "changing values". The variable with significant loadings on $PSIC_8$ was "percentage of time spent in academic involvement" (.77). Since the variable loading on $PSIC_8$ addressed

the subjects' involvement. $PSIC_8$ was labeled "academic integration". Since the PSIC variable "faculty expectations getting closer to mine" had poor variable loadings (-.19-.35) on six factors, it was eliminated. Twenty percent (20%) of the PSIC variables had excellent variable loadings (.7+). Twenty-nine percent (29%) of the PSIC variables had very good variable loadings (.60-.69). Fourteen percent (14%) of the PSIC variables had good variable loadings (.50-.59). (good). Thirty-six percent (36%) of the PSIC variables had fair variable loadings (.40-.49).

The SPSS labels of the eight PSIC factors were labelled and saved (see Tables 4 & 5). The factor scores were computed using the weighted z score method. The variables with factor loading scores ranging from fair to excellent (.4-.7) were multiplied by the corresponding factor score coefficient. The formula utilized was as follows: Factor Scores($V_{N1}(F_L{*}F_{SC}) + V_{n2}(F_L{*}F_{SC})$ +....V_{n11}), (where V = variables with .4 factor loading, FL = factor loading, Fsc = Factor score coefficient). The PSIC factor scores were computed as follows:

$Factor_1[V_{21}(.72*.20) + V_{25}(.70*.19) + V_{16}(.66*.18) + V_6(.65*.18) + V_{28}(.63*.17)$

$+ \quad V_{15}(.61*.)17 + V_{24}(.53*.10) + V_{22}(.52*.16) + V_{30}(.48*.0)7 + V_4(.45*.09)$

$+ V_{23}(.41*.07) + V_{13}(.41*.07)] = .99.$

$Factor_2[V_{32}(.75*.31) + V_{33}(.66*.27) + V_{20}(.62*.21) + V_{34}(.52*.13) + V_{18}(.44*.14)$

$+ \quad V_{31}(.43*.16)] = .76$

$Factor_3[V_{11}(.67*.36) + V_{14}(.61*.27) + V_5(.55*.28) + V_{17}(-.48*-.28)] = .67$

$Factor_4[V_{26}(.76*.40) + V_{19}(.65*.36) + V_{29}(.47*.26)] = .65$

$Factor_5[V_3(.65*.37) + V_{35}(-.46*-.25) + V_{12}(.39*.20) + V_2(.39*.21)] = .52$

$Factor_6[V_{10}(.78*.49) + V_9(55*.33) + V_1(.46*.29)] = .70$

$Factor_7[V_{27}(.74*.52) + V_7(.46*.30)] = .52$

$Factor_8[V_{36}(.77*.56)] = .43$

The PSIC factors were interrelated. Most of the correlations among the factors were positive (See Table 6). To promote conciseness, only the negative correlations were presented. Congruence had negative correlations with social integration (-.52), social separation (-,64), culture (-.56), independence (-.44), changing values (-.45), and academic separation

(-.41). Congruence had no correlation at the .05 level with academic integration. Academic integration had negative correlations with social integration (-.81), social separation (-.38), culture (-.82), independence (-.58), social separation (-.56), and academic integration (-.46). The remaining factors had positive correlations extending from .14 to .98.

Table 4

Summary of PSIC Factors with Factor Loadings

PSIC Factors	Factor Scores
$PSIC_1$ Congruence	
Easy to make contact with faculty	.72
Faculty very encouraging	.70
Feel free to contact faculty	.62
Capable of getting a college degree	.66
Easy to find what you need	.66

Know whom to contact	.66
Course work OK	.55
Adequate activities for males and females	.48
Grades OK	.45
Have time for fun after studying	.43
Socializing with faculty helped me adjust	.40
Most student policies make sense	.40

$PSIC_2$ Social Integration

Living on campus helps make friends	.75
Adequate number of female faculty	.62
Increasing comfort on campus	.61
Have friends on campus to talk to	.52
Faculty and I have similar ideas	.51
Living on campus helps me keep up with what's going on	.43

$PSIC_3$ Social Separation	
More time spent with college friends than home friends	.66
Can solve problems better now	.55
Miss friends back home	-.48

$PSIC_4$ Culture	
Adequate activities for students of different cultures	.75
Adequate number of faculty of different cultures	.64
Students' ideas similar to mine	.47

$PSIC_5$ Independence	
Like being on my own	.65
Percentage of time spent involved in social activities	-.46
Enjoy developing campus relationships	.40
Extracurricular activities important to me	.40

$PSIC_6$ Academic Separation	
Faculty expect more than high school instructors	.78
College courses require more than high school	.56
I value getting a college degree	.46

$PSIC_7$ Changing Values	
Not sure college worth all the hard work	.74
Need to learn to become college student as well as a professional	.46

$PSIC_8$ Academic Integration	
Percentage of time spent in academic involvement	.77

The following formula was used to calculate the composite score for the PSIC factors: Mean(F_{nFS}*F_{nFS}*F_{nFS}*F_{nFS}.....*F_{8FS}), (where: F_n = specific factor, $_{FS}$ = factor score of the factor). The PSIC composite score ($PSIC_{cs}$)

computed as follows: Mean(.99+.76+.69+.65+.52+.70+.52+.43) = .66. The PSIC factor included: $PSIC_1$ (congruence = .99; $PSIC_2$ (social integration = .76); $PSIC_3$ (social separation = .69); $PSIC_4$ (culture = .65); $PSIC_5$ (independence = .52); $PSIC_6$ (academic separation = .70); $PSIC_7$ (changing values = .52); and $PSIC_8$ (academic integration = .43) (See Table 5).

Table 5

Factors Significant to Professional Socialization

Factors	Factor Scores
$PSIC_1$ Congruence	.99
$PSIC_2$ Social Integration	.76
$PSIC_F$ Social Separation	.67
$PSIC_4$ Culture	.65
$PSIC_5$ Independence	.52
$PSIC_6$ Academic Separation	.70

$PSIC_7$ Changing Values	.52
$PSIC_8$ Academic Integration	.43

Table 6

Relationships Existing Among PSIC Factors

Factors	Negative Correlations
$PSIC_{F1}$ Congruence	
$PSIC_2$ Social Integration	-.52
$PSIC_3$ Social Separation	-.64
$PSIC_4$ Culture	-.56
$PSIC_5$ Independence	-.44
$PSIC_7$ Changing Values	-.45
$PSIC_8$ Academic Separation	-.41

$PSIC_{F8}$ Academic Integration	
$PSIC_2$ Social Integration	-.81
$PSIC_3$ Social Separation	-.38
$PSIC_5$ Independence	-.58
$PSIC_8$ Academic Integration	-.56

According to the scale, the $PSIC_{cs}$ was considered a very good composite score. The composite score was labeled "professional socialization", given the symbol "$PSIC_{cs}$", and saved on the original data base.

Table 6

Research Question 3

Factor analysis was utilized to analyze data pertinent to research question 3: What were the variables relevant to the intent to persist? Factor analysis reduced the number of IPS (Intent to Persist Scale) variables from six variables to two factors. Variables with significant loadings on IPS_1

included: "money not the reasons for dropping out" (.58), "marriage not the reason for dropping out" (.83), "employment not the reason for dropping out" (.85), and transferring to another institution not the reason for dropping out" (.76). According to the literature review, employment, marriage, transfer, and lack of funds were common deterrents to college students' persistence. IPS_1 was labeled "deterrents". Variables with significant loadings on $Factor_2$ included "possibility of returning" (.91) and "intent to persist scale" (.91). Since IPS_2 involved students intent to persist, IPS_2 was labeled "intent." The IPS factors scores were computed using the processes applied in research questions 1 and 2. See Tables 7 and 8 for summaries of the analysis of research question 3. The IPS scores were computed as follows: (factor loadings preceded the factor score coefficients) {IPS_1 (.58*.26 + .83*.37 + .76*.32 + .85*.37) = .1.00; IPS_2 (.91*.53 + .91*.54) = .98}. The composite score for IPS_1 and IPS_2 was computed as follows: M(1.00,.98) = .98. The IPS composite score was represented by the symbol IPS_{cs} and labeled "persistence."

Table 7

Variables with Factor Loadings on IPS_1 Deterrents and IPS_2 Intent

Variables	Factor Loadings
IPS_{F1} Deterrents	
Money not the reason for dropping out	.58
Marriage not the reason for dropping out	.83
Employment not the reason for dropping out	.85
Transferring not reason for dropping out	.76
Variable Loadings on IPS_{F2} Intent	
Planning to return this fall	.91
IPS (Scale)	.91

Table 8

IPS Factors with Factor Scores

Factors	Factor Loadings
IPS_{F1} Deterrents	1.00
IPS_{F2} Intent	.98

Demographics Overview

The intent of research questions 4, 5, and 6 was to determine the relationships between the demographic data, commitment, professional socialization, and the intent to persist. An overview of the computation of the demographic characteristics was presented before the results of the analysis of research questions 4, 5, and 6. The average GPA was 2.75-3.00, while the national average was 2.00-2.50. The average ACT score was 22-25, while the national average was 18-22. The average socioeconomic level

(SES) was $30,000-41,000, while the national average was $15,000-25,000. Parents' level of education aligned with the SES level. As the SES (socioeconomic status) increased as the father's level of education increased. Socioeconomic levels of the mothers decreased between undergraduate and masters. The fathers tended to have a higher level of education than the mothers. Fifty-three percent (53%) of the fathers held an undergraduate degrees or above. Thirty-one percent (31.6%) of the mothers held an undergraduate degree or above. The majority (82%) of the students were Baptist or southern Baptist. Slightly more than half (57%) of the students were Oklahoma residents. The cultural distributions were: Asian heritage (1%), Hispanic heritage (3%), other heritages (3.2%), African heritage (3.7%), and Caucasian heritage (71.5%). The gender ratio was three to one with females students at 71.5 percent and male students at 24.7 percent. Except for humanities, subjects were equally distributed across disciplines. The percentage of students majoring in physical sciences was 24 percent. The percentage of students majoring in the social sciences was 21 percent. The

percentage of students majoring in education was eighteen percent. The percentage of students majoring in fine arts was sixteen percent. The percentage of studsents majoring in humanities was six percent.

Some differences existed within the demographic data. GPAs among Hispanic students fluctuated more across the categories than the other categories. A decline in GPAs existed between the socioeconomic level $41-$60,000 and the $100,000+ level. That is, sixteen percent of the subjects in the $41-$60,000 SES category had GPAs in the A and B category and 10% of the subjects in the $100,000+ category had GPAs in the A and B. category. Social science majors and physical science majors had higher ACT scores than subjects majoring in the other disciplines. Social science majors (5.3%) had ACT scores in the 28+ category and 6% of physical science major had ACT scores in the 28+ category. Since the academic requirements tended to be higher for students majoring in the physical sciences, it was generally considered common for students majoring in the physical sciences to have GPAs higher than in the other disciplines. Social

science majors may have higher GPAs because the discipline of sociology and psychology generally required completion of masters degrees for first-level employment in those fields.

GPAs declined as the mothers' education increased. This was especially noted from the undergraduate level to the masters+ level. Genders were evenly distributed across all college majors except more females majored in education. The female to male ratio in the field of education was sixteen to one. The female to male ratio for the university was three to one. Finally, the subject population was somewhat homogeneous. Most of the subjects had above average grade point averages, had similar heritages, came from families with similar income brackets, were Baptist or southern Baptist (82%), and were Oklahoma (66%) residents.

Research Question 4

ANOVA was used to analyze the data relevant to research question 4: How were the demographic variables related to commitment? ANOVA was selected because it permitted examination of several categories as well as

the relationships between the categories (Borg & Gall, 1993; Hair et al., 1987). Only the relationships significant at the .05 level were considered. The seven CIC factors and the commitment composite score (CIC_{cs}) generated during the analysis of research question 1 were included in the data analysis of research question 4. The demographic variables used in the analysis included ACT scores; GPAs; gender; socioeconomic levels; mothers' education; college majors; and fathers' education.

When the demographic data variables were compared to the CIC_{cs}, none of the demographic variables held significant relationships with the CIC_{cs}. Because this was the first testing of the instruments, analysis was then conducted between the seven CIC factors and the demographic variables. No correlations existed between the CIC factors and the demographic variables. In the literature review, the demographic variables were presented as correlates to commitment. Future researchers might consider creating scales for the demographic data such as GPAs, ACT scores, parents' education, and socioeconomic levels.

Research Question 5

ANOVA was also employed to analyze data relevant to research question 5: How were the demographic variables related to professional socialization? The eight PSIC factors and the composite score ($PSIC_{cs}$) generated during the analysis of research question 2 were utilized in the analysis of research question 5. The analysis revealed no significant relationships between the $PSIC_{cs}$, PSIC factors, and the demographic variables. The recommendations introduced with the analysis of research 4 were applied to the analysis of research question 5.

Research Question 6

ANOVA was employed to conduct the analysis of research question 6: How were the demographic variables related to the intent to persist? The IPS_{cs} (persistence) and the two IPS factors generated during the analysis of research question 3 were used in the analysis of research question 6. The outcomes of the analysis of research question 6 revealed no significant relationships between the IPS_{cs} and the demographic variables. According

to the literature review, a direct relationship existed between demographic variables and the intent to persist. The homogeneity among the subjects could have contributed to the lack of correlation between the demographic data and the intent to persist.

Research Question 7:

Pearson's *r* was used to analyze the data relevant to research question 7: How were commitment and professional socialization related? Pearson's *r*, with a range of -1 to +1, was considered appropriate for the analysis of research question 7. Utilization of Pearson's *r* resulted in computation of the strengths of the relationships as well as the direction of the relationships between the two concepts (Borg & Gall, 1989; Hair et al., 1987; Kachigan, 1982; Van de Geer, 1971). The greater the strength of the relationships between the two concepts, the easier it would be to delineate the differences within the groups studied (Borg & Gall, 1989). The scale utilized for the determining if the correlations were pertinent extended from weak to strong (.1 to .3 = weak, .31 to .5 = moderate, >.5 = strong) (Borg &

Gall, 1989; Kvis & Knofl, 1980). The seven CIC factors and the (CIC_{cs}) generated during the analysis of research question 1 were utilized in the analysis of research question 6. The eight PSIC factors and the ($PSIC_{cs}$) generated during the analysis of research question 2 were utilized in the analysis of research question 7. Because this was the first testing of the Commitment Inventory Checklist (CIC) and the Professional Socialization Inventory Checklist (PSIC), a thorough analysis of the data was conducted. The analytic process included the following steps: 1) correlation of the CIC_{cs} and the $PSIC_{cs}$; 2) correlation of the CIC_{cs} and the eight PSIC factors; 3) correlation of the $PSIC_{cs}$ and the seven CIC factors; 4) correlation of the seven CIC factors and the eight PSIC factors.

The goal of the data analysis was to identify links between the commitment and professional socialization as well as elements separating the two concepts. The discussion was limited to the relationships significant at the .05 level. First, the analysis of the CIC_{cs} (.75) and the $PSIC_{cs}$ (.66) revealed that a strong negative (-.57) correlation. A strong positive

correlation was expected between the two variables. Second, correlation of the CIC_{cs} and the PSIC factors revealed all eight PSIC variables were significant at the .05 level. Both positive and negative correlations existed between the CIC_{cs} and the PSIC factors. Several of the PSIC factors had high correlations with the CIC_{cs} (See Table 9). $PSIC_2$ (social integration) had a .50 correlation with the CIC_{cs}. $PSIC_3$ (social separation) had a .94 correlation with the CC_{cs}. $PSIC_4$(culture) had a. 46 correlation with the CIC_{cs}. $PSIC_5$ (independence) had a .76 correlation with the CIC_{cs}. Finally, $PSIC_6$ (academic separation) had a .71 correlation with the CIC_{cs}. Hence, social integration, social separation, culture, independence, and academic separation were related to commitment.

Third, correlation of the $PSIC_{cs}$ and the CIC factors revealed both positive and negative correlations (See Table 10). Two of the CIC factors had strong positive correlations with the $PSIC_{cs}$ (composite score). CIC_2 (role models) had a .78 correlation with the $PSIC_{cs}$. CIC_7 (transfer risk) had a .92 correlation with the $PSIC_{cs}$. Three of the CIC factors had negative

correlations with the $PSIC_{cs}$ (See Table 9). CIC_1 (institutional commitment) had a -.38 with the $PSIC_{cs}$. CIC_3 (self-image) had a -.26 correlation with the $PSIC_{cs}$. CIC_6 (obligation) had a -.92 correlation with the $PSIC_{cs}$. CIC_5 (future) had a -.96 correlation with the $PSIC_{cs}$. Finally, CIC_7 (transfer risk) had a .98 correlation with the $PSIC_{cs}$. Hence, role models and transfer risks were

Table 9

CIC_{cs} Comparison to PSIC Factors

Factor	Correlation
$PSIC_2$ Social Integration	.50
$PSIC_3$ Social Separation	.94
$PSIC_4$ Culture	.46
$PSIC_5$ Independence	.76
$PSIC_6$ Academic Separation	.71

common to commitment and professional socialization. Conversely, institutional commitment, self-image, obligation, future security, and transfer risk were not relevant to professional socialization.

Table 10

Correlation of $PSIC_{22}$ and CIC Factors

CIC Factors	Correlations
CIC_1 Institutional Commitment	-.38
CIC_2 Role Models	.78
CIC_3 Self Image	-.26
CIC_5Future Security	-.96
CIC_6 Obligations	-.92
CIC_7 Transfer Risks	.98

Research Question 8:

Pearson's *r* was utilized to analyze data relevant to research question 8: How was commitment related to the intent to persist? The seven CIC factors and the CIC_{cs} generated during the analysis of research question 1 were utilized during the analysis of research question 8. Also, the IPS_{cs} and the IPS factors generated during the analysis of research question 3 were used in the analysis the data pertinent to research question 8. Utilization of Pearson's *r* assisted in determining the strengths and directions (+1 to -1) of the relationships between commitment and the intent to persist. Since this was the first testing of the instruments, extensive analyses were conducted. The analytic process included: 1) correlation of the CIC_{cs} with the IPS_{cs}; 2) correlation of the seven CIC factors and the IPS_{cs}; 3) correlation of the two IPS factors with the seven CIC factors. First, correlation of the CIC_{cs} and the IPS_{cs} revealed a correlation of -.57. A high positive correlation between the two concepts was expected. Second, correlation of the IPS_{cs} and the seven CIC factors revealed the following correlations: CIC_1 (institutional

commitment) -.75; CIC_2 (role models) -.79; CIC_3 (self-image) -.80; CIC_6 (obligation) -.48; CIC_4 (support = .69); and CIC_7 (transfer risk =.41).

Table 11

Correlation of the IPS_{cs} and the CIC Factors

Factors	Correlations
CIC_1 Institutional Commitment	-.75
CIC_2 Role Models	-.79
CIC_3 Self Image	-.80
CIC_4 Support	.69
CIC_6 Obligations	-.48
CIC_7 Transfer Risks	.41

correlation (.41). Third, correlation of the CIC_{cs} and the IPS factors revealed the following a strong positive correlation (.51) existed between the CIC_{cs} and

IPS_1 (obstacles). Fourth, four positive and three negative correlations existed between the IPS_1 (obstacles) and the seven (7) CIC factors. The correlations between the IPS_1 (obstacles) and the CIC_{cs} were as follows: CIC_1 = .45; CIC_2 = -.76; CIC_3 = -.26; CIC_4 = -.20, CIC_5 = .91; CIC_6 = .98; and CIC_7 = .98. Four negative and two positive correlations existed between the IPS_2 (intent) and the seven CIC factors. Correlations of the IPS_2 and the CIC factors were as follows (See Table 12): CIC_1 (institutional commitment = .25); CIC_3 (self-image = -.49); CIC_4 (support = .45); CIC_5 (future security = .46); CIC_6 (obligation = .54); CIC_7 (transfer risk = -.56). Table 12

Correlation of the CIC_{cs} and the IPS Factors

Factors	Correlations
IPS_1 Deterrents	.51
IPS_2 Intent	.31

In conclusion, institutional commitment, role models, self-image, and obligation were not or did not appear to link commitment and the students' intent to persist. Conversely, support and transfer risks appeared to link commitment and the intent to persist. Hence, elements related to social interaction as well as inner feelings tended to establish relationships between commitment and the intent to persist.

Research Question 9:

Pearson's *r* was utilized to analyze the data relevant to research question 9: How was professional socialization related to the intent to persist related? The eight PSIC factors and the $PSIC_{cs}$ (composite score) generated during the analysis of research question 2 were utilized in the analysis of research question 9. The IPS_{cs} and the IPS factors generated during the analysis of research question 3 were utilized in the analysis of research question 9. The analytic process included: 1) correlation of the $PSIC_{cs}$ and the IPS_{cs}, 2) correlation of the $PSIC_{cs}$ and the IPS factors, and 3) correlation of the IPS_{cs} and the PSIC factors. First, outcomes of the

correlation of the $PSIC_{cs}$ (composite score) with the IPS_{cs} revealed a correlation of -.20 at the .05 level. A high positive correlation between

Table 13

Correlation of the IPS_{cs} and the PSIC Factors

Factors	Correlations
$PSIC_1$ Congruence	-.45
$PSIC_2$ Social Integration	-.55
$PSIC_4$ Culture	-.48
$PSIC_5$ Independence	-.48
$PSIC_6$ Academic Separation	-.48
$PSIC_8$ Academic Integration	-.83

professional socialization and the intent to persist was expected. Second, correlations between the IPS_{cs} and the PSIC factors were as follows (See

Table 13): $PSIC_1$ (congruence = -.45); $PSIC_2$ (social integration = -.55); $PSIC_3$ (social separation = .00); $PSIC_4$ (culture = -.48); $PSIC_5$ (independence = -.48; $PSIC_6$ (academic separation = -.48); $PSIC_7$ (changing values = .36); and $PSIC_8$ (academic integration = -.83). Third, correlation of the $PSIC_{cs}$ and the IPS_1 (obstacles) revealed a strong negative correlation (-.54). Also, correlation of $PSIC_{cs}$ and the IPS_2 (intent) revealed a very strong negative correlation (-.99).

Table 14

Correlation of the $PSIC_{cs}$ and the IPS Factors

Factors	Correlations
IPS_1 Deterrents	-.54
IPS_2 Intent	-.99

Research Question 10:

Partial correlation coefficient was used in the analysis of the data relevant to research question 10: How were commitment, professional socialization, and the intent to persist related? The seven CIC factors, the CIC_{cs}, the eight PSIC factors, the $PSIC_{cs}$ and the IPS_{cs} were utilized in the analysis of research question 10. The analytic process included five steps. First, while controlling the $PSIC_{cs}$, the CIC_{cs} and the IPS_{cs} were correlated. The outcome revealed no correlation between the IPS_{cs} and the CIC_{cs}. Second, while controlling the CIC_{cs}, $PSIC_{cs}$ and the IPS_{cs} were correlated. The outcomes revealed no correlation between the IPS_{cs} and the $PSIC_{cs}$. Third, while controlling the eight PSIC factors, the seven CIC factors and the IPS_{cs} were correlated. The analysis revealed no correlations between the IPS_{cs} and the CIC factors. Fourth, while controlling the CIC_{cs}, the IPS_{cs} and the PSIC factors were correlated. No correlations existed between the PSIC factors and the IPS_{cs}. Finally, while controlling the IPS_{cs}, the CIC_{cs} and the $PSIC_{cs}$ were correlated. No correlation existed between the CIC_{cs} and the

$PSIC_{cs}$. This was contrary to the correlation when the two instruments were correlated using Pearson's *r*. Apparently, elements linking commitment, professional socialization, the intent to persist were eliminated when the partial correlation coefficient was utilized. That is, when overlapping elements were controlled during analysis, no correlations existed between the three concepts.

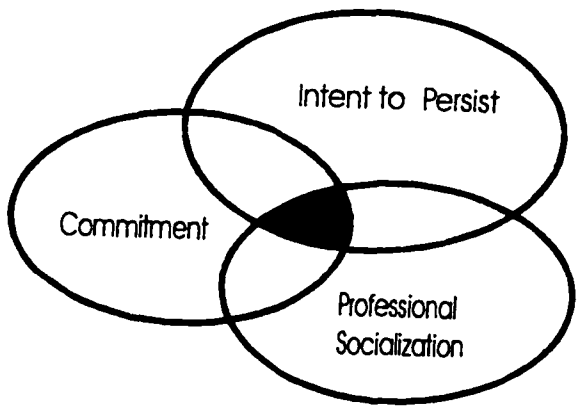

Figure 1.9: Correlation of Commitment, Professional Socialization, and the Intent to Persist.

Chapter V: Discussion, Conclusions, Limitations, and Implications

Discussion

The outcomes of the study were primarily related to the nature of first-year college students and their experiences within the college community as well as the nature of commitment, the nature of professional socialization, and the nature of the intent to persist. However, the role assignments of second semester, first-year college students and their developmental levels had the greatest influence on the outcomes of the study. Utilization of instruments constructed from well-designed conceptual frameworks also contributed to the outcomes of the study. Because the Commitment Inventory Checklist (CIC), the Professional Socialization Inventory Checklist (PSIC), and the Intent to Persist Scale (IPS) had not been tested before, it was anticipated that new information would evolve. The demographics of the subjects did not appear to influence the outcomes of the study.

Where applicable, discussion of the outcomes of the study included comparisons of the relationships among the nature of the three variables, the

nature of the college student, the nature of the college environment, and the references utilized to build the conceptual frameworks. Discussion also included comparison of the relationships among the outcomes of the study; the setting; the subjects; the purposes of the study; the hypothesis; and the literature review. Also, application of the principles of the statistical methodologies such as factor analysis, ANOVA, Pearson's *r*, and partial correlation was included in the discussion of the outcomes of the study. The outcomes of each research questions were discussed separately.

Research Question 1

Factor analysis was utilized to conduct the analysis of research question 1: What were the variables relevant to commitment?. Pearson's *r* was utilized to compare the interrelationships among the variables relevant to commitment. The outcomes of the analysis of research question 1 were closely related to the literature review. For example, the analysis of research question 1 revealed that institutional commitment (CIC_1); role models (CIC_2); self image (CIC_3); support (CIC_4); future security (CIC_5); obligations (CIC_6);

and transfer risks (CIC_7) were the variables most relevant to commitment to degree attainment. According to the literature review, all of the variables or factors were relevant to commitment to degree attainment (Begley & Czajka, 1993; Dunham, Grube, & Castaneda, 1994; Farkas & Tetrick, 1989). Because the commitment composite factor score (CIC_{cs}) was at an excellence level (.74), the variables or factors were considered closely related to commitment (Gorsuch, 1983).

Synthesis of research question 1 revealed the outcomes could be expressed more accurately if content of the literature review; the nature of commitment; the nature of first-year college students; the nature of the college environment; and the references utilized to construct the commitment conceptual framework were integrated into the discussion. Where applicable, principles of factor analysis, principles of Pearson's *r*, and the purposes of the study were also integrated into the discussion. Finally, discussion of the outcomes of research question 1 presented comparisons of the relationships among the individual commitment factors.

According to the principles of factor analysis, the first factor was most relevant to the specific concept (Comfrey & Lee, 1992). The outcomes revealed that institutional commitment (CIC_1) was the variable most relevant to commitment. CIC_1 had an excellent factor score (.91) with six factor loadings ranging from good to excellent (.52-.76). This outcome correlated with the literature review. According to Bean (1985), Pascarella and Terenzini (1991), and Tinto (l975, l987), institutional commitment was most relevant to initiating, establishing, and maintaining levels of commitment to degree attainment. When the nature of first year college students was considered, all of the students were new and were seeking validation of the value of attaining a college degree. Also, during the first year of college, members of the college community focused heavily on selling the value of a college degree. Early interactions with faculty, staff, and peers focused heavily on helping the students learn the institutional goals and align their personal goals with those of the institution. The greatest merger of personal goals with institutional goals probably occurred during the first year of college.

Role models (CIC_2) was the second factor associated with commitment to degree attainment. Role models (CIC_2) had an excellent factor score (.82) with the three factor loadings extending from good to excellent (.59-.82). The results revealed that students were more likely to remain committed to degree attainment if faculty, staff, and peers demonstrated loyalty to the institution and were interested in the academic success of the students (Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994; Grosset, 1991; Hollenbeck, Klein, O'Leary, & Wright, 1989; Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Third, self-image (CIC_3) had an excellent factor score (.91) with two factor loadings. Students sometimes maintain commitments to degree attainment out of fear that others would perceive them as unstable and unreasonable if they were to dropout of college (Becker, 1960; Bycio & Hausdorf, 1994). That is, since most traditional, first-year college students were in the developmental phases of late adolescence or early adulthood, it appeared logical that they would be very concerned about how others perceived them.

Fourth, support (CIC_4) had a poor or marginal negative factor score (-.23) with 3 factor loadings. Because commitment evolved from inner drives, support was not viewed as being highly significant to commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Tubbs, 1993). However, when the principles of factor analysis were applied, a number four ranking indicated some degree of support was relevant to commitment. The significance of support would be marginal because first-year students and the others involved were still learning what their needs were and what resources were available. Consequently, the students would probably have limited abilities to determine the volume and the nature of support needed. A weak or marginal factor score would appear to be appropriate for second semester, first-year students.

Fifth, future security (CIC_5) was ranked after support with a very weak or marginal factor score (.08) and 3 factor loadings. Most students made commitments to degree attainment for self-fulfillment, to serve others as well as for their future security (Hollenbeck, Williams, & Klein, 1989; Meyer

& Allen, 1997; Shore & Wayne, 1993). Most did not pursue a college degree for the sole purpose of gaining future security. Role models in the college community would encourage students to pursue a college education for personal growth and development or self-fulfillment rather than solely for financial gain. However, according to the basic principles of factor analysis, a fifth positioned variable loading indicated, future security could contribute significantly to levels of commitment (Gorsuch, 1983).

Sixth, sense of obligation to parents (CIC_6) followed future security with a excellent factor score (.72) with two factor loadings. Students often pursued a college degrees out a sense of obligation to their parents (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Shore & Wayne, 1993). First-year students continued to have strong links to their parents and were dependent on them for financial support, emotional support, and others. Hence, it seemed reasonable that students persisted toward degree attainment out of obligation to their parents. Further research might reveal when, why, how, and under what conditions students maintained their commitments to degree attainment for this reason.

Transfer risk (CIC_7) had an excellent factor score (.72) with one factor loading. According to the literature review, many students were concerned about losing earned credit if they transferred to another institution (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Spady, 1970; Tinto, 1975,1987). Most first year credits were generally basic courses and would probably transfer to another institution. Since first-year students were probably not familiar with common practices in higher education, it seemed reasonable that first year students would be concerned about losing earned credits. First-year students made tremendous changes in their life styles and had invested time and energy to acquire the credits. Therefore, controlling any threat to loss of the credit seemed reasonable. Loss of scholarships or financial aid may also be contributed to the concerns about transfer risks.

Because this was the first testing of the Commitment Inventory Checklist (CIC), the interrelationships among the CIC factors were computed. The factors or variables relevant to commitment to degree attainment appeared to be somewhat parallel to each other. That is, only five positive

correlations existed among the factors. While all of the factors were related to inner drives or needs, the majority of the correlations were negative. Therefore, no conclusions were drawn regarding the influence of the factors on each other. No evidence was discovered during the literature review to indicate the significance of the relationships between the CIC factors and commitment levels. Theoretically and statistically, the outcomes revealed the factors most relevant to commitment to degree attainment addressed different aspects of commitment.

The references utilized to construct the commitment conceptual framework evolved mainly from disciplines such as psychology and business administration. A great deal of the information used to construct the commitment conceptual framework evolved from research studies examining elements associated with employees' commitments to continued employment. Synthesis of the literature revealed several general differences existed between employees' commitments to employers and students' commitments to educational institutions. First, employees' relationships with agencies or

organizations were considered permanent or stable. Whereas students' relationships with colleges and universities were considered more temporal or transitional. The exchanges between employees and employers were more tangible and applicable than the exchanges between students and educational institutions. Employees received salaries that could be used to purchase tangible items such as cars, homes, or clothing. College students received mid-term or final grade reports which indicated they were progressing toward degree attainment. Most employees were in different age groups than college students. Employees were committed to organizations because of their reliance on the organizations for employment benefits, salaries, career advancement, and others. But students were dependent on institutions for degree attainment and not their current personal needs.

In spite of these differences, students' commitments to continued enrollment were similar to employees' commitments to continued employment. Apparently, the merger between the goals; effective role models; concerns about self-image; support; future security; sense of

obligation; and transfer risks were as significant to employees and agencies as the relationships were to students and educational institutions. In summary, the CIC could be viewed as a viable instrument to measure first year students' levels of commitment to degree attainment. Except for "invested and want benefits" all of the CIC items ranked fair and above (.4+).

Research Question 2

Factor analysis and Pearson's *r* were utilized to analyze the data relevant to research question 2: What were the relevant variables related to professional socialization? The outcomes of the analysis of research question 2 disclosed that variables relevant to professional socialization were: congruence; social integration; social separation; culture; independence; academic separation; changing values; and academic integration.

The outcomes revealed congruence ($PSIC_1$) was the variable or factor most significantly related to professional socialization. Congruence had a very strong factor score (.99) with twelve factor loadings ranging from fair to excellent (.41-.72). According to the basic principles of factor analysis, the

first factor was most representative of professional socialization (Comfrey & Lee, 1992; Gorsuch, 1983). According to the literature review, congruence was paramount to professional socialization of first-year college students (Astin, 1993; Bean, 1985; Pascarella & Chapman, 1983; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Morrison, 1993; Spady, 1970; Stage, 1989; Thornton & Nardi, 1972; Tinto, 1975; Weidman, 1979). Apparently, students acclimated to the college environment more efficiently if similarities existed between the environment and the students. For example, Sedlacek (1987) indicated attrition rate of African-American students was much lower at predominately African-American colleges than at predominately Caucasian-American colleges. Social integration ($PSIC_2$) followed congruence. Social integration had a very strong factor score (.76) with six factor loadings ranging from fair to excellent (.43-.76). Students tended to adapt more easily if they participated in social activities offered on college campuses. Participation in campus activities was perceived as one of the mechanisms for learning the mores, norms, and values associated with becoming members of the college

community (Astin, 1993; Bauer & Green, 1993; Brower, 1992; Christie & Dunham, 1991; Grosset, 1991; Krotseng, 1992; Mallet & Cabrera, 1991). According to the literature, the amount of participation in social activities was directly related to students adaptation to college life which resulted in increased levels of professional socialization.

Social separation ($PSIC_3$) followed social integration with a very strong factor score (.67) and four factor loadings ranging from negative fair to positive very good (-.48-.67). Separation from the previous environment was relevant to levels of social integration. Professional socialization required students to separate from the previous social environment and become members of the college environment (Pascarella, 1980; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1977, 1979, 1991; Spady, 1970; Stage, 1989; Terenzini et al., 1994; Wentzel, 1991). The high magnitude and complexities of skills and knowledge associated with professional socialization on college campuses coupled with the restricted time frame required students to focus primarily on becoming a member of the college community. Spady (1970) and Tinto

(1975) indicated that if students were to persist toward a college degree, allegiance to the college environment must take priority over other social activities. Failure to separate from previous environments could significantly impair social integration.

Cultural representation ($PSIC_4$) followed social separation with a very strong factor score (.65) and three factor loadings ranging from fair to negative excellent (.47 to -.75). According to the literature review, cultural representation was relevant to professional socialization. If the culture among members of the college community was similar to the students, becoming members of the college community would occur more rapidly and required fewer adjustments (Astin, 1993; Ayres, 1983; Bean, 1985, 1986; Bluming, 1989; Brown, Alpert, Lent, & Brady, 1988; Cabrera, Nora, & Casteneda, 1993; Hardy & Conway, 1988; Pascarella, 1980; Sedlacek, 1987; Tracey & Sedlacek, 1987). Independence ($PSIC_5$) followed cultural representation with a strong factor score (.52) and four factor loadings ranging from fair to very good (.40-.65). Becoming members of the college

community required a high level of independence during the first year of college. The greatest increase in independence probably occurred during the first year of college. Levels of independence were directly related to the abilities to separate from the previous environment and integrate into the new environment. Also, the college environment required rapid adaptation to multiple, concurrent, and complex changes in the students' lifestyles. Hence, a sufficient degree of independence was necessary for adequate levels of professional socialization.

Academic separation ($PSIC_6$) ranked sixth among the professional socialization factors or variables with a very strong factor score (.70) and three factor loadings ranging from fair to excellent (.47-.78). Students needed to differentiate between previous academic skills and those required by college courses (Astin, 1993; Bluming, 1989; Cabrera, Nora & Casteneda, 1993; Hart & Keller, 1981; Hatcher et al., 1991; Johnson, 1987). Separation of academic requirements associated with secondary schools and those associated with successful completion of college courses was paramount to

of professional socialization. Requirements aligned with college courses required more hours of study, a higher volume of reading, and a higher level of thinking.

Changing values ($PSIC_7$) followed academic separation with a strong factor score (.52) and two excellent factor loadings (.71 to .72). The ultimate outcomes of professional socialization involve a significant change in students' values. For example, the goals of higher education focused on helping students learn to think from a more global perspective. Another goal of higher education included helping students become more flexible and exhibit increased concerns about the future of humankind. Finally, academic integration ($PSIC_8$) was the last professional socialization factor or variable. Academic integration had a very high factor score (.77) with one factor loading. Academic integration occurred when students' academic performance matched the basic requirements associated with college courses. Academic integration on college campuses involved application and analysis of information rather than memorization. For example, students

were expected to develop tools to aid them in writing papers. Secondary education often provided guidelines for writing papers, but college required students to create to some degree their own guidelines. Academic integration was an integral part of professional socialization, but was not as significant as congruence, social integration, or independence. Perhaps social integration ranked higher than academic integration, because seventy-one percent (71%) of the sample was female. Also, the eighth ranking of academic integration was compatible with the literature review. Bean (1985), Spady (1970), Pascarella and Terenzini (1991), and Tinto (1987) indicated academic failure was not the primary reason most students dropped out of college.

The professional socialization factors were highly correlated with each other. All of the factors involved some type of interaction with the college environment. Interaction with the college environment was considered the ultimate foundation for the development and maintenance of professional socialization. Congruence had negative correlations with social integration,

social separation, culture, independence, and academic separation. No correlation existed between congruence and academic integration. According to the principles of factor analysis, the first factor was more relevant to professional socialization than the other seven factors. Also, factors following the first factor were representative of what was left after, the primary elements were factored out. Hence, it was logical that the remaining seven factors would have a negative correlation or no correlation with the first factors. Theoretically, levels of congruence were dependent on the degrees of social integration, social separation, culture, independence, academic separation, changing values, and academic integration, and vice verse. As students separated from the previous environment, integrated into the college environment, exercised higher degrees of independence, congruence between the students and the institution was likely to increase. During the first year of college, professional socialization factors were thought to be very unstable and may or may not align with each other. However, it was possible that the factors eventually stabilized and aligned with each other. Further

research was needed to determined when, how, and under what conditions the professional socialization variables balance were likely to occur.

Finally, the PSIC was a viable instrument for estimating first year students' levels of professional socialization. One variable out of the thirty-six (36) variables had a poor factor loadings (<.4) across several factors. The professional socialization factors (congruence, social integration, social integration, culture, independence, academic separation, changing values, and academic integration) correlated well with the literature review.

Research Question 3:

Factor analysis and Pearson's r were employed to conduct the analysis of data relevant to research question 3: What were the relevant variables related to the intent to persist? Factor analysis reduced the six variables to two factors. The analysis revealed that obstacles (IPS_1) and intent (IPS_2) were the factors most relevant to the intent to persist. Obstacles (IPS_1) had a factor score of 1.00. These variables were some of the most significant deterrents associated with the intent to persist. Students were

more likely to withdraw because of the lack of funds or the need to transfer to another institution than because of marriage or opportunities for employment (Astin, 1992; Bean, 1985; Braxton, Duster, & Pascarella, 1988; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Spady, 1970; Tinto, 1975, 1982, 1987).

In summary, The IPS_2 (intent) had an excellent factor score (.98). The students ranked their intents to enroll in the fall with the rankings on the 1 to 5 scale equally. IPS_1 had an excellent factor score (1.00). According to the results the subjects maintained high levels of the intent to persist toward a college degree. Also, the obstacles such as lack of funds, marriage, employment, or transferring to another institutions were the most common deterrents to first year students' intent to persist. The homogeneity between the subjects and the college environment could have contributed to the high levels of the intent to persist. Also, the size of the college campus could have contributed along with the one to twelve or one to fifteen faculty-student ratio may have contributed to the high levels of the students' intent to persist. Future studies should include an in-depth conceptual analysis of the intent to

persist. The analysis may reveal characteristics, processes, correlates, enhancers, deterrents, and other elements about first year students' intent to persist. The outcomes of the study revealed that students' intent to persist involved more than enrollment in the next semester or stating the intent to do so.

Research Question 4

ANOVA was utilized to analyze data relevant to research question 4 How were the demographic variables related to commitment?. The CIC factors and the CIC_{cs} generated during the data analysis of research question 1 were used during analysis of research question 4. Demographic data included gender, college major, culture, academic abilities, socioeconomic status, and parents' education. Since the literature offered little or no information regarding students' levels of commitment and their background characteristics, it was anticipated that the outcomes of research question 4 would provide new information. Relationships significant at the .05 level were included in the discussion. The outcomes revealed no correlation between

the demographic data, the CIC composite score, nor the CIC factors. When the nature of commitment, the nature of first year college students, and the nature of the college environment was considered, it appeared that regardless of background characteristics first-year students probably were at the same levels of development when their entered college. Given the tremendous amount of change required by the college environment, demographic data probably did not significantly influence the students abilities to initiate, establish, and maintain adequate levels of commitment. If differences existed in this study, they were not statistically significant at the .05 level.

In summary, based on the outcomes of the analysis of research question 4, levels of commitment of first year students were not related to specific individual characteristics. Little or no evidence existed which suggested student characteristics such as gender, GPAs, ACT scores, socioeconomic status (SES), parents' education, culture, or college major necessarily enabled or impaired first-year students' abilities or efforts to

establish sufficient levels of commitment.

Research Question 5

ANOVA was utilized to conduct the analysis of research question 5: How were the demographic variables related to professional socialization? The $PSIC_{cs}$ (composite score) and the PSIC factors generated during the analysis of research question 2 were utilized in the analysis of research question 5. The demographic data included gender, college major, academic abilities, culture, socioeconomic status, and parents' education. The outcomes of research question 5 revealed that no significant relationships existed between the PSIC composite score and the demographic data. No significant relationships existed between the PSIC factors and the demographic data. The lack of statistical significance between the demographic variables and the professional socialization were similar to those associated with commitment. Given the requirements of professional socialization; the students' levels of development; and the high volume of varying and complex activities; the restricted time frame; and complexities of

the adaptations expected of students on college campuses during the first six to seven months of college, individual characteristics such as gender, culture, socioeconomic levels, college majors, parents' education, and cognitive abilities would not substantially influence the levels of professional socialization. All of them would be newcomers to the campus and would be unfamiliar with the norms, mores, and values of the college campus. Also, all of them would be experiencing new independence coupled with complex activities along with an enormous amount of new responsibilities in an unfamiliar environment. Therefore, initially, individual characteristics probably would not make a difference in their first year of professional socialization.

In conclusion, if initiating, establishing, and maintaining professional association were associated with acquisition of sufficient levels of skills, knowledge, and experience within the college environment, then individual characteristics would not influence their abilities to acquire adequate levels of professional socialization. Demographic data either did not influence the levels of professional socialization or maybe too minuscule to be statistically

significant during the second semester of the first year of college.

Research Question 6

ANOVA was utilized to conduct the analysis of research question 6: How were the demographic variables related to the intent to persist? The intent to persist composite score (IPS_{cs}) and the IPS factors generated during the analysis of research question 3 were utilized in the analysis of research question 6. The demographic data included gender, college major, academic abilities, parents' education, culture, and socioeconomic status. The outcomes of research question 6 revealed that no significant relationships existed between the IPS_{cs} composite score and the demographic data. The outcomes revealed no significant relationships existed between the demographic data and the intent to persist factors. When the nature of the college environment, the nature of first year college students, and the nature of the college environment were considered, it seemed logical that no relationships would exist between the demographic variables and first year students' intent to persist. As with commitment and

professional socialization, the students' abilities to maintain high levels of the intent to persist probably were not related to their background characteristics. In order to maintain high levels of the intent to persist, students must deal with high volumes of elements that needed to be learned and applied within the college environment during the first six to seven months of the first year of college. No evidence existed that indicated students' background characteristics would make a significant difference in their abilities to maintain high levels of the intent to persist. Students with high academic abilities, in high socioeconomic brackets, with college majors in disciplines such as architecture, engineering, medicine, and others tended to persist more than students majoring in other disciplines (Stoecker, Pascarella, & Wolfie, 1988). Since most of the subjects were middle income with above average GPAs, the outcomes of this study did not validate these assumptions.

In summary, most first year students were probably at the same levels of the intent to persist. The subjects' background characteristics did not appear to influence significantly the levels of the intent to persist. If

differences existed, the differences were not significant at the .05 level. Specific characteristics of the subjects did not appear to influence the students' abilities to maintain adequate levels of the intent to persist.

Research Question 7

Pearson's *r* was utilized to conduct the analysis of data relevant to the research question 7: How were commitment and professional socialization related? The composite scores and the factors that evolved during the analysis of research questions 1 and 2 were utilized during the analysis of research question 7. The (CIC_{cs}) commitment had an excellent composite score (.74). The ($PSIC_{cs}$) professional socialization also had an excellent composite score (66). Correlation of commitment and professional socialization revealed a strong negative correlation (-.57). According to the hypothesis, the two variables should have had a strong positive relationship. The strong negative correlation between the two variables stimulated a return to the literature review for a more thorough synthesis of the general differences between the two variables than with the initial synthesis. When

the general differences between the two variables were considered a strong negative correlation seemed logical. Outcomes of the second synthesis indicated that given the nature of the two variables, the nature of the college environment, the nature of first year college students, a negative correlation between the two variables seemed reasonable. Influences of the nature of the college environment, the nature of first year college students, the differences between the two variables overrode the commonalities. In the following paragraphs, general differences between commitment and professional socialization were discussed.

First, commitment included students' responding to inner drives, inner needs, or interests to obtain a college degree . Professional socialization involved students' responding to interactions within the college community. Second, rewards associated with commitment to degree attainment were distant or long term, intangible and less visible than those associated with professional socialization. Rewards associated with professional socialization were more tangible and more immediate. Rewards such as grade reports,

elections to student offices, and positive input from members of the community were associated with professional socialization. Third, commitment required less interaction with the environment, while professional socialization required extensive interaction with the college community. That is, commitment required extensive reliance on personal abilities, while professional socialization required extensive reliance on the college environment which included experienced and motivated socializing agents. Fourth, commitment was defined as a promise to obtain a college degree. Professional socialization was defined as a structured pathway leading to degree attainment. Fifth, reinforcement of professional socialization and commitment differed. Reinforcement of professional socialization evolved from interactions with the college environment. Reinforcement of commitment was related to the realization of personal or individual goals.

Sixth, elements interfering with commitment and professional socialization differed. Elements interfering with commitment included competition between external commitments and commitments to degree

attainment. Conflicts evolving from students' attempts to maintain high levels of commitment to degree attainment involved the participation of others. Resolving the conflicts involved others who may or may not want to accept the changes required for commitment to degree attainment. This may prove to be a very difficult process for first year students with limited experience on college campuses and equipped with evolving skills and knowledge about college life. Elements interfering with professional socialization involved students' previous perceptions of college life, prior study habits, prior test taking skills, time management, financial management, and many others. Unlike participants involved in the commitment process, participants in the professional socialization process had the same goals as the students. Socializing agents were not competing with the students' attempts to adapt to the college environment. They assisted the students in adjusting to college life. While parents and home friends may expect the students place their commitments first rather degree attainment.

Because of the strong negative correlation (-.57) between the

commitment composite score and the professional socialization composite score, the CIC_{cs} was correlated with the professional socialization factors. The goal was to investigate possible reasons a strong negative correlation existed between levels of commitment and levels of professional socialization. Several significant correlations existed between the professional socialization composite score and the commitment factors. First, the CIC_{cs} had a strong positive correlation with the following PSIC factors: $PSIC_3$ (social separation = .94), $PSIC_6$ (academic integration = .71), and $PSIC_5$ (independence = .76). The CIC_{cs} had two moderate positive correlations with $PSIC_2$ (social integration = .50) and $PSIC_4$ (culture = .46). The CIC_{cs} had a moderate negative correlation with $PSIC_1$ (congruence = -.40).

Second, $PSIC_{cs}$ had several positive correlations with the CIC factors. The $PSIC_{cs}$ had positive correlations with the following CIC factors: CIC_2 (role models = .78), CIC_4 (culture = .12), and CIC_7 (transfer risks = .92). Conversely, the $PSIC_{cs}$ had negative correlations with CIC_1 (institutional commitment = -.38), CIC_3 (self-image, -.26), CIC_5 (future security = -.96),

CIC_6 (obligations = -.92). The positive correlations probably did contribute to the mid-range negative correlation between commitment and professional socialization. Conversely, a negative correlation existed between CIC_1 (institutional commitment = -.38) and $PSIC_{cs}$. A negative correlation existed between $PSIC_1$ (congruence = -.37) and the CIC_{cs} were attributed to the strong negative correlation between the two variables. The first factor tended to be most representative of the specific concept or variable (Comfrey & Lee, 1992). The negative correlations existing between the CIC_{cs} and ($PSIC_1$) congruence along with the negative correlations between the $PSIC_{cs}$ and (CIC_1) institutional commitment probably accounted for the strong negative correlation between commitment and professional socialization. The outcomes validated the significance of the differences between commitment and professional socialization. The outcomes challenged the assumption made by the seven tcollege student persistence models. A strong, positive correlation was expected between professional socialization and commitment.

Because this was the first testing of the Commitment Inventory

Checklist (CIC) and the Professional Socialization Inventory Checklist (PSIC), the relationships between the individual commitment factors and the relationships between the individual professional socialization factors were compared and contrasted. The interrelationships among the commitment factors and the relationships among the professional socialization factors varied. Relationships among the CIC factors were generally negative. The factors most relevant to commitment were parallel to each other.

The PSIC factors were very well correlated with each other. Since most of the PSIC factors had positive correlations, only the negative correlations were presented. Unlike the commitment factors, the professional socialization factors tended to be interrelated. Congruence between students and the institution was considered necessary for social integration, social separation, academic integration, academic separation, increased independence, and changing values of values. Although perceptions of cultural representations factored out separately in this study, cultural representation was considered part of congruence between students and the

institution. According to the literature review, social integration and academic integration were considered overlapping. Therefore, they were studied under the umbrella of professional socialization. Separation from the environment included both social and academic aspects. Students not only needed to rely on the college environment for the necessary academic adjustments, but the social aspects as well. Because part of the process of successful degree attainment involved learning the mores, norms, and values of the college environment, students needed to separate from the previous environment both socially and academically. Because of the complexities, the high volume of changes, and the restricted time period, students needed to rely primarily on the college environment to meet their needs. Students tended to persist through college if they made the college environment the primary focus of their lives. The conclusions drawn about the influences of the relationships between the factors of each of the two variables on professional socialization and commitment were validated both statistically and theoretically.

In summary, the strong negative correlation between commitment and

professional socialization was related to the differences in the nature of the two variables, the nature of the college environment, and the nature of first-year college students. The differences were primarily associated with the driving forces (inner feelings vs interactions), the interrelatedness of the factors, the definitions, and the characteristics. The outcomes differed from the hypothesis of the study. Since prior research studies had found high positive correlations, it was anticipated that the outcomes of the studies would reveal further positive correlations. Future research using larger more diverse samples was needed to establish reliability and validity of the two instruments.

Research Question 8

Pearson's r was utilized to analyze data pertinent to research question 8: How were commitment and the intent to persist related? The CIC_{cs}, the CIC factors, the IPS_{cs}, and the IPS factors were utilized in the analysis of research question 8. The outcomes of the study revealed a weak negative correlation (-.20) existed between commitment (CIC_{cs}) and the intent to

persist was (IPS_{cs}). According to the literature review, a strong positive correlation should have existed between commitment and the intent to persist. Several possible reasons could explain the differences between the outcomes of research question 8 and the literature review. An in-depth analysis of the intent to persist was needed along with its relationships to the nature of first year college students and the nature of the college community.

First, the intent to persist needed to be subjected to a rigorous conceptual analysis. Perhaps the outcomes differed from current literature because the intent to persist may be more complex than enrollment for the next semester or statement of the intent to enroll in the next semester. The same conceptual framework used to construct the commitment could be utilized to conduct the intent to persist conceptual analysis. The results of a conceptual analysis could reveal several important factors about the intent to persist. That is, if the intent to persist differed from other intents such as the intent to clean out cabinets, intent to change jobs, intent to lose weight, intent to stop drinking, intent to stop smoking or intent to stop abusing drugs.

Conceptual analysis could reveal if the intent to persist toward degree attainment was dynamic or fixed; internally or externally oriented; sequential or non-sequential, competitive or complementary with other goals or intents; interactive or semi-isolated/isolated; primary purposes; complex or simple; vacillating or stable; temporal or long term; immediacy of rewards; or closed ended.

Conceptual analysis of the intent to persist could also reveal the following: awareness of the levels of intent; knowledge required for continued persistence; reinforcers/enhancers; obstacles; students' developmental required; students' characteristics; students' roles and responsibilities, or the roles and responsibilities of others. Third, the differences between the literature review and the outcomes of the study could be influenced by the evolving levels of commitment and the evolving levels of the intent to persist. For example, the merger of institutional goals or curriculum and personal goals was probably in the early stages of development. The commitments probably vacillated more during the first year than any other year of college.

Second semester, first-year students were probably still learning and exploring the institutional goals as well as personal or individual goals. The students may be sure they want a college degree but their commitment to degree attainment may still be unclear. It can be concluded that the length of time spent on the campus and the large volume of varied activities influenced the relationships between commitment and the intent to persist of first year college students.

Second, first-year students have multiple immediate commitments to learn and carry out such as class attendance, course assignments, dormitory regulations, and others. While maintaining their intent to pursue degree attainment, the limited experiences of first year students may result in fluctuating levels of commitment or vice verse. According to the literature review, commitment required making investments and sacrifices required for degree attainment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). First-year students were still identifying the investments and sacrifices associated with the intent to persist. Third, the differences between the outcomes of the study and the literature

review may be related to the differences between the nature of commitment and the nature of the intent to persist. According to the literature review, commitment was the motivation or promise to pursue degree attainment. The intent to persist was defined as the outcomes of the efforts or behaviors needed to keep the promise. Students arrived on the college campuses with the intent to complete a college degree and therefore, committed themselves to that goal. Perhaps little or no correlation existed between the two concepts during the first year of college because the students were making "blind" commitments. That is, students made commitments to degree attainment without knowledge of what commitment to degree attainment entailed. When first-year students discovered the actual requirements, the commitments may weaken or decrease without effecting the students' beliefs in the value of a college education. Finally, if the notion of maintenance of commitments out of obligations to others were adopted, the students could have high levels of the intent to persist low personal or individual commitments.

Fourth, the differences between the relationships among the

commitment factors and the relationships among the intent to persist factors may have contributed to the weak or marginal negative correlation between the two variables. As indicated in research questions 1, the commitment factors appeared to be parallel to each other. According to research question 3, the intent to persist variables appeared to be related. Because this was the first comparison of the Commitment Inventory Scale (CIC) and the Intent to Persist Scale (IPS), the CIC_{cs} was correlated with the IPS factors. The IPS_{cs} was correlated with the commitment factors. The IPS_{cs} had moderate to strong negative correlations with CIC_1 (institutional commitment = -.75), CIC_3 (self-image = -.80), CIC_5 (future security = -.51), and CIC_6 (sense of obligations, = -.48) The IPS_{cs} had moderate to strong positive correlations with CIC_2 (role models = .79), CIC_4 (support = .69), and CIC_7 (transfer risk = .47). Since institutional commitment (CIC_1) was considered the most relevant factor associated with commitment, a negative factor score between the intent to persist and this factor probably contributed to the weak negative correlation between the two variables. Also, the group of commitment factors

with negative correlations with the intent to persist (institutional commitment, self-image, future security, and sense of obligations) tended to be related to more to inner drives and needs. Whereas the group of commitment factors with positive correlations with the intent to persist tended to involve interaction with others. Interaction was a weak or minimal link between commitment and the intent to persist.

In summary, a weak negative correlation (-.20) existed between commitment and the intent to persist. An in-depth conceptual analysis of the intent to persist could result in a more comprehensive and accurate knowledge base. The differences in the individual sets of factors associated with each variable was also considered a contributing element to the lack of correlation between the two variables. The greatest strength in the outcomes of research question 8 was the realization that the intent to persist involved more than enrollment for the next semester or stating the intent to enroll. A second strength of the outcomes of research question 8 was the significance of the relationships among the nature of the first-year college students, the

nature of the college environment, the nature of commitment, and the nature of the intent to persist. For example, fluctuation of first-year college students' commitment to degree attainment were related to their developmental levels along with the complex and massive demands of the college environment. Therefore, the lack of or minimal correlations between the two variables were related to the nature of the first-year college student and the nature of the college environment. A third strength involved the idea that commitment and the intent to persist may be linked by first year students' interactions with the college environment.

A fourth strength involved the notion that commitments made by first-year students were broad, general, and evolving from a non-experiential knowledge base. That is, the initial commitments made by first-year students were not closely related to actual experiences within the college community. Hence, initial experiences could negatively influence their levels of intent to persist. As first-year students gained experience within the college environment, they may become discouraged when they began to recognize

the differences between their ideal expectations of the environment and their actual experiences. At some point, commitment and the intent to persist may become stable and influence each other in a positive manner. When, how, and under what conditions this was likely to happen needed further investigation. Currently, smoother movement through the transitional phase or phases was more likely to happen if the role models not only demonstrated loyalty to the institution, but communicated to the students appropriate methods for dealing with college life. Research should be conducted to explore further possible relationships between commitment and the intent to persist. Also, future research studies should focus on the influences of the nature of the college environment and the first year of college on students' levels of commitment and levels of their intent to persist.

Research Question 9

Pearson's r was utilized to analyze data pertinent to research question 9: How were professional socialization and the intent to persist related?. The $PSIC_{cs}$, the PSIC factors, the IPS_{cs}, and the IPS factors were utilized in the

analysis of research question 9. A strong negative correlation (-.57) existed between professional socialization and the intent to persist. According to the literature review, a strong positive correlation existed between professional socialization and the intent to persist. The nature of professional socialization, the nature of the intent to persist, the nature of the college environment, the nature of first-year college students, and the references used to construct the professional socialization conceptual framework played significant roles in the outcomes of research question 9.

First, professional socialization was defined as the structured pathway leading to degree attainment. The intent to persist was the reason students came to the college campus. Professional socialization was related to the degree and the quality of interactions between the students and the college community. The intent to persist was more internal than interactional. The students brought with them the intent to persist toward degree attainment. The intent to persist was based on students' preconceived ideas about degree attainment. Professional socialization evolved through experiences

with the college environment. The intent to obtain a college degree was long-term and more intangible than professional socialization. The challenges associated with becoming members of the college community could negatively influence the levels of the intent to persist. Time and energy students spent dreaming about their intent to persist toward degree attainment must now be redirected toward a firm focus on day to day, week to week activities associated with becoming members of the college community. In order to continue toward degree attainment, first-year students must master many tasks in a very short time period. While integrating socially and academically into the college environment, students established congruence with the institution, exercised new found freedoms, and separated socially and academically from the previous environment. At some point during the first year of college, students questioned if their intent to persist toward a college degree was worth the hard work. For example, "I want to get a college degree, but I didn't know it would require so much."

As students gained experience within the college environment, their

perceptions of college life changed and possibly influenced their levels of intent to persist. With many changes occurring in students' lives during the first year of college, students' intent to persist may lack clarity and stability. Students' intent to persist may fluctuate many times as they move toward the end of the first year. The literature offered very little on the nature of the intent to persist. Both qualitative and quantitative research studies were needed to be conducted to began to build a theoretical framework for the intent to persist.

In summary, negative correlations between professional socialization and the intent to persist were related to the nature of the college environment, nature of professional socialization, the nature of the intent to persist, the nature of first-year college students, and the need for a more in-depth analysis of the intent to persist. One significant strength evolving from the analysis of research question 9 was the realization that the intent to persist involved more than enrollment for the next semester or stating the intent to do so. A second strength was the idea that first-year college students

entered college with preconceived ideas about college life. However, as they gained experience within the college environment, their perceptions changed to a realistic point of view. During this period of adjustment, their levels of the intent to persist may decrease. At some point, professional socialization and the intent to persist probably became stable and reinforced each other. Further research was needed to determine when, how, and under what conditions this was most likely to occur. Currently, this was thought to occur when first year students gained enough experience to make the transition from preconceived ideas about college life to more realistic perceptions of college life. It was more likely to occur if students were given appropriate support and guidance. Since both professional socialization and the intent to persist were on-going, orientation programs needed to be on-going as well.

Research Question 10

Partial correlation coefficient was utilized to conduct the analysis of data pertinent to research question 10: How were commitment, professional socialization, and the intent to persist related?. The CIC_{cs}, the CIC factors,

the $PSIC_{cs}$, the PSIC factors, the IPS_{cs} and the IPS factors were used in the analysis of research question 10. The relationships significant at the .05 level were included in the discussion. While controlling commitment (CIC_{cs}), professional socialization ($PSIC_{cs}$) and the intent to persist (IPS_{cs}) were correlated. No correlation was exhibited between professional socialization ($PSIC_{cs}$) and the intent to persist (IPS_{cs}). While controlling professional socialization ($PSIC_{cs}$), commitment (CIC_{cs}) and the intent to persist (IPS_{cs}) were correlated. No correlation was exhibited between commitment (CIC_{cs}) and the intent to persist (IPS_{cs}). While controlling the intent to persist (IPS_{cs})), professional socialization ($PSIC_{cs}$ and commitment (CIC_{cs}) were correlated. No correlation was exhibited between commitment (CIC_{cs}) and the intent to persist ($PSIC_{cs}$). Elements that linked commitment, professional socialization, and the intent to persist. were controlled when using partial correlation. According to the literature review, links between commitment and professional socialization were person-environment fit, external factors, support, and interaction within the college environment. According to the

outcome of the research study, commonalities existed among the three variables, but were not statistically significant. The seven traditional college student persistence or attrition models indicated that commitment and professional socialization had direct, positive relationships to students' intent to persist.

Based on the outcomes of the research study, common links existed between commitment and the intent to persist as well as between professional socialization and the intent to persist. Interaction was considered a link between commitment and the intent to persist. Students' needed to change their personal values to match those in the college environment. This change was considered a significant link between professional socialization and the intent to persist. Finally, the outcomes revealed common elements linked commitment, professional socialization, and the intent to persist. The nature of the college environment and the developmental levels of first-year students probably overrode the commonalities. It may possible for the levels of commitment, levels of

professional commitment, and levels of the intent to persist do stabilize at some point during the first year. But this did not appear to occur with this sample of students. If stablization occurred, it did not appear to occur during the first six to seven months of the first year of college.

Implications for Future Research

The outcomes of the study revealed several significant implications associated with first-year college students' persistence. The implications were presented in three major categories. The first two categories were general implications and the last category involved implications specific to the research study. The last category provided discussion regarding, the need for an interdisciplinary approach to research and the first year college student. The discussion also addressed the need for further utilization of outcomes of prior research studies, and implications of the research study.

First, new and innovative approaches to research on college students' persistence were greatly needed. Research during the last 27 years has followed the same trend. The trend did produce general frameworks with

several concepts that have proven significant to college students' persistence. It did not appear that outcomes of research on college students' persistence significantly influenced the high attrition rates of first-year college students. As the 21st Century approaches, new and innovative philosophies, techniques, and methodologies needed to be used to aid in reducing the high attrition rates. As indicated in the literature review, an interdisciplinary approach to research on college students' persistence was both economical and effective. That is, researchers should look at differences and similarities between experiences of first-year college students and individuals in similar situations. References utilized to build the conceptual frameworks for this study evolved from publications in psychology, sociology, and business administration. Researchers interested in reducing the high attrition rates of first-year college students should utilize outcomes of research studies addressing topics relevant to the persistence of first year college students. For example, the outcomes revealed the students' commitments to degree attainment were similar to employees' commitments to continued

employment. Also, the outcomes revealed first-year college students' socialization was similar to general socialization processes and new employees' socialization to new jobs. Hence, utilization of current research studies in other disciplines to the develop a theoretical framework for college students' persistence proved to be an effective approach.

Relocation and adjusting to institutional life was considered the essence of the experiences of first-year college students. A vast amount of information existed in the literature regarding the experiences of individuals relocating to new systems or institutions. In the future, researchers should examine the differences and similarities between the responses of college students to relocation and other individuals such as military life, prison life, and foster homes. Outcomes of these research studies would increase college official in reducing the high attrition rates of first year college students.

Second, researchers needed to use previous research outcomes conducted in the higher education arena. It has been known for some time that commitment, professional socialization, and the intent to persist were

related. Therefore, a new step toward using this research would be to focus on when, how, and under what circumstances were the variables likely to become stable and align with each other. Outcomes of the research study indicated this did not happen during the first six to seven months of the first year of college.

Research should be conducted at several points during the first year of college. A meta-analysis of studies across the first-year of college could help researchers identify when levels of commitment, levels of professional socialization, and levels of the intent to persist were most likely or least likely to stabilize. The outcomes of the study revealed students' levels of commitment, levels professional socialization, and levels of intent to persist did not appear to have strong, positive correlations to each other nor to the demographic data. Utilization of instruments constructed from an in-depth conceptual analysis of the two major concepts probably offered information closer to reality than previous studies. Because this was the first testing of the instruments, the foregoing conclusions were drawn with caution.

Reliability and validity needed to be established for the PSIC and the CIC. Also, reliability and validity needed to be established for the IPS after further refinement of the instrument. Person-environment fit needed to be subjected to a more in-depth analysis and the appropriate items integrated into the PSIC, CIC, and IPS.

According to the literature, interaction with the college environment had a strong positive influence on students' commitments to degree attainment, professional socialization, and the intent to persist. Interaction with the external environment tended to have negative influences on the three variables. At this point, most research studies addressed the academic year. Research studies conducted after final examinations might reveal different information than studies conducted earlier in the semester. Also, a study conducted in mid-August could provide information regarding the influences a three month absence from the day to day activities of the college community. In other words, if it was believed that interaction with the college community influenced college student attrition, then future research should

investigate the influence of the three month breach in interaction following the first year.

Sufficient evidence existed to indicate that developmental levels and the nature to the college environment were relevant to first-year college persistence. More research on the influences of the nature of first-year college students and the nature of the college environment on college students' persistence needed to conducted. Initially, first-year students have high expectations. Research needed to be conducted to determine the students' expectations of the college environment. Research studies needed to be conducted to examine correlations between the students' expectations and the expectations of colleges and universities.

Although prior research studies implied socializing agents or role models were pertinent to the persistence of first year college students, little research had been conducted on the knowledge and skills of college officials. Faculty and staff orientation or inservice programs could evolve from outcomes of future research. According to the literature, it had been well-

established that external factors such as family members, home friends, and associates could significantly interfere with first year college students' persistence. Little research had been conducted on the status of those relationships and how they influenced first year college students' persistence. Future research studies should explore the nature of these relationships.

While the Intent to Persist Scale (IPS) was considered functional for this study, a more in-depth analysis needed to be conducted on this variable. The exploration could encompass similarities and differences existing between the intent to persist and the intent to seek employment, to purchase a home, to lose weight, to stop drinking, to stop smoking and others. A conceptual analysis of the intent to persist could reveal correlations between students' "intent behaviors" and their actual behaviors. Outcomes of future research studies could indicate whether the value students placed on obtaining a college degree correlated with their behaviors. Behaviors believed to be most conducive or least conducive to adequate levels of commitment, professional socialization, and the intent to persist needed to be

identified. During faculty and staff advisement activities, this information could be utilized to help students recognize whether or not their behaviors were or were not representative of the intent to persist toward degree attainment. Many researchers presented person-environment fit as relevant to college student persistence. Following the analysis of the ten research questions, a review of person-environment fit in journals such as psychology, business administration, and personnel management revealed, person-environment fit was much more complex than presented in the references used in the study. Future research studies need to build a conceptual framework of college students' persistence which reflected the broader more comprehensive aspects of person-environment fit.

In summary, the major implications emerging from the study involved the need for more innovative approaches to research on first year college students' persistence, more efficient use of existing research outcomes, the need for more in depth analysis of the intent to persist, and the addition of behaviors associated with the three variables to the instruments. The nature

of first-year college students and the nature of the college environment were relevant to first-year college students' persistence. Therefore, these elements needed to be addressed in future research studies. Because of the current attrition rates of first-year college students, more interdisciplinary, innovative, and creative approaches to research on first year college students' persistence or attrition were needed. During the next five to ten years, research on first year college students' persistence could provide interested researchers with a multitude of opportunities.

Limitations

The primary limitations of this study included the size of the population, the setting, and the testing of newly developed instruments. The study was conducted on a small, private, church-supported college campus. A large public campus would provide more diversity among the participants and a larger population for sampling. This was the first testing of the Professional Socialization Inventory Checklist (PSIC), the Commitment Inventory Checklist (CIC), the Intent to Persist Scale (IPS). In spite of the

limitations, the study had merit and contributed to the current college students' persistence knowledge base. The PSIC and the CIC evolved from a rigorously constructed conceptual framework. The IPS was constructed from the higher education literature. The outcomes of the study revealed that the instruments were representative of the concepts. The outcomes also stimulated many questions regarding the historical approaches to the research and college student persistence. Because of the outcomes of the study, the intent to persist and person-environment fit will be subjected to a thorough conceptual analysis. Also, research studies with students' perceptions of their first year of college as a focus will be conducted. Research studies will be conducted that ask the question, "Is eighteen or nineteen were too young to began collegiate studies?"

Conclusions

Some of the outcomes of the research study were closely related to the hypotheses, the purposes, and the literature review. Some of the outcomes were marginal and some differed from projections of the research

study. The conclusions were presented by grouping similar research questions. First, research questions 1, 2, and 3 sought to identify the variables relevant to 1) commitment, 2) professional, and 3) the intent to persist. Variables most relevant to commitment (in chronological order) were institutional commitment; role models; self image; support; future security; obligations; and transfer risks. These outcomes were compatible with the literature review. According to the literature review, all of the variables were relevant to first year college students' commitment to degree attainment, but institutional commitment was the most influential variable. The variables evolved from inner feelings and were to be parallel to each other. Because of the high composite factor score (.74) and the fact that 20 of the 21 variables had fair to excellent factoror loadings (.4-.7) on the seven factors, the Commitment Inventory Checklist (CIC) was viewed as a viable instrument. Future research studies using larger and more diverse samples should seek reliability and validity of the instrument.

The variables most relevant to professional socialization were (in

chronological order) congruence; social integration; social separation; culture; independence; academic separation; changing values; and academic integration. Unlike variables relevant to commitment, the variables were related to each other. For example, social integration and academic integration were overlapping. Except for a weak correlation between social separation and academic integration, all of the correlations between social integration and academic integration were strong (.57 to.78). According to the literature review, congruence was considered to be the most significant to professional socialization. Because of the high composite factor score (.66) and the fact that 35 of the 36 of the variables had fair to excellent factor loadings (.4-.7) on at least one of the eight factors, the Professional Socialization Inventory Checklist (PSIC) was a viable instrument for projecting or measuring first year students' levels of professional socialization. The instrument was worthy of retesting. Future research studies using larger and more diverse samples should seek reliability and validity of the instrument.

The variables most significant to persistence were (in chronological

order) lack of funds, transfer to another institution, employment, and marriage. First-year students were more likely to leave a particular institution because of lack of funds or transfer to another institution rather than employment and marriage. The subjects' intent to enroll for the fall semester and the rating of their to return on the 1-5 scale were highly correlated (.91). Because of the high factor score (.94) and the fact than none of the variables were eliminated during factor analysis, the Intent to Persist Scale (IPS) was considered a viable instrument for estimating first year students' intent to persist. Prior to testing the instrument again, researchers needed to synthesize current literature and build a conceptual framework for intent to persist similar to the commitment and professional socialization frameworks.

Second, research questions 4, 5, and 6 revealed students' background characteristics did not significantly influence the levels of commitment, professional socialization, nor the intent to persist. The literature review projected gender, socioeconomic status, and academic abilities would have some influences on the levels of the three variables.

Since the instrument variables were being tested for the first time, some differences between the literature review and the outcomes of the study were anticipated. The nature of first-year college students, the nature of the college community, the nature of commitment, the nature of professional socialization, the nature of the intent to persist probably precluded the influences of students' background characteristics. That is, the complexities of commitment, professional socialization, the intent to persist along with the stringent demands of the college environment in a very short time period would equally challenge students regardless of gender, academic abilities, socioeconomic levels, culture, or college majors. If differences existed among the subjects in this study, they were not statistically significant. Further research using the CIC, PSIC, and IPS should be conducted using larger and more diversified samples. The demographic data collection tool should be redesigned to provide subjects with the opportunities to document actual socioeconomic levels, GPAs, ACT scores, parents education, culture, and culture. Several subjects indicated some of the categories such as

culture, GPAs, ACT scores, parents' educational levels, socioeconomic status, college majors, and others did not describe them appropriately.

Third, research question 7 revealed that commitment and professional socialization had an inverse relationship (r = -.57) rather than a direct relationship. Based on the literature review, it was anticipated that the common links or similarities between commitment and professional socialization would outweigh the differences. Apparently, common links such as person-environment fit and interaction with the college environment were not well-established during the first six to seven months of college. Further research was needed to determine stablizing conditions commonly associated with both commitment and professional socialization. The outcomes of research question 7 offered some insights into possible influences of the relationships among the variables associated with each of the two variables. The factors associated with commitment tended to be parallel and factors associated with professional socialization tended to be more closely related to each other. Also, the origins of the two variables was thought to have

influenced the outcomes of the study. Commitment evolved from inner feelings and professional socialization involved through interactions with the college environment. Person-environment fit, support, external factors, and interaction with the college environment were considered common links between the two variables. Future research studies should consider addressing if elements associated with person-environment fit and interaction were sufficiently addressed on the CIC and on the PSIC.

Fourth, the nature of first year college students and the demands of the college environment were considered important variables when interpreting the results of the study. It was commonly known that first-year students were in the developmental stages of late adolescence or early adulthood. The first-year of college required extreme changes in the students' lifestyles within a very short time period. Therefore, students abilities to initiate and maintain adequate levels of commitment, levels of professional socialization, and the intent to persist toward degree attainment were likely to be influenced by the students' developmental levels. Their

developmental levels would influence their abilities to respond appropriately to the first year of college. The academic year excludes summer months. Hence, a lengthy break existed between nine months of intense interaction with the college environment and the fall semester. Most research studies addressed students' returning to campuses for the second year of college as indicative of percentages of college students' persistence. Future research studies should be conducted at several different points during the calendar year to determine if the lack of interaction with the college community during the summer influenced students' decisions to withdraw or to persist. The second semester of the first year was selected for this study because the literature indicated most decisions to withdraw or persist were made during this semester.

Fifth, the outcomes of research questions 8 and 9 revealed inverse relationships between commitment and the intent to persist as well as inverse relationships between professional socialization and the intent to persist. Positive relationships were anticipated. Commitment had a weak negative

(-.20) relationship with the intent to persist. Professional had a strong negative relationship with the intent to persist (-.57). It was concluded that the relationships among the three variables did not stabilize during the first six to seven months of college. The relationships among the nature of first-year college students, the nature of the college environment, and the nature of the three variables contributed to the inverse relationships. The possibility of the concepts stabilizing during the first-year of college should be investigated. In future studies, synthesis of the content of the CIC, PSIC, and IPS needed to be conducted to determine if the common links among the three variables were sufficiently represented on the instruments. Synthesizing the instruments could disclosed whether representation of the common links and the differences between the concepts were balanced.

Sixth, the outcomes of research question 10 revealed common links existed between commitment, professional socialization, and the intent to persist. Partial correlation coefficient controlled the influences of commitment on professional socialization and the intent to persist. No correlations existed

between the two variables. The same outcomes occurred when the influences of professional socialization on the relationships between commitment and the intent to persist were controlled. When the intent to persist were controlled, no correlation existed between commitment and professional socialization. This was considered the most significant outcome of the research study. Common links did in fact exist among the three variables. As previously stated, the instruments needed to be synthesize to determine if the common links were appropriately represented.

Finally, the outcomes of the study added to the current college students' persistence knowledge base. In spite of some general differences, employees' commitments to continued employment at companies were similar to first-year students' commitment to continued enrollment at educational institutions. The CIC was a viable instrument for estimating first year students' levels of commitment. Socialization of new employees was similar to socialization of first year college students. Also, general principles and processes of socialization were similar to those associated with professional

socialization of first-year college students. The PSIC was a viable instrument for projecting levels of professional socialization of first-year students. The intent to persist was more complex than enrollment for the fall semester or stating the intent to do so. The intent to persist needed to be subjected to a rigorous conceptual analysis. A conceptual analysis could bridge of the gaps existing in the literature addressing first-year college students' levels of intent to persist. Demographic data did not influence the levels of commitment, levels of professional socialization, nor the levels of the intent to persist. It was found that background characteristics probably did not significantly influence students' abilities to meet the challenges of the first year of college. During the first year, gender, college major, culture, socioeconomic status, and academic abilities probably did not place students into separate groups as they attempted to adjust to the rigors of the first year of college. Replication of the study was not recommended. It did not seem logical to attempt replication of a study that involved the first testing of instruments.

Finally, the trends of research during the last 27 years contributed a

great deal to the development of a theoretical framework for college students' persistence. As the 21st century approaches, new and innovative approaches aimed at researching college students' persistence needed to be tested. This study was perceived as a different approach to building a theoretical framework for college students' persistence. Also, the outcomes of the study were related to the current status of the theoretical development of college students' persistence. Other variables or concepts relevant to college students' persistence needed to be subjected to thorough conceptual analyses and research instruments constructed from the analyses. The thirty-five to sixty percent (35-60%) of first-year college students attrition rates occurring over the last 100 years must be reduced to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. A theoretical framework was needed to assist colleges and universities to design and implement more effective orientation programs and more effective student retention programs. The outcomes of this study initiated a new era of research on college students' persistence.

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Appendix A: A Comparison of Seven Traditional College Student Persistence Models

Components	Spady,1970	Spady, 1971	Tinto, 1975	Tinto, 1987	Bean, 1985	Bean, 1986	Stoecker, etal, 1988
Background	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Commitment	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Development	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Interaction	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Satisfaction	X	X	X	Implied	Implied	Implied	Implied
Socialization	X	X	X	X	X		
Academic Integration	X	X	X		X	X	X
Social Integration	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Nature of Institution	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
College Major							X
Involvement	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Unidirectional	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dropout Decisions	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Environmental Pulls						X	

Appendix B:

A Comparison of Traditional and Nontraditional College Students

Element	Traditional	Nontraditional
Age	Less than 24 years	24 years+
Academic Status	Full-time	Part-time
Employment	Part-time	Full-time
Campus Involvement	High	Low
Family Responsibilities	None to low	High
Time Available for study	High	Margin
Community Activities Responsibilities	Low	Moderate - High
Support	Internal (campus)	External
Marital Status	Single	Married
Parenthood	None	More likely to be parents
Academic Variables	Less significant	More significant
Institutional Utility	Inefficiency has less impact	Inefficiency influences performance
Stress	Not as complex	More significant
Dropout Rates	Lower	Higher

Appendix C:

Elements of Commitment and Professional Socialization Relevant to Students' Intent to Persist

Element	Commitment	Professional Socialization
Time frame	Long term	Short term
Interactive	Significant	Very significant
Sequential	Characteristic	Characteristic
Dynamic	Characteristic	Characteristic
Purposeful	Characteristic	Characteristic
Contextual	Characteristic	Characteristic
Unifying	Characteristic	Characteristic
Flexible	Characteristic	Characteristic
Timely	Characteristic	Characteristic
On-going	Characteristic	Characteristic
Global	Characteristic	Characteristic
Student role	Independent	Interdependent
Socializing Agent	Marginal	Primary
Motivation	Inner feelings	External Interaction
Deterrents	External	Previous perceptions
Maintenance	Inner drives	External Interaction
Reward immediacy	Long term/intangible	Short term/tangible

Appendix D: Construction of Commitment Inventory Checklist (Step 1)

Major Concepts	Primary Focus	Underlying Principle	Measurable Objectives
Support	Parents Friends	Vital to establishing commitment	Estimate perception of parents/friends' support
Support	Faculty Staff Peers	Direct influence on establishing and maintaining commitment	Estimate perception of faculty, staff, and peer support
Role Models	Faculty Staff Peers	Display of institutional commitment and commitment to a college degree influences commitment	Estimate perception of faculty, staff, and peer institutional commitment and commitment to degree attainment
Growth	Increased level of commitment	Progressive commitment necessary for persistence	Determine if commitment has increase while on campus
Belonging	Kinship to previous environment	Sense of belonging to campus enhances commitment	Estimate perception of college environment
Investment	Commitment actions	Willingness to make investments indicates level of commitment	Estimate willingness to make investment sacrifices
Motivation	Reasons for making commitment	Could aid in determining influence of primary reasons for seeking a college degree	Determining primary reason for pursuing a college degree

Appendix D: Construction of Commitment Inventory Checklist (Step 2)

Objectives	Instrument Items
1. Estimate perception of parents and friends' support	1. My family and my friends back home support my getting a college education
2. Estimate perception of peer support	2. Most of my friends at OBU encourage me to get a college education
3. Estimate perception of peers' display to commitment to degree completion	3. Most students at OBU seem determined to complete their degrees
4. Estimate perception of faculty support	4. Faculty members often encourage me to strive to complete my degree
5. Estimate perception of faculty commitment	5. Faculty members behave as if they are really committed to providing us with a college education
6. Determine reason/s for pursuing college degree	6. I believe a college degree would secure my future
7. Estimate changes in commitment since admission	7. My desire to get a college education has increased since I have been here at OBU.
8. Estimate affective attachment to university	8. I made the right choice when I decided to attend OBU I am proud to tell others I am an OBU student Students should remain loyal to a university as long as they are students on that campus
9. Determine reason fo continued movement toward degree attainment	9. Because I have invested a lot of time and energy to pass my courses, I am going to continue with my college education

Appendix D: Construction of the Commitment Inventory Checklist (Step 2 cont.)

Objectives	Instrument Items
9. (cont.)	-I am remaining at OBU because some of my hard earned credits may not transfer -I am remaining at OBU because my family has sacrificed so much to help me -I am pursuing a college degree because more college graduates will be needed during the next 10 years -I would hate for the people back home to find out I dropped out of college -I feel I should continue here at OBU because the faculty work so hard to help me get a good education -I am planning to continue here at OBU because of the quality of the general atmosphere -I am continuing here at OBU because getting a college degree would improve my chances of getting a good job -It would hard for me to leave OBU now that I hae gotten use to the system and the people -I like being viewed as a reasonable and decisive person
10. Estimate relationship between commitment to degree attainment and plans to return or not return	-I am not going to enroll at OBU for the fall semester -I am not sure whether or not I am going to enroll for the fall semester -I might enroll at OBU this fall semester -I am definitely planning to enroll at OBU for the fall semester -I have already enrolled at OBU for the fall semester

Appendix E: Construction of the Professional Socialization Inventory Checklist (Step 1)

Concept	Primary Focus	Underlying Principles	Measureable Objectives
1. Separation	1. Old vs New	1. College environment must take priority	1. Estimate separation of old vs new environment
2. Involvement	2. Value External Outcome	2. Balancing of involvement in internal and external environments necessary	2. Estimate valuing of involvement in new environment Estimate ability to balance
3. Growth -Autonomy -Organization -Problem solving -Role Alignment	3. Levels of Efficiency of	3. Necessary for acclimation to new environment and goal achievement	3. Estimate degree of autonomy, organization, problem solving, & role alignment
4. Congruence	4. Expectations Homogeneity	4. More likely to progress with expectations and ideas are similar	4. Estimate alignment of sharing of expectations and ideas
5. Support	5. Culture Gender Organization	5. Individuals more likely to acclimate with shared characteristics and perceived organizational support of same	5. Estimate perception of gender and cultural support by organization
6. Belonging	6. Friendship Kinship	6. More likely to achieve professional socialization if feels part of new environment	6. Estimate perception of new environment

Appendix E: Construction of the Professional Socialization Inventory Checklist (Step 1 cont.)

7. Confidence	7. Goal feasibility	7. Belief in abilities motivates seeking membership in new environment	7. Estimate perception of ability to complete college degree
8. Integration	8. Activities	8. Ability to balance social and academic activities relevant	8. Estimate ability to balance social and academic activities
9. Satisfaction -Internal -External	9. Faculty Environment Parents Friends	9. Positive outcomes indicate mutual exchanges (necessary for professional socialization)	9. Estimate satisfaction with faculty, staff, peers, parents, friends, and the college environment.

Appendix E: Construction of the Professional Socialization Inventory Checklist (Step 2)

Objectives	Instrument Items
1. Estimate separation of old vs new environment	1. I miss my friends and family back home when I am here at OBU College courses require more than high school The faculty at OBU expect more of me than my high school teachers
2. Estimate valuing of involvement in new environment	2. Getting involved in extracurricular activities here at OBU is important to me The more I get involved in campus activities the more comfortable I feel
3. Determine if has less interest in home	3. Now, I would rather spend more time with my friends here on campus that those back home
4. Estimate degree of autonomy, organization, problem solving, and role alignment	4. I like being on my own and making my own decisions I am beginning to get organized so that I can get my studying done and have time left over for fun I can solve most problems I encounter better now than when I first came to OBU Now that I am pretty well oriented, I know whom to contact when I have problems I understand that I need to learn to how function as a college student as well as a professional in my field What I expect of myself is getting closer to what my college professors expect of me
5. Estimate perception of new environment as a new home	5. I enjoy the personal relationships I have developed here at OBU I am beginning to feel more at home here at OBU

Appendix E: Construction of the Professional Socialization Inventory Checklist (Step 2 cont.)

Objectives	Instrument Items
6. Estimate perception of ability to complete a college degree	6. I am capable of completing a college degree
7. Estimate perception of social, organizational, gender, and cultural support	7. There are lots of activities on this campus for female students There are lots of activities for students of different cultural groups When I have a problem, I have friends I can talk to When I have a problem with my classes, I feel free to contact the instructors
8. Estimate alignment of expectations and shared ideas	8. Many of the students here at OBU have ideas similar to mine Many of the faculty members have ideas similar to mine
9. Estimate ability to balance academic and social activities	9. I spend the following percent of my time involved in extracurricular activities: 10-19%, 20-29%, 30-39%, 40-49%
10. Estimate satisfaction with faculty, staff, peers, and parents	10. I spend the following percent of my time involved in academic activities: 10-19%, 20-29%, 30-39%, 40-49%

Appendix: F

PLACE AN X IN ONE COLUMN

COMMITMENT INVENTORY SCALE FORM	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Diagree
1. My family supports my getting a college degree				
2. Most of my high school friends encourage me to get a college education				
3. Most of my friends here at OBU encourage me to get a college education				
4. Most of the students here at OBU seem determined to get a degree				
5. Faculty members encourage me to strive toward completing my degree				
6. Faculty members seem committed to providing me with a good education				
7. I believe a college degree will help secure my future				
8. I am more determine to get a college education than when I arrived				
9. I made the right choice when I decided to attend OBU				
10. Most of the students seemed to be loyal OBU fans				
11. I am proud to tell others I am an OBU student				
12. Because I have invested a lot of time and energy to pass my courses, I want to benefits from the results				
13. Because my family has sacrificed so much to help me, I cannot dropout				
14. I am remaining at OBU because some of my hard earned college credit may not transfer				
15. I am pursuing a college degree because more college graduates will be needed during the next 10 years				
16. I would hate for the people back home to discover I dropped out of college				
17. I need to get a degree to improve my chances of getting a good job				

COMMITMENT INVENTORY SCALE FORM (cont)	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
18. I like for people to think of me as a reasonable person				
19. I like for people to think of me as a stable and decisive person				
20. It would be hard for me to leave now that I have gotten use to the system/people				
21. Because the faculty work so hard to help me get a good education, I am planning to continue my studies here at OBU				
Please Select one of the following:				
--I am **definitively** not going to enroll at **OBU** for the fall semester				
--I might enroll at **OBU** this fall, after the summer.				
--I am not sure whether or not I am going to enroll at OBU this fall				
--I am **definitely** planning to enroll at OBU for the fall semester.				
--I have already enrolled at **OBU** for the fall semester.				

If I do not return to OBU this fall, it will probably be for one or more of the following reasons: Check the Appropriate Columns

INTENT TO PERSIST SCALE FORM	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
1. I may not have the money to return to school this fall						
2. I am planning to get married						
3. I may transfer to another institution						
4. I might have a chance to get a good paying job						
Circle the number below which most represents of the likelihood of your returning to OBU for the fall semester: 1 2 3 4 5						

Appendix G:

Professional Socialization Inventory Scale Form	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Obtaining a college degree is important to me				
2. Involvement in extracurricular activities is important to me				
3. I like being on my own and making my own decisions				
4. I have time for studying as well as fro fun				
5. I can solve most problems better than when I first came to OBU				
6. I usually know what person/s to contact for most problems I encounter on campus				
7. I need to learn to be a college student as well as a professional in my field				
8. What I expect of my self if getting closer to faculty expectations				
9. College courses require a lot more studying than high school courses				
10. **OBU** faculty expect more of me than my high school teachers did				
11. I spend more time with my college friends than with friends & family back home				
12. I enjoy the personal relationships I have developed here at OBU				
13. Interacting with faculty about things other than class helped me adjust to college.				
14. I am beginning to feel more at home here at OBU				
15. Most of the time I feel I am capable of completing a college degree				
17. I miss my friends and family back home when I am here at OBU				
18. Living on campus helps me keep up with what's going on				

Appendix G: (cont.)

Professional Socialization Inventory Scale Form	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
19. An adequate number faculty of different cultures are here at OBU				
20. The more involved I get in campus activities the more comfortable I feel as a college student				
21. I can usually make contact with faculty members if I really try.				
22. I am satisfied with my grades				
23. Most of the student policies at OBU make sense to me				
24. The requirements to complete courses seem reasonable to me				
25. Most of the faculty are very encouraging				
26. There are lots of campus activities for students of different cultures				
27. I am not sure a college education is worth all the hard work.				
28. When I have problems with my classes, I feel free to contact the instructors				
29. Many students on this campus have ideas similar to mine				
30. OBU provides activities for the female students as well as male students				
31. Many of the faculty on this campus have ideas similar to mine				
32. Living on campus gives you a chance to make lots of friends				
33. There is a sufficient number of female faculty on this campus				
34. When I have a problem I have friends here on campus I can talk to				
35. I spend the following percent of my time extracurricular activities on camp	10-19%	20-29%	30-39%	40-49%
36. I spend the following percent of my time studying or preparing for class.	10-19%	20-29%	30-39%	40-49%

Appendix: H

Dear Student:

Please take a little time to complete the back of this form and the attached inventories. Please place them in the self-addressed stamped envelope and return them as soon as possible. If you return the completed forms by March 30, 1996, your name will be entered in a drawing for a twenty-five dollar gift certificate to J. C. Penney's. Drawing will be held May 15, 1996. As part of the requirements of my Ph. D., I have to conduct a research study. I am interested in why first year college students decide to remain in college or decide to leave.

My goal is to compare students who plan to return to college this fall with those who do not. Feedback from students like you is an important source of information. Your returning the forms indicates you are voluntarily participating in the study. I assure you the information will be kept confidential. Your participation in the study will not cause you any harm. A copy of the results will be placed in the University of Oklahoma library.

This is a very complex and expensive project. If an adequate number of students return the forms, then the time, energy and money I invested in this project will have been worth the effort. Your assistance is greatly appreciated. Perhaps the results of the study will in some way help you determine the best pathway for your future.

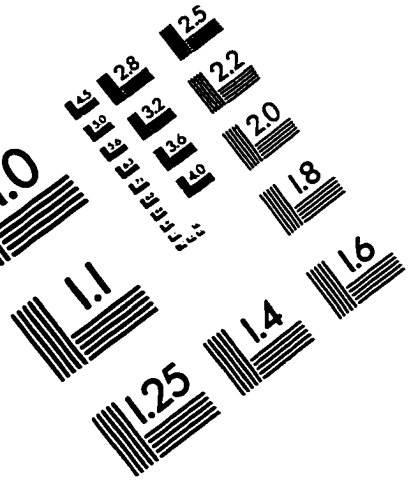
Juanita F. Johnson

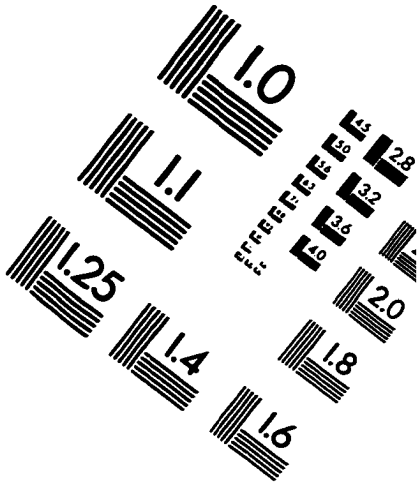
Appendix I: Demographic Data

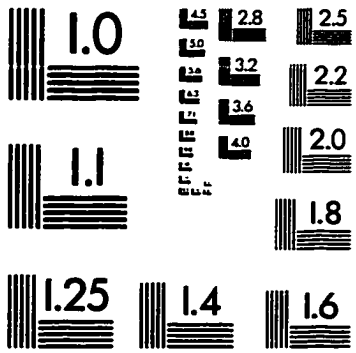
PLEASE CIRCLE ONE

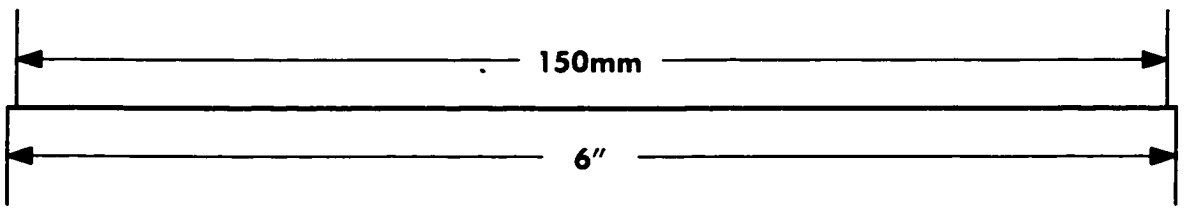
1. Is OBU the first college you have attended ?	Yes	No			
2. Are your married?	Yes	No			
3. Is this your second semester?	Yes	No			
4. How old are you?					
5. Do you live of campus?	Yes	No			
6. Which of the following best describes your mother's education?	Less than 12 years	High School	Special Training	Undergraduate Degree	Masters Degree & Above
7. Which of the following best describes your father's education?	Less than 12 years	High School	Special Training	Undergraduate Degree	Masters Degree & Above
8. The cultural group you identify with?	Hispanic	Asian	Black	White	Other
9. What kinds of grades did you make in high school?	C & D	B & C	A & B	A only	
10. What was your ACT/SAT average?	17 or Less	18-22	23-25	26-27	28+
11. What is your major?	Social Sciences	Physical Sciences	Fine Arts	Humanities	Education
12. Are you full-time?	Yes	No			
13. Male or Female?	Female	Male			
14. What kind of grades are you making now?	C & D	B & C	A & B	A only	
15. Which of the following best describes your parents or parents salary or salaries?	Less than 10,000	20,000 to 40,000	41,000 to 60,000	61,000 to 100,000	100,000 and above

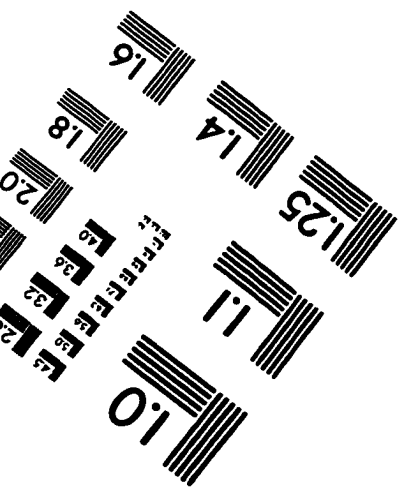
IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (QA-3)

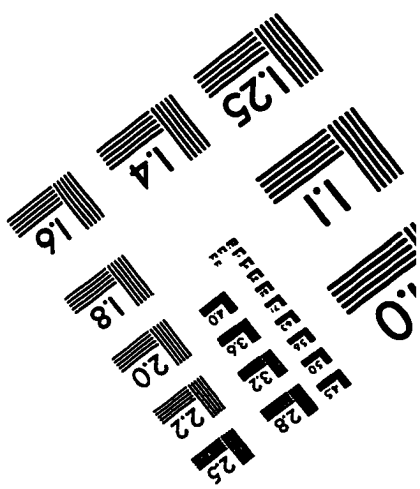












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