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DETERMINING JOB SATISFACTION AND MOTIVATION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS PROFESSIONALS WHO TRANSITION INTO ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

by

Angel J. Hernandez

A Dissertation

Submitted to the
Department of Educational Services and Leadership
College of Education
In partial fulfillment of the requirement
For the degree of
Doctor of Education
at
Rowan University
March 9, 2018

Dissertation Advisor: Ane Turner Johnson, Ph.D.

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Dedications

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother, Clara, who is one of the strongest and most resilient people I have ever met. She taught me to work hard, be humble, overcome adversity, and to never stop being grateful. My mother never attended college, and likely does fully comprehend what a dissertation is, but her love, guidance, and support helped make this dissertation (and defense) possible. Ma, I love you and hope this makes you proud.

I dedicate this dissertation to my best friend, Sonia, who is my rock, my morale compass, and a true example of taking life's lemons and making something resembling lemonade. You remind me to make the most out of every day and to live life to its fullest.

I dedicate this dissertation to my sister Kassandra, brother Andre, uncle Balmir, and grandma Clara. Your love, support, and encouragement helped me complete this journey.

I dedicate this dissertation to my friend Victor. You encourage me to be a life-long learner and believed in me when I doubted myself.

I dedicate this dissertation to my friend Suhail, who taught me the significance of being a leader rather than a manger, and to find power in authenticity and vulnerability.

I dedicate this dissertation to my friends and colleagues Nichole, Kelsey, Catalina, JJ, Barry, Steve, Nettie, Shana, Kevin, TJ, and Mylon. You supported me while on this journey and encouraged me to integrate what I learned into my daily work.

I dedicate this dissertation to all student affairs and academic affairs professionals. Our profession is invaluable! I hope you never lose sight of the significance of our work and never stop advocating for our students.

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I remember graduating with my Master's degree and thinking to myself, "I'm done with school." I never expected that seven years later, I would complete a doctoral degree. This would not have been possible without the love, support, and encouragement of my friends, family, colleagues, and supervisors. Thank you for everything from the bottom of my heart!

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Abstract

Angel J. Hernandez
DETERMINING JOB SATISFACTION AND MOTIVATION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS PROFESSIONALS WHO TRANSITION INTO ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
2017-2018
Ane Turner Johnson, Ph.D.
Doctor of Education

Up to 61% of student affairs professionals exit the field within five years of completing their graduate program (Holmes, Verrier, & Chrisholm, 1983; Lorden, 1998; Rosen, Taube, & Wordsworth, 1980; Rosser & Javinar, 2003). Existing research has explored why attrition is high but has not accounted for what happens after they leave, what fields, if any, they gravitate towards, or how satisfied they are in their new roles. It is uncertain what percentage of academic affairs professionals formerly worked in student affairs or if their needs vary because of their previous student affairs experience. The purpose of this study was to explore levels of satisfaction and motivation among student affairs professionals who transition into academic roles. The study used Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory as a theoretical framework, measuring variables using the Abridged Job Descriptive Index and the Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale (Deci, Ryan, Gagné, Leone, Usunov, & Kornazheva, 2001; Ilardi, Leone, Kasser, & Ryan, 1993; Kasser, Davey, & Ryan, 1992). A total of 468 participants completed the survey. The findings suggest that academic affairs professionals exhibit higher job satisfaction and motivation, that student affairs professionals transition well into academic roles, and that job satisfaction and motivation increases post-transition. Implications for policy, practice, research, and leadership are discussed.

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Table of Contents

Abstract v

List of Figures xiii

List of Tables xiv

Chapter 1: Introduction 1

Academic Affairs and Student Affairs 4

Student Affairs Culture 5

Differences Based on Institutional Type 6

Training 8

Professionalism 9

Academic Affairs Culture 9

Differences Between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs 10

Transitioning From Student Affairs to Academic Affairs 12

Problem Statement 14

Purpose Statement 16

Research Questions 18

Definition of Terms 18

Student Affairs Professional. 18

Academic Affairs Professional. 19

Job Satisfaction 19

Motivation 19

Extrinsic Motivation 19

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Table of Contents (Continued)

Intrinsic Motivation 19

Theoretical Lenses 19

Limitations and Delimitations 21

Varying Definitions of Student and Academic Affairs 21

Research Design 22

Significance of the Study 23

Policy 24

Practice 24

Research 25

Overview of Dissertation 25

Chapter 2: Literature Review 27

Higher Education in the United States 27

Political and Economic Landscape in Higher Education 28

Rising Cost of Education 29

Increased Accountability 30

Competing Priorities 31

Doing More With Less 32

Higher Education as a Place of Employment 33

Organizational Leadership and Values 35

Shared Governance 36

Collective Bargaining Units 37

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Table of Contents (Continued)

Student Affairs Profession 37

Practitioner Job Preparation and Professional Development 38

Where You Work Matters 41

Collaboration 41

Workplace Politics 42

Academic Affairs Profession 43

Theoretical Framework: Self-Determination Theory 45

Attrition Among Student Affairs Practitioners 47

Reasons for Leaving 48

Shifts in Societal Values 48

Job Dissatisfaction 49

Relationship with Supervisor 50

Decision-Making 52

Employee Burnout 53

Decreased Motivation 54

Boredom at Work 55

Disconnect Between Theory and Practice 55

Workplace Environment 56

Other Reasons for Leaving 57

Reasons for Staying 57

Job Stability 57

Choosing Not to Start Over 58

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Table of Contents (Continued)

Conclusion 59

Chapter 3: Methodology 61

Research Questions 61

Assumptions of and Rationale for Quantitative Research 62

Researcher Worldview 63

Survey Research 63

Context 65

Sampling Strategy and Participant Selection 68

Sampling Strategy 68

Participant Selection 69

Instrumentation 70

Key Study Variables 70

Independent Variables 70

Dependent Variables 70

Abridged Job Descriptive Index 70

Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale 73

Data Analysis 76

Validity 78

Ethical Considerations 79

Limitations 80

www.manaraa.com

Table of Contents (Continued)

Conclusion 82

Chapter 4: Results 83

Modification to Methodology 83

Data Analysis 84

Independent Variables 84

Division 84

Transition 84

Dependent Variables 85

Job Satisfaction Variable. 85

Job Motivation Variable. 85

Results 86

Demographics 86

Research Question 1 88

Abridged Job Descriptive Index. 88

Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale 93

Research Question 2 98

Abridged Job Descriptive Index 98

Post-Transition Experience 99

Research Question 3 101

Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale 101

Qualitative Analysis 105

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Table of Contents (Continued)

Integration of Findings 110

Conclusion 112

Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications 113

Discussion 113

Job Satisfaction 114

Academic Affairs Practitioners Report Greater Levels of Satisfaction 114

Post-Transition Motivation and Assimilation 116

Job Motivation 119

Higher Motivation Among Academic Affairs Professionals 119

Academic Affairs Offers Greener Pastures 122

Distinct Values in Student Affairs and Academic Affairs 127

Self-Determination Theory 128

Implications 131

Policy 131

Practice 133

Research 137

Leadership 139

Conclusion 140

References 143

Appendix A: IRB Notice of Approval 156

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

Table of Contents (Continued)

Appendix B: Survey Consent Form 158

Appendix C: Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction At Work Scale 159

Appendix D: Abridged Job Descriptive Index 161

Appendix E: Questions From Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction At Work Scale .. 162

Appendix F: Survey Questions Based On Abridged Job Descriptive Index 163

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

List of Figures

Figure Page

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework....................17

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

List of Tables

Table Page

Table 1. Number of Student and Academic Affairs Professionals, Fall 2010 68

Table 2. Questions Based on Abridged Job Descriptive Index 73

Table 3. Questions Based on Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale 76

Table 4. Characteristics of Survey Respondents 87

Table 5. Crosstabulation of Division and “My current coworkers are smart” 89

Table 6. Crosstabulation of Division and “My current coworkers are dependable” 90

Table 7. Crosstabulation of Division and “My present job is Satisfying” 90

Table 8. Crosstabulation of Division and “My present job is rewarding” 91

Table 9. Crosstabulation of “Opportunities for advancement are limited” by division ... 92

Table 10. Crosstabulation of Division and “My supervisor is someone I admire” 92

Table 11. Independent Samples t-tests of Questions From Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale 97

Table 12. Crosstabulation of Academic Affairs Professionals Who Previously Worked in Student Affairs and “My current coworkers are dependable” 99

Table 13. Job Satisfaction Post-Transition from SA to AA 100

Table 14. CI for Questions Based on Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale 103

Table 15. Characteristics of Open-Ended Respondents 106

Table 16. Means of Student Affairs Professionals and Those Who Transition 123

www.manaraa.com

Chapter 1

Introduction

Many key stakeholders, such as scholars, politicians, and employers believe that the United States higher education system is underperforming (Morris, 2016; Zumeta, 2011). This has resulted in higher education being placed under scrutiny, with critics asking questions such *what exactly are we buying?* and *is college worth it?* given the current job market and rising student debt (Ivory Tower, 2014). Stakeholders frequently ask difficult questions such as what exactly students are learning while in college and how academically rigorous colleges really are *(*Ivory Tower, 2014; Kirst & Antonio, 2008; Zumeta, 2011). Such scrutiny has resulted in a closer review of how institutions of higher education operate, how much students learn, career readiness upon graduation, and the amount of debt students have upon graduating (Ivory Tower, 2014; Kirst & Antonio, 2008). Such scrutiny has resulted in increased accountability being placed on institutions to demonstrate effectiveness, resulting in closer inspection of pedagogy, curricula, course requirements, field placements, and other ways which faculty and staff prepare students for their careers (Buchanan, 2012; Cappelli, 2008; Evans, 1998; Zumeta, 2011).

Changes in funding have resulted in significant spikes in the cost of education. In 2015, the average annual cost for tuition and fees at a four-year public institution in the United States was $9,139, compared to $500 in 1971 (Schoen, 2015). The average cost for tuition and fees at a private institution was $31,231 in 2015 compared to $1,832 in 1971 (Schoen, 2015). These increases are attributed not just to inflation, but also the need for institutions to have amenities and faculty that will attract prospective applicants during a time of state and federal budget cuts (Schoen, 2015; Zumeta, 2011). Concerns

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over the rising cost of education have put pressure on educational leaders to acknowledge that their services account for a significant portion of the increases in costs (Ehrenberg, 2000; Thelin, 2011). This has resulted in national attention, research, and inquiry on how colleges and universities work, how they can maximize efficiency, and how operating costs can be reduced (Ehrenberg, 2000; Thelin, 2011).

Most colleges and universities prospered between 1990 and 2000 (Thelin, 2011). However, the economic recession of the 2000s changed the economic landscape in higher education by creating a need for institutions to adopt business practices in order to stay fiscally solvent. Enrollment was high and institutions were able to focus on the best ways to engage students. This has resulted in college graduates being seen as products of institutions that can attract prospective students and become prospective donors (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Zumeta, 2011).

Additionally, institutions have started to rely less on state funding and began seeking alternative sources (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Zumeta, 2011). For example, Texas A&M University (TAMU) became involved in the cloning business. What began as research turned into a profitable business (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Prospective clients could initiate the process of collecting the cells and DNA of a beloved pet for cloning. Standard service orders were $895 with an annual maintenance fee of $100 per year. This scientific milestone conducted in partnership with an institution of higher education resulted in TAMU securing patents, prestige, additional partnerships, and funding for additional research (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

The story of Dowling College, in Long Island, NY, is another exemplar of this new reality. In May 2016, Dowling College announced that it would close its doors.

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Established in 1955, the institution was over 54 million dollars in debt and was a month away from losing accreditation status (Pettit, 2016). Dowling had a total of 2,453 undergraduate and graduate students during its final year (Dowling, 2016; Pettit, 2016). The college planned to increase revenue by admitting more international students but was unsuccessful in reaching target enrollment and closed a result (Pettit, 2016). The closing of Dowling College resulted in decreased access to education. It also resulted in a loss of jobs for faculty and staff that were employed by the college. Faculty and staff now found themselves unemployed, facing the reality that may have to relocate themselves and their families in order to secure employment. The closing of Dowling College demonstrates the fragility of colleges and universities as organizations. Dowling college was comprised of individuals with unique talents, aspirations, and stories—many of whom found themselves without work because the organization collapsed under new economic conditions.

The story of Dowling College demonstrates what institutions such as TAMU wish to avoid, while contextualizing and reinforcing their desire to secure additional funding. This has changed how decisions are made regarding college and university governance, as institutions explore ways to become fiscally solvent and self-sustaining in order to continue to operate and seek additional funding and resources (Altbach, 2015; Kwong, 2000; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Zumeta, 2011). Student success and achievement may be an institution's ultimate goal, but money and other resources are needed in order to do obtain that goal. Thus, as the roles of institutions of higher education continue to evolve, so do the roles of the faculty and staff that work for the organizations.

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Academic Affairs and Student Affairs

The current structure of most institutions of American higher education dates back to the 1960s and 1970s, which marked the end of *in loco parentis*, a time when the relationship between students and colleges was vastly different than they are today. *In loco parentis* translates to "in the place of a parent"—and this model of governance provided institutions with parental authority regarding students' welfare (Lee, 2011). Faculty inherently adopted parental roles and oversaw in- and out-of-classroom experiences such as advising and intellectual, social, moral, and spiritual development (Reynolds, 2009). "This meant that universities could regulate the students' personal lives—including speech, association, and movement—and take disciplinary action against students without concern for the students' right to due process" (Lee, 2011, p. 66). Higher education has since evolved such that faculty now focus more on "[r]esearch and teaching, leaving the out-of-classroom supervision of students to others" (Reynolds, 2009, p. 5). The *others* Reynolds (2009) refers to are student affairs professionals.

In loco parentis ended during a time of duality in higher education. For the most part, academic affairs, led by faculty, focused more on in-classroom learning and faculty endeavors, whereas student affairs, led by administrators, focused on the out-of-classroom experiences (Reynolds, 2009). However, as the pedagogy of developing the whole student and synthesizing in- and out-of-classroom experiences became the foundation for student affairs practice, student affairs practice also evolved (Dungy & Gordon, 2011).

The field of student affairs as it exists today is relatively young (Buchanan, 2012). The pedagogy which guides current student affairs practice dates back to 1937, to the

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publication of *The Student Personnel Point of View* (Hamrick, Evans, & Schuh, 1998). This document provided a philosophical foundation for practice as well as the student development theories that emerged during the 1960s (Hamrick, Evans, and Schuh, 1998, p. 153). These theories helped shape how practitioners perceive and see "[t]he way that a student grows, progresses, or increases his or her developmental capabilities as a result of enrollment in an institution of higher education" (Schuh, Jones, & Harper, 2011, p. 153). These theories also changed how practitioners related to students, allowing them to guide students and facilitate learning rather than just enforce rules and requirements.

Following *in loco parentis*, student affairs mainly offered services such as advising, counseling, management, and other administrative functions outside of the classroom (Love, 2003). However, the roles of student affairs professionals evolved over time as they became recognized for playing vital roles such as "[l]eading, educating, individual and group advising, counseling, supervising, teaching, training, planning, program development, inquiring, managing, financial management, and assessment and evaluation" (Love, 2003, para. 6). The above show a progression in student affairs since the era of *in loco parentis*, which, consequently, has changed the roles assumed by student affairs practitioners.

Student Affairs Culture

The profession of student affairs has become a specialized field, with institutions commonly requiring personnel to hold a master's degree at minimum and a doctoral degree for administrative leaders and career advancement (Buchanan, 2012). However, attrition rates are estimated to be as high as 61% among new professionals, which suggest that the student affairs workforce, while highly educated, may also be highly dissatisfied

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(Deci & Ryan, 1985; Grandey, 2002; Holmes, Verrier, & Chrisholm, 1983; Rosen, Taube, & Wordsworth, 1980; Rosser & Javinar, 2003). Ironically, student affairs is commonly described as meaningful and fulfilling (Love, 2003). "Those who work in student affairs are educators who use a range of approaches, including programing, advising, environmental management, administration, and policymaking, to achieve educational goals" (Manning & Munoz, 2011, p. 273). This kind of work often requires practitioners to work evenings and weekends to facilitate programs, lectures, and other events—particularly if they are a new professional (Frank, 2013). Additionally, some functional areas such as residence life have after-hours on-call duty rotation, which requires non-traditional work hours. This kind of a schedule has contributed to burnout among practitioners (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Grandey, 2002; Holmes, Verrier, & Chrisholm, 1983; Rosen, Taube, & Wordsworth, 1980; Rosser & Javinar, 2003).

Student affairs culture is largely influenced by institutional type (Hirt, 2006; Manning, Kinzie, & Schuh, 2014). Manning, Kinzie, and Schuh (2014) present traditional and contemporary models of practice, indicating which type of campus each model is best suited for (Manning, Kinzie, & Schuh, 2014). These scholars suggest that the influence of organizational structure directly affects the scope of practitioner's work, which has implications for what practitioners do and how satisfied they are doing it.

Differences based on institutional type. Research suggests that the nature of student affairs work, the pace of work, and how work gets done varies based on institution type (Hirt, 2006; Manning, Kinzie, & Schuh, 2014). The way a practitioner describes their work is likely a reflection of their institution type (Hirt, 2006; Manning, Kinzie, & Schuh, 2014). For instance, practitioners at research universities are more

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likely to speak about being top-tier or competitive, compared to professionals at liberal arts, sectarian, and comprehensive institutions appear to focus more on collaboration than competition (Hirt, 2006). Additionally, practitioners at research institutions self-report being specialist compared to generalists at liberal arts, sectarian, and comprehensive institutions. Practitioners at research institutions reported operating in silos and having little interaction without units or departments, compared to liberal arts, sectarian, and comprehensive institutions, where practitioners reported working in various departments (Hirt, 2006).

Hirt (2006) asserts, "When asked what one lesson they wished they had learned before starting to work at a research university, nearly 5% reported a need to better understand campus politics and power" (Hirt, 2006, p.96). Respondents did not suggest that politics were necessarily negative but reported being unaware of the degree of politics on campus and how to navigate them (Hirt, 2006). Additionally, research suggests that practitioners at research institutions are more likely to lack appropriate balance between work and personal life (Frank, 2013; Hirt, 2006). This negative trait is positively reinforced by the existing culture of rewarding workaholics (Hirt, 2006).

Additionally, strong relationships with colleagues are valued in student affairs. Research suggests that practitioners at research institutions may have difficulty branching outside of their department or unit because staff commonly work in silos which operate independent of each other (Hirt, 2006). Additionally, student affairs practitioners are larger institutions are less likely to know faculty or academic administrators (Hirt, 2006).

Ultimately, a fundamental difference in culture and practice a result of institutional type and size is, "[t]hose at research universities *believe* that their work

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makes a difference in the lives of students whereas those at liberal arts and religiously affiliated campuses *see* the differences in their students (Hirt, 2006, p. 207). This suggests that factors that guide decision-making and indicator of success can vary accordingly.

Training. There over 125 master's and 60 doctoral programs for higher education administration in the United States (American College Personnel Association, 2009; History of NASPA, 2016). Unfortunately, research suggests that attrition rates among new professionals are as high as 61% for reasons such as low pay, long hours, and high stress (Frank, 2013; Holmes, Verrier, & Chrisholm, 1983; Lorden, 1998; Rosen, Taube, & Wordsworth, 1980; Rosser & Javinar, 2003). Research suggests that such high attrition may be attributed to a disconnect between how students are prepared and what they encounter working in the field (Buchanan, 2012). It also means that institutions of higher education are spending time and money to prepare graduate students in higher education administration programs to enter a field with high turnover rates during a time of increased accountability for how they spend funds (Buchanan, 2012; Cappelli, 2008; Evans, 1998; Zumeta, 2011).

Research suggests that training is needed both at the time of hire and as part of continuous development (Buchanan, 2012; Tull, 2006; Winston & Hirt, 2003). Training varies based on institutional size and the number of staff hired (Hirt, 2006; Tull, 2006). Continued training and development is particularly important in student affairs, where a practitioner that worked at a liberal arts college may need to be trained on the culture and practices that take place at a research institution (Hirt, 2006). Ironically, practitioners often dedicate time and resources to training paraprofessional staff while supervisors

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expect for professional staff to already possess the necessary skills and traits (Burkard et al., 2004).

Training and development is also available through national organizations such as the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), and the Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I), professional organizations that host a variety of trainings, certifications, and conferences regionally and nationally (American College Personnel Association, 2017; Association of College and University Housing Officers – International, 2017; History of NASPA, 2016).

Professionalism. Student affairs is an established profession. ACPA and NASPA have individual and joint documents outlining principles of practice, expectations, values, and ethical principles of the profession. One shared document provides a common set of 10 Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Educators. These competency areas indicate foundational, intermediate, and advanced benchmarks designed to establish a minimum competency-level in addition to aspirational levels. This document services as a resource and guide for developing competent new professionals that are well-prepared for mid-level positions (ACPA NASPA Professional Competencies, 2015). The document also emphasizes that supervisors and supervisees share responsibility for professional development (ACPA NASPA Professional Competencies, 2015).

Academic Affairs Culture

Existing literature defines and describes how student affairs practice fosters student learning and supports institution's academic missions (Banta & Kuh, 1998; Hamrick, Evans, & Schuh, 1998; Hirt, 2006). However, literature on academic affairs

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practice and culture is less robust compared to student affairs and tends to be program-specific. The prevalence of narrow research makes it challenging to describe academic affairs culture with as much breadth and depth as student affairs culture.

There is consensus among researchers that academic affairs encompasses curriculum, academic departments, and faculty (Frost et al., 2010; Hirt, 2006). While academic affairs is led by academic faculty, it includes "student affairs practitioners in academic roles" such as advisors or assistant deans (Frost et al., 2010; Violanti, 2007, p. 1). These professionals often feel "caught in the middle" of the competing values of academic and student affairs and fulfill job responsibilities from both aspects of campus life (Violanti, 2007, p. 7). These professionals are trained as student affairs professionals but work in academic roles. The level of depth of the relationships these professionals build with students can be quite different given that the focus is academic and professional in nature, whereas the student of student affairs is to engage in and reflect upon out-of-classroom experiences (Hirt, 2006). Being seen as an academic figure can make a student less likely to disclose non-academic matters affecting academic, such as consuming too much alcohol. It can be easier for student affairs professionals to engage in these conversations because of their access and proximity to students in non-academic settings (Frank, 2013; Hirt, 2006).

Differences Between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs

While there is a general consensus as to the role of student affairs in higher education, divisions of student affairs vary across campuses. A specific department may fall under student affairs at one institution and academic affairs at another. An example of this is evident at two New Jersey public four-year institutions. The Rowan University

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Academic Success Center, which houses tutoring and disability services, is housed under the Division of Student Life (student affairs), whereas the equivocal units at Rutgers University (Learning Centers and Student Access & Educational Equity) are housed under Undergraduate Academic Affairs (Undergraduate Academic Affairs, 2017; Student Life, 2016). This example demonstrates a lack of consistency or uniformity among institutions regarding which departments fall under student affairs or academic affairs. Such differences may be influenced by institutional type and size, as previously noted (Banta & Kuh, 1998; Hirt, 2006).

Over the last several decades, scholars have called for increased collaboration, communication, and information sharing among student and academic affairs (Bourassa & Kruger, 2001; Banta & Kuh, 1998). Some argue that the divisions among separate student affairs and academic affairs remain intact, whereas others believe they have become increasingly blurred (Magolda & Quaye, 2011). For instance, some student affairs professionals teach courses in addition to serving as administrators, challenging the traditional divide between student and academic affairs (Magolda & Quaye, 2011). This exemplar denotes intersection and collaboration between student affairs. However, literature also suggests that there is a cultural hierarchy in higher education where student affairs is thought of as being *inferior* in the eyes of faculty, which suggests that those working in academic affairs may not fully understand or appreciate the work done in student affairs (Bourassa & Kruger, 2001).

While research suggests that the lines between academic affairs and student affairs are less fixed, each division has a unique way of operating, supporting students and demonstrating effectiveness. Banta and Kuh (1998) suggest, “Faculty members are

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generally more attuned to knowledge acquisition and intellectual development; student affairs professionals have greater experience in helping students cultivate certain abilities (like time management or decision-making) and cognitive processes (like moral reasoning)" (p. 2). This description mirrors the culture of each division, with academic affairs focusing on classroom learning and student affairs the out-of-classroom.

This divide persists despite what is known about "[c]ognitive and affective development [being] inextricably intertwined and that the curricular and out-of-class activities are not discrete, independent events; they affect one another (sometimes profoundly) in ways that often are not immediately obvious" (Banta & Kuh, 1998, p. 3). However, assessment measures often reflect the traditional dichotomy, not accounting for learning-rich environments such as residence halls, libraries, studios, faculty offices, or student employment (Banta & Kuh, 1998).

Transitioning From Student Affairs to Academic Affairs

Many academic affairs professionals begin their career in higher education by working in student affairs (Daly & Dee, 2006). However, it is difficult to account for how many professionals transition into academic affairs. For instance, when an employee leaves a position, institutions may or may not record if an employee that is resigning intends to continue in student affairs, transition into academic affairs, or exit higher education entirely. There is also no uniform way to note who leaves a position to further their education with the intent of returning to higher education or if an employee has been involuntarily separated. This makes it difficult to accurately estimate the size of the population of practitioners of academic affairs professionals that previously worked in student affairs.

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Existing research on job attrition in student affairs suggests that there is a revolving door of practitioners, many of which are dissatisfied in their position, which may decrease effectiveness and productivity (Cappelli, 2008; Tull, 2006; Winston & Hirk, 2003). Such findings have promoted further inquiry among researchers to better understand the connection between job satisfaction among student affairs practitioners and why attrition rates are so high. However, issues related to retention and job satisfaction are not unique to student affairs and has also been conducted among academic affairs practitioners. For instance, Glick (1992) conducted a broad national study of job satisfaction among academic affairs professionals and reported low satisfaction rates. Other research has had a narrower focus, such as Donnelly (2009), who found that about 63% of academic advisors reported being satisfied with their supervisor (Donnelly, 2009). This was particularly important considering that literature suggests that a negative perception of supervisor effectiveness has the propensity to increase job dissatisfaction and intentions to exit the field (Buchanan, 2012; Tull, 2006; Winston & Hirt, 2003).

For many, transitioning into academic affairs provides them with the opportunity to work traditional hours in a higher education setting, unlike the non-traditional hours associated with student affairs (Donnelly, 2009; Frank, 2013; Hirt, 2006). Others may seek continual meaningfulness and fulfillment in their work (Branson, 2006). However, research has not addressed how transitioning from student affairs to academic affairs impacts job satisfaction, motivation, attrition, or effectiveness in job performance. Zumeta (2011) asserts,

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> Public policymakers also have a right to ask that colleges and universities demonstrate, as publicly supported entities must now do, with solid evidence and as rigorously as possible, not only what they are doing but what impact they have made. (p. 140)

As such, it is important to better understand how student affairs professionals transition in to academic affairs roles as well as what training or support they need to maximize effectiveness.

Problem Statement

Existing research on attrition among student affairs professionals suggests that rates may be as high as 61% (Holmes, Verrier, & Chrisholm, 1983; Lorden, 1998; Rosen, Taube, & Wordsworth, 1980; Rosser & Javinar, 2003). This suggests that there is a revolving door of practitioners, many of which are dissatisfied in their position, which may decrease effectiveness and productivity (Cappelli, 2008; Tull, 2006; Winston & Hirk, 2003). Such findings have promoted further inquiry among researchers to better understand the connection between job satisfaction among student affairs practitioners and why attrition rates are so high. However, issues related to retention and job satisfaction are not unique to student affairs and has also been conducted among academic affairs practitioners. For instance, Glick (1992) conducted a broad national study of job satisfaction among academic affairs professionals and reported low satisfaction rates. Other research has had a narrower focus, such as Donnelly (2009), who found that about 63% of academic advisors reported being satisfied with their supervisor (Donnelly, 2009). This was particularly important considering that literature suggests that a negative perception of supervisor effectiveness has the propensity to increase job

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dissatisfaction and intentions to exit the field (Buchanan, 2012; Tull, 2006; Winston & Hirt, 2003).

Inconsistencies in how institutions define academic and student affairs can make it difficult for researchers to accurately study trends among practitioners because they may or may not identify as student affairs or academic affairs practitioners because of how their institution is organized. Such inconsistencies are evident in examples such as tutoring and academic support programs being housed under student affairs at one New Jersey public four-year institution and academic affairs at another (Undergraduate Academic Affairs, 2017; Student Life, 2016). Some researchers circumvent this by recruiting participants regardless of if they work in academic or non-academic roles (Tull, 2006). A limitation of this practice is not being able to account for differences as the result of a participant's functional area (student affairs or academic affairs). Another gap in existing literature is the lack of research on student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs. Exploring these gaps may help increase job satisfaction, motivation, which may lower attrition rates. Such benefits can save institutions time and money during a time of increased pressure on institutions to demonstrate effectiveness and fiscal responsibility (Bender, 1980; Buchanan, 2012; Cappelli, 2008; Evans, 1998; Saks, 2005; Tull 2006; Zumeta, 2011).

Existing research provides some insight regarding why attrition rates are as high as they are among student affairs practitioners, but it does not account for what happens after practitioners leave, what fields, if any, they gravitate towards, or how satisfied they are in their new roles—all of which has implications for how graduate programs in higher education administration and supervisors prepare and develop new professionals. This is

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especially important considering that formal research has not explored practitioner transition from student affairs to academic affairs, which has implications for the kind of training and preparation students and new professionals receive, which has an effect on satisfaction, motivation, and productivity (Buchanan, 2012; Tull, 2006; Winston & Hirt, 2003).

While literature exists on academic affairs professionals, it is uncertain what percentage of them formerly worked in student affairs or if their needs vary because of their previous environments. It is important to understand student affairs practitioners exist the field within five years of completing their graduate program and how many of them transitioned into academic roles (Holmes, Verrier, & Chrisholm, 1983; Rosen, Taube, & Wordsworth, 1980; Rosser & Javinar, 2003). Additional research is needed to better understand why student affairs professionals transition into academic affairs and how satisfied and motivated they are in their new roles. Exploring this phenomenon may influence how higher education administration graduate programs prepare their students to enter the field. It also has implications for how institutions recruit, train, and develop staff, which affects the retention and satisfaction rates of professional staff.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to explore levels of satisfaction and motivation among student affairs professionals who transition into academic roles to understand how to best support the unique needs of this group of practitioners. Job satisfaction and motivation will be evaluated using Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory, which measures levels of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation using the presence of three psychological conditions: competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 1985;

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Jones, 2014). A survey design will be used to explore trends, attitudes, and opinions of student affairs practitioners across the United States that have transitioned into academic affairs. This survey instrument used in this study will incorporate questions from the Abridged Job Satisfaction Index and Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale. The participants of this study are full-time academic affairs from the United State whose previous position was in student affairs and have been in academic roles for two years or less. In accordance with existing research on job satisfaction among student affairs professionals, the relationship between academic affairs practitioners and their supervisors will be explored, in addition to job motivation and satisfaction. The findings of this study will help to improve how student affairs professionals across the country are trained and developed to flourish in their positions based on national trends, rather than those specific to an individual institution, state, or region.

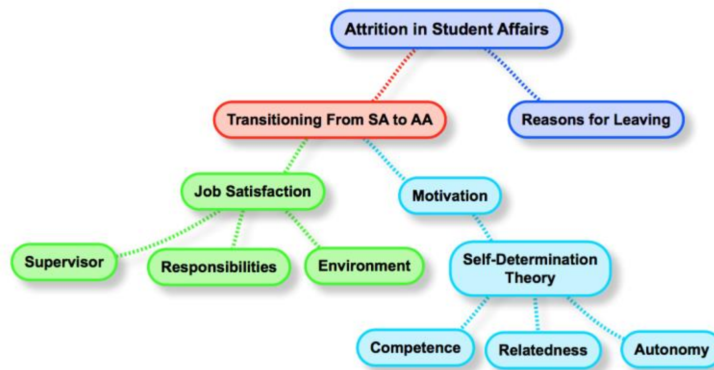

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

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Figure 1 represents the conceptual framework of this study. This study will expand on previous research by examining what academic affairs professionals that formerly worked in student affairs perceive they need to be satisfied and motivated in their new roles.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide this study:

1. How do student affairs and academic affairs professionals rate their job satisfaction and motivation?
2. How is the job satisfaction of academic affairs professionals who previously worked in student affairs influenced by their experiences in student affairs?
3. How is the motivation of academic affairs professionals who previously worked in student affairs influenced by their experiences in student affairs?

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined in terms of this study's purpose.

Student affairs professional. Student affairs professionals are defined as administrators that focus primarily on student's out-of-classroom experiences and learning (Evans & Reason, 2001; Reynolds, 2009). Using this definition, student affairs departments include, but are not limited to: alcohol and other drug programs, campus activities, civic engagement and service-learning, commuter and off-campus living, fraternity and sorority advising, housing and residential life, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender programs and services, multicultural student programs and services, orientation programs, sexual violence-related programs and services, student conduct, and student leadership.

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Academic affairs professional. Academic affairs professionals are staff that serve in academic roles and concentrate primarily on in-classroom experiences, learning, and faculty (Frost et al., 2010; Violanti, 2007). Departments associated with academic affairs include, but are not limited to: academic advising programs, career services, education abroad programs and services, TRIO and other educational opportunity programs, undergraduate admissions.

Job satisfaction. The term job satisfaction refers to the extent that employees enjoy their work and remain invested and committed (Tull, 2006). Existing research on job satisfaction suggests that satisfied employees exhibit higher levels of workplace efficiency and productivity (Hoel, Einarsen, & Cooper, 2003; Keashly & Jagatic, 2003).

Motivation. The term motivation refers to why a person performs an action or task. This broad phenomenon is divided into two types of motivation, extrinsic and intrinsic, which are defined below (Bénabou & Tirole, 2003; Gagne & Deci, 2005).

Extrinsic motivation. The term extrinsic motivation refers to acting or performing for a reward (Bénabou & Tirole, 2003; Gagne & Deci, 2005). For example, an employee may put in extra hours at night in order to justify a pay increase.

Intrinsic motivation. The term intrinsic motivation refers to acting or performing for the sake of doing it (Bénabou & Tirole, 2003; Gagne & Deci, 2005). For example, an employee may put in extra hours at night because they love their job and take pride in producing high-quality work.

Theoretical Lenses

The theories framing this study are found in positive psychology and industrial-organizational psychology theories. Positive psychology examines the average person,

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asking questions such as, "what works, what is right, and what is improving?" (Sheldon & King, 2001). Positive psychology focuses on examining human potential, motives, and capacities (Sheldon & King, 2001). Viewing this study through a positive psychology lens contributes to considering practitioner's needs as humans and how those needs manifest themselves in the context of higher education administration. Moreover, industrial organizational psychology studies workplace behavior and uses psychology to improve the workplace (Koppes, 2003). Industrial-organizational psychology seeks to improve the work place and work lives (Koppes, 2003). These theoretical frameworks were selected because together, they focus on the intersection of student affairs professionals as individuals with goals, motives, and aspirations that come to work, which has a culture of its own, to fulfill their individual mission as well as that of their department and institution. Together, social and industrial-organizational psychology encapsulate facets of job satisfaction and motivation, which this study seeks to measure among student affairs professionals who transition into academic positions.

This study will use Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory to measure job satisfaction and motivation because it examines how both interpersonal and environmental factors influence motivation. Self-determination theory stems from positive psychology, positing that motivation is higher when three psychological conditions are met: relatedness, competence, and autonomy. Sense of relatedness refers to a sense of mattering, being interpersonally connected, and feeling cared for (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Competence refers to feeling effective having mastery of things in environment (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Lastly, autonomy refers to self-endorsed behavior as

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a result of congruence between beliefs and performance—that is, being able to do what one feels should be done (Gagne & Deci, 2005).

Self-determination theory suggests that supporting the three psychological needs of competence, autonomy, and relatedness can lead to the internalization of values, that is, shifting from being extrinsically to intrinsically motivated (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Jones, 2014). The presence or absence of the three psychological needs affect levels of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. For instance, a stimulus such as a reward from a teacher can increase or decrease student's extrinsic motivation if their psychological need of autonomy is met. If the reward is perceived as controlling, such as the ability to pick a prize, autonomy is lost and intrinsic motivation decreases. However, if the reward is praise, students psychological need of autonomy may increase, which would raise intrinsic motivation (Jones, 2014). These same concepts occur in student affairs and academic affairs workplace environments, which are often transactional (extrinsic motivation) or environments that drive performance and foster innovation as a result of buy-in and increased satisfaction (internalized intrinsic motivation) (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Jones, 2014; Saks, 2005). These theories and their relationships will be explored in greater detail in Chapter Two.

Limitations and Delimitations

Varying Definitions of Student and Academic Affairs

A unique factor affecting how student affairs and academic affairs relate to one another is the inconsistent use of the terms student affairs and academic affairs. Current ambiguity in how both terms creates a challenge of some student affairs professionals not identifying as such. This inconsistency is present both in research and practice, as it is not

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always clear which functional areas are included in student affairs or academic affairs. As demonstrated by the divisional classification of the academic learning centers at Rutgers University and Rowan University, a department can be housed under academic affairs at one institution and student affairs at another (Rutgers Learning Centers, 2016; Student Life, 2016).

This poses a challenge for researchers. For instance, some studies of student affairs practitioners may include learning center staff since schools such as Rowan University housed academic support programs under student life but may not depending on how they operationalize such terms (Rutgers Learning Centers, 2016; Student Life, 2016). Ambiguity in what student affairs is and whom exactly student professionals are makes it difficult to produce replicable research studies (Creswell, 2014).

As discussed in definition of terms section of this chapter, student affairs professionals are defined as administrators that focus primarily on student's out-of-classroom experiences and learning (Evans & Reason, 2001; Reynolds, 2009). Furthermore, academic affairs professionals are defined as staff that concentrate primarily on in-classroom experiences, learning, and faculty (Frost et al., 2010).

Research Design

This study uses a survey research design, which collects information regarding knowledge, feelings, values, and behavior (Fink, 2013). Survey data can be used to provide a numeric description of trends, perceptions, or attitudes of a sample or population (Creswell, 2014). While common, surveys are but one way of collecting data (Fink 2013). Quantitative research, and survey research, specifically, is imperfect and has some possible disadvantages. For instance, the generalizability and validity of data is

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dependent upon a sound research design, sampling methodology, and data analysis (Fink, 2013).

Additionally, quantitative research does not provide the context for the observed pattern (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, there is no way of ensuring that participants are responding truthfully and accurately, but strategic questioning helps reduce the chance of this occurring (Fink, 2013; Wright, 2005). For instance, some researchers may ask the same thing in different ways to accurately capture respondent's thoughts, feelings, attitudes, or behaviors (Creswell, 2014; Fink, 2013). Survey research requires access to participants as well as participant access to an electronic device with internet access. Finally, it may be difficult to reach participants for survey research if they do not have access to such a device, are not comfortable responding on an unsecure server, or have a disability (Fink, 2013; Wright, 2005).

Significance of the Study

This study will explore the transition from student affairs to academic affairs, which has not been previously researched. The results of this study can be used to inform practice, policy, and research. This study explores how transitioning into academic roles influences the job satisfaction and motivation of student affairs professionals using Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-determination theory. Researching this phenomenon will allow for a better understanding of national trends, attitudes, and opinions of student affairs practitioners who transition into academic affairs, which may help lower the high attrition rates among student affairs practitioners. Additionally, understanding job satisfaction and motivation among this group of staff helps positively impact productivity, which is crucial to institutions demonstrating their continued effectiveness (Ehrenberg, 2000;

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Thelin, 2011). This study will explore the transition from student affairs to academic affairs, which has not been previously researched.

Policy

The results of this study may have implications for how graduate programs in higher education administration admit and prepare students to enter the field such as course and field experience requirements. It also has implications for policies regarding professional development offered to new professionals and those that supervise them. Findings may be used to increase collaboration between student and academic affairs. Additionally, the results of this study have implications for how graduate programs and supervisors prepare practitioners to flourish in both student and academic affairs, as well as the possible transition that may occur within five years of completing their graduate program (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Grandey, 2002; Holmes, Verrier, & Chrisholm, 1983; Rosen, Taube, & Wordsworth, 1980; Rosser & Javinar, 2003).

Practice

Given the increased accountability placed on institutions of higher education, it is important to hire and retain talented staff and keep them motivated and engaged. This study may motivate leaders at institutions to assess attrition in their units as well as how many academic affairs professionals at their institutions previously worked in student affairs. Additionally, hiring managers and supervisors would likely benefit from the results of this study, as they may better understand possible challenges an employee may face as they transition from student to academic affairs. This may allow them to preemptively instill support systems that foster individual and team success. Ultimately, studying this transition can reveal conditions in which this group of practitioners can

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flourish. Exploring this phenomenon can positively impact the experiences of students across the United States, as they may be interacting with and being served by a revolving door of professionals that are dissatisfied and less productive. Doing so may increase staff performance and effectiveness, which is beneficial to a profession facing increased pressure to demonstrate effectiveness and fiscal responsibility (Bender, 1980; Buchanan, 2012; Cappelli, 2008; Evans, 1998; Saks, 2005; Tull 2006; Zumeta, 2011).

Research

The data collected from this study can inform future research on attrition, job satisfaction, and motivation among student and academic affairs professionals. This study helps fill the existing gap in literature on student affairs professionals who transition into academic roles. It also provides a foundation for other researchers interested in studying student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs to expand upon or replicate in order to better understand trends, perceptions, or attitudes of this population (Creswell, 2014). Other researchers may wish to take study this phenomenon using a qualitative strategy of inquiry to gain context to explain the trends, perceptions, or attitudes that emerge from this study (Creswell, 2014). Researchers can use this study to better inform how staff are trained and on-boarded as they transition from student affairs to academic affairs.

Overview of Dissertation

This study is comprised of five chapter. Chapter One intended to introduce the research topic, purpose of study, significance, research questions, and limitations. Chapter Two will act as the literature review. Chapter Three presents this study's methodology. Chapter Four reveals the findings of the study. Chapter Five discusses the

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findings in light of the existent literature on student affairs and academic affairs practitioners, highlights the implications of the study for leadership, policy, practice, and research and provides a set of recommendations for supporting student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs.

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Chapter 2

Literature Review

Chapter Two provides a review of existing literature pertinent to this study and identifies gaps in the literature. The literature reviewed focuses on higher education as a place of employment, student affairs practice, student affairs practitioners, academic affairs practitioners, reasons practitioners exit the field, and reasons why disengaged employees stay. Drawing from self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Jones, 2014) this literature review seeks to identify gaps in existing research concerning the connection between transitioning from student affairs to academic affairs and attrition rates, job satisfaction, and motivation in order to convey the need for this study.

Higher Education in the United States

The origin of higher education in the United States dates back to 1636-1769. During this time, the original nine Colonial Colleges were formed. Each college had a religious affiliation, operated with less than a handful of faculty members, and was attended solely by clergy or other White men that did not need to work in order to provide for their families (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). Those who wished to be a doctor or lawyer also attended higher education (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). During this time, less than 1% of the total population attended college, which made college admissions radically different than they are today—there were no entrance exams or applications.

Comparatively speaking, in 2009, 16.92% of Americans were enrolled in college (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). This was largely a result of national efforts to have a more educated work force and decades of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) increasing access and providing support to minority students. However, access for many was now

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limited due to the rising cost of attendance coupled with limits on how much aid a student could receive each term (Complete College America, 2009). Additionally, as of 2017, there are over 2,072 bachelor's degree-granting institutions in the United States (Carnegie Classification, 2017).

The reach of colleges and universities extends beyond their campuses and students. Many "Colleges and universities often claim they create jobs, boost tax revenue and stimulate the local economy" (Siegfried & Sanderson, 2006, p. 1). In 2017, the largest employer in nine states was a college or university system (Gillett, 2017). For instance, the University of California was the largest employer in California and the State University of New York System was the largest employer in New York (Gillett, 2017). Additionally, many colleges or universities have hospitals, which is indicative of institutions not just serving students, but patients as well. Additionally, many institutions have developed ties with private industry. For example, Texas A&M University (TAMU) became involved in the cloning business (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

Political and Economic Landscape in Higher Education

It is important to discuss higher education administration in a broader national political and economic context in order to address larger environmental factors which may directly or indirectly influence student affairs or academic affairs practitioner's job satisfaction and motivation. Increasing financial pressure is changing how educational leaders lead (Eckel, 2000; Kezar & Lester, 2011; Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004). Prioritizing the bottom-line has changed how institutions of higher education operate, which affects the environments academic affairs professionals work under.

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There are over 2,072 public and private bachelor's degree-granting institutions in the United States (Carnegie Classification, 2017). Public institutions are funded primarily by local, state, and federal funding and usually offer lower tuition rates compared to private colleges—especially those who reside in the same state as the institution (College Board, 2017). Private colleges primarily rely on tuition, fees, as private funding as their sources of funding (College Board, 2017. Some private institutions are for-profit whereas others are not-for-profit (College Board, 2017; Cragg & Henderson, 2013).

Changes in the workforce, a changing economy, increased accountability from stakeholders have shaped the current structure of higher education in the United States. This includes the creation of new majors and programs and how students are prepared to enter their chosen field (Buchanan, 2012; Cappelli, 2008; Evans, 1998; Zumeta, 2011).

Rising Cost of Education

Changes in funding have resulted in significant spikes in the cost of education. In 2015, the average annual cost for tuition and fees at a four-year public institution in the United States was $9,139, compared to $500 in 1971 (Schoen, 2015). The average cost for tuition and fees at a private institution was $31,231 in 2015 compared to $1,832 in 1971 (Schoen, 2015). These increases are attributed to institution's needs to have amenities and faculty that will attract prospective students despite their decreased state funding (Schoen, 2015; Zumeta, 2011).

This has implications for the accessibility of higher education, the rising cost of higher education, and student's quality of life post-graduation. This also has implications for student affairs professionals, whose starting taxable income start as low as under $20,000 despite the fact that the student affairs profession has become a specialized field,

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with institutions commonly requiring personnel to hold a master's degree at minimum and a doctoral degree for administrative leaders and career advancement (Buchanan, 2012; Live In Report, 2017).

In 2016, the US Department of Labor released *Guidance for Higher Education Institutions on Paying Overtime Under the Fair Labor Standards Act*, which raised the Fair Labor Standards Act's (FLSA's) salary threshold for exemption from overtime pay to $913 per week ($47,476 annually) in 2016 (Department of Labor, 2016). However, the legislation was blocked by a federal judge in Texas and eventually was not enacted (Nagele-Piazza, 2016). This would have resulted in changes to pay structures and salaries for higher education employees across the United States (Department of Labor, 2016; Nagele-Piazza, 2016).

Increased Accountability

An emerging theme in student affairs literature is the increased accountability placed on institutions of higher education as they become increasingly dependent on alternate source of funding due to decreased state funding (Altbach, 2015; Kwong, 2000; Zumeta, 2011). This has resulted in higher education adopting business-like practices, which many argue is indicative of the field no longer functioning as a public good (Altbach, 2015; Kwong, 2000; Zumeta, 2011). Thus, scarce resources have resulted in increased accountability placed on institutions competing for limited funds by demonstrating effectiveness (Altbach, 2015; Kwong, 2000; Zumeta, 2011). This has resulted in a closer inspection of monetary spending, pedagogy, curricula, course requirements, field placements, and other ways faculty and staff prepare students to enter the workforce (Buchanan, 2012; Cappelli, 2008; Evans, 1998; Zumeta, 2011). At the

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same time, free market practices are increasingly permeating the culture of higher education, often in pursuit of increased funding in response to threats to rising costs (Kwong, 2000).

Zumeta (2011) asserts that accountability is not new in higher education, arguing that accountability is socially constructed and has appeared in different forms over time. For example, American higher education was intentionally founded and designed not to mirror the faculty-governance model of the Oxford scholars. Instead, clergy and legislators were included on governing boards to keep institutions acting in line with societal norms. Zumeta (2011) argues that this demonstrates social accountability, making a connection to present day accountability as different rather than new. One reason accountability is taking on new forms is that legislators have longer tenures, a more educated staff, increased access to measurable data and anecdotal evidence such as family members attending state colleges or universities (Zumeta, 2011).

The current culture of accountability has created a culture of justification where the needs of states to justify their spending have resulted in the adoption of free market practices in higher education such as being results- and efficiency-driven (Altbach, 2015; Kwong, 2000; Zumeta, 2011).

Competing Priorities

Institutions often face competing priorities, focusing on raising their institution's ranking rather than on key issues such as diversity, equity, or innovation in the classroom (Eckel, 2000; Kezar & Lester, 2011; Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004). There is also an emphasis on institutions establishing relationships with outside stakeholders such as policy makers or donors and on faculty to research and publish (Kezar & Lester, 2011;

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Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004). It has also resulted in an increase in adjunct faculty in many institutions (Oprean, 2012). It has also resulted in institutions increasing enrollment in order to offset decreases in funding (Bernstein, 2017; Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004).

In student affairs, campus growth plans have a direct influence on housing programs, which need to expand in order to accommodate a growing student population. This has resulted in an increase in public-private partnerships in order to keeping up with enrollment demands and aging infrastructure (Bernstein, 2017). Under such partnerships, institutions partner with private developers to develop student housing. Such partnerships reduce or minimize institutional debt while granting private developers access to students or land which they would not be able to access otherwise (Bernstein, 2017). Additionally, student affairs administrators are facing increased pressure to maximize efficiency and provide evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of current practices on learning and development (Eckel, 2000; Kezar & Lester, 2011; Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004). This paradigm shift leaves student affairs practitioners seeking to collaborate with faculty whose priorities are not always student learning (Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004). It is important to consider these macro-level environmental factors that influence the current culture in higher education, shaping how individual student affairs and academic affairs practitioners perform their duties and interact with students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders.

Doing More With Less

Financial hardship in higher education has also contributed to a culture of doing more with less (Bourassa & Kruger, 2001). The American higher education system continues to be scrutinized as greater accountability is placed on institutions for student

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learning outcomes (Manning, Kinzie, and Schuh, 2014). Colleges and universities across the country adopted cost-savings measures in response to the budget cuts that followed the recession of the late 2000s. These include cutting faculty positions, eliminating course offerings, closing computer labs, reducing library services, forgoing salary increases, and more (Oliff, Palacios, Johnson, and Leachman, 2013). Some institutions have even had to close altogether as a result of not being able to overcome the loss in revenue (Oliff, Palacios, Johnson, and Leachman, 2013; Pettit, 2016). Students, parents, legislative bodies, accreditation commissions, and the general public have a vested interest in graduation rates, evidence of student learning, and overall institutional effectiveness (Manning, Kinzie, and Schuh, 2014).

Higher Education as a Place of Employment

Much of existing literature on higher education employees focuses on tenure- and non-tenure track faculty. However, institutions of higher education are comprised of professional and paraprofessional staff which serve in areas such as admissions, advisors, administrators, counselors, medical personnel, public safety, information technology, human resources, custodial, food-service, student activities, and many more (Evans & Reason, 2001; Manning, Kinzie, & Schuh, 2014; Quaye & Harper, 2014). Positions are generally classified as faculty or staff, lumping non-faculty positions together (Facts and Figures, 2017; Frost et al., 2010). For instance, Rutgers University, which was discussed in Chapter one has over 68,000 students, over 8,000 part- and full-time faculty, and more than 14,000 part- and full-time staff (Facts and Figures, 2017).

Manning, Kinzie, and Schuh (2014) argue that one size does not fit all as a result of institutional mission, size, location, and resources. They discuss traditional and

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innovative models of practice, allowing practitioners to learn about operational models they may wish to implement on their campuses. The Student-Centered Innovative Model, for example, places "[s]tudents at the center of the enterprise, but do[es] so in novel ways to enhance student success" (p. 132). This model entrusts students with managing organizational functions while developing leadership skills (Manning, Kinzie, & Schuh, 2014). Once again, Rutgers University and Rowan University demonstrate how underlying philosophical values and fiscal solvency also impact organizational structure and the division of labor among institution of higher education. For instance, Rowan University's department of Residential Learning and University Housing employs Graduate Resident Directors, which oversee their assigned residence hall(s) and directly supervise Resident Assistants (RAs) (Graduate Coordinators, 2017). Resident Directors (RDs) at Rowan University are matriculated graduate students, whereas Rutgers University's structure has Resident Directors (graduate students) and Residential Learning Coordinators (Master's-level professionals) overseeing halls and supervising RAs (Graduate Internships, 2017; Professional Employment, 2017). Stockton University, another public four-year institution in New Jersey, only employs full-time Master's-level Complex Directors (Complex Director, 2017). Lastly, The College of New Jersey, also a public four-year institution in New Jersey, only requires Residence Directors to hold a bachelor's degree, while preferring a master's degree (Residence Director, 2016).

The aforementioned staffing structures have implications for the quality of services and support offered, as students are being supported by staff with varying levels of education, training, and experience. It should be noted, however, that both staffing structures are seen across the United States, with many institutions hiring students

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enrolled in higher education administration graduate programs or related fields (Graduate Internships, 2017). They also demonstrate how a new professional could be position to reach a metaphorical glass ceiling, as their level of education may restrict opportunities for promotion or advancement. Thus, some practitioners may return to school to earn a more advanced degree, which could contribute to current attrition rates among student affairs professionals.

Organizational Leadership and Values

As colleges and universities face increased pressure from external stakeholders, many argue that change is needed from within so that they can evolve beyond their current practices (Bryman, 2007; Fullan & Scott, 2009) Traditional organizations operate under the premises of top-down leadership, standardization, uniformity, and an emphasis on tasks and authority (Kezar & Lester, 2011). Literature on change in higher education leadership focuses heavily on ways leaders can get buy-in and effectively communicate a vision—suggesting a paradigm change (Kezar & Eckel, 2002). Organizations outside of higher education which are considered innovative, such Apple, have abandoned the traditional down-down structure and replaced with a culture that emphasizes collaboration, frequently asking questions, exploring, and finding ways to improve practice (Thomke & Feinberg, 2009).

This is an example of Argyris and Schon's (1974) notion of single-loop versus double-loop learning among leaders. Single-loop learning is demonstrated by problem solving in accordance with current expectations. Goals, values and plans are not questioned while operating in single-loop learning (Argyris & Schol 1974). Conversely, double-loop learning involves revaluating, reframing, and altering perception to achieve a

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more desirable outcome (Argyris & Schon, 1974). These skills are coveted among organizational leaders inside and outside of higher education (Fullan & Scott, 2009; Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Thomke & Feinberg, 2009), which as discussed in Chapter 1, needs to demonstrate effectiveness and positive results to appease stakeholders and secure sources of funding (Buchanan, 2012; Cappelli, 2008; Evans, 1998; Kezar & Lester, 2011; Zumeta, 2011).

Shared Governance

In 1966, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), American Council on Education (ACE), and AGB released a *Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities*, establishing "areas of primary responsibility for governing boards, administrations, and faculties" (Shared Governance, 2015). Faculty focused on areas such as curriculum, instruction, and research, whereas the governing board's focus was on resource allocation among competing demands, whereas the president had responsibility for goal definition and attainment (Statement, 2015). This model of shared governance exists, though some argue that faculty have decreased influence given the adoption of top-down leadership and business-like practices (Eckel, 2000; Kezar & Lester, 2011; Rhoades, 2004).

For example, University Governance at Princeton consists of 21 members: The President, Provost, seven academic officers (Deans), eight Vice Presidents, an Executive Vice President, the General Council, President of the Princeton University Investment Company, and the Chief Audit and Compliance Officer (University Governance, 2015).

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Collective Bargaining Units

The National Labor Relations Act of 1935 allowed employees to be represented by collective bargaining units. By 1972, 37 states passed laws permitting state employees to bargain collectively (Ehrenberg et al., 2004). Different collective bargaining units represent different employee types. For instance, some units represent blue-collar workers whereas other may focus more on white-collar positions (Ehrenberg et al., 2004). Benefits of being in a collective bargaining unit may include: better wages, more access to benefits, job security, strength in numbers and seniority (Keller, 2012). However, drawbacks include union dues, a loss of autonomy, and a less collaborative work environment (Keller, 2012).

Current turnover rates among student affairs professionals are as high as 61% within five years of completing their graduate program (Einarsen, Hoel, & Cooper, 2003; Holmes, Verrier, & Chrisholm, 1983; Keashly & Jagatic, 2011; Rosen, Taube, & Wordsworth, 1980; Rosser & Javinar, 2003; Tull, 2006). "Employees excluded from coverage under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) include supervisors, managers, confidential employees, and others" (Society for Human Resource Management, 2012). Thus, many of the professionals exiting the field may have been in a collective bargaining unit.

Student Affairs Profession

The current structure of most institutions of American higher education dates back to the 1960s and 1970s, which marked the end of *in loco parentis*, a model of governance which provided institutions with parental authority regarding students' welfare (Lee, 2011). During this time, faculty adopted parental roles and oversaw in- and

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out-of-classroom experiences such as advising and intellectual, social, moral, and spiritual development (Lee, 2011; Reynolds, 2009). Higher education has since evolved. Faculty now focus more on "[r]esearch and teaching, leaving the out-of-classroom supervision of students to others" (Reynolds, 2009, p. 5). Student affairs supports institution's academic missions by offering services needed by students and collaborating with faculty to promote student engagement (Evans & Reason, 2001; Manning, Kinzie, & Schuh, 2014; Quaye & Harper, 2014).

Student engagement is defined as involvement in educationally purposeful activities inside and out of the classroom (Manning, Kinzie, & Schuh, 2014). Practitioners "[use] a range of approaches, including programing, advising, environmental management, administration, and policymaking, to achieve educational goals" (Manning & Munoz, 2011, p. 273). This is a wide-scope. As such, student affairs includes units such as: alcohol and other drug programs, campus activities, civic engagement and service-learning, commuter and off-campus living, fraternity and sorority advising, housing and residential life, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender programs and services, multicultural student programs and services, orientation programs, sexual violence-related programs and services, student conduct, and student leadership (Quaye & Harper, 2014).

Practitioner Job Preparation and Professional Development

Many employers fail to recognize the impact job training has on performance (Kalleberg, 2009). Unfortunately, higher education is not exempt from this (Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000; Cappelli, 2008; Lorden, 1998). In fact, employer's return on investment for ongoing talent management and professional development far

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outweighs the costs (Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000; Cappelli, 2008; Lorden, 1998). This is because researchers have found a correlation between increases in employee talent, skills, and competence and their levels of productivity and innovation (Cappelli, 2008; Lorden, 1998). This complements the findings of research from outside of higher education, which has found that employers that reduce funding from training and development are more likely to have staff that are less able, less loyal, and more likely to seek better opportunities from external organizations (Cappelli, 2008). This suggests that employers should provide ongoing professional development as part of a larger plan to cultivate and retain talented personnel (Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000; Cappelli, 2008; Lorden, 1998). Based on these findings, it is recommended that employers should avoid cutting professional development funds as much as possible, as doing so could end up costing employers more in the long run (Cappelli, 2008; Lorden, 1998).

Talent management and professional development need to become organizational priorities rather than afterthoughts (Cappelli, 2008; Kalleberg, 2009). That is, most organizations do not use talent management appropriately—partially because it requires being proactive and many organizations operate in ways which are reactionary (Cappelli, 2008; Kalleberg, 2009). In the context of higher education, talent management appears in various forms, such as department- or institutional-sponsored development, regional and national conferences, networking, shadowing, goal-setting, etc. (ACPA NASPA Professional Competencies, 2015). Failure to properly invest and develop staff may result in increased turnover and hiring externally because the most qualified candidates would not come from within an organization (Cappelli, 2008).

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Some scholars assert that the scope of student affairs professionals is too great to expect for students in higher education administration graduate programs to gain everything they need to know (Cuyjet, 2009; Longwell-Grice, & Molina, 2009; Palmer, 1995). This suggests that employers may need to intentionally avoid assuming that graduates possess the skills and competencies they desire straight out of graduate school. It also suggests that new professionals require ongoing mentorship, guidance, and support in order to flourish in their roles (Cappelli, 2008; Lorden, 1998; Palmer, 1995). The two largest professional organizations for student affairs professionals, the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) have developed a common set of 10 Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Educators. These competency areas indicate foundational, intermediate, and advanced benchmarks designed to establish a minimum competency-level in addition to aspirational levels. This document services as a resource and guide for developing competent new professionals that are well-prepared for mid-level positions (ACPA NASPA Professional Competencies, 2015).

Thus, while research supports that ongoing professional development, it is important to recognize that employers are not required to do so. Some may lack the necessary time and resources needed to appropriately develop staff. Institutional size may also affect development opportunities, as smaller institutions generally have fewer staff and resources (Hirt, 2006). Thus, new professionals may need to be more assertive in seeking development opportunities, as the responsibility cannot fall on supervisors alone (ACPA NASPA Professional Competencies, 2015).

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Where You Work Matters

The work of student affairs practitioners is largely correlated with their institutional type and size (Hirt, 2006). Professionals at larger institutions tend to function more as specialists compared to those at smaller institutions that serve as generalists with wider-scope of responsibilities (Hirt, 2006). Functional area also dictates whether a professional is more of a generalist or specialist (Hirt, 2006). For instance, working in housing and residence life requires training across areas such as supervision, programming, student development, crisis-response, and leadership (Kaliher, 2010). These practitioners must not only be well-versed in these areas, but also be able to coach and train supervisees in these areas. This is vastly different than smaller offices such as service learning or volunteerism, which have a much narrower mission and less staff (Schuh, 2011).

Collaboration. Where practitioners work also affects workplace culture, values, and norms (Hirt, 2006). Calls for higher education to do more with less while demonstrating effectiveness resulted in a push across institutions for cross-collaboration between student affairs and academic affairs (Bourassa & Kruger, 2001; Hogan, 2017). It has become increasingly common for faculty to assume roles traditionally associated with student affairs and vice-versa (Bourassa & Kruger, 2001; Hogan, 2017). Conversely, some student affairs professionals also teach courses in addition to serving in their primary role as administrators; further challenging the traditional divide between student and academic affairs (Magolda & Quaye, 2011).

Student affairs has evolved from *In Loco Parentis* to a culture student engagement, which emphasizes participating in educationally effective practices inside

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and outside the classroom (Quaye & Harper, 2014). This has contributed to the national push for cross collaboration, as demonstrated by publications such as *Student Affairs for Academic Administrations*, which helps academic administrators see student affairs as one of their greatest resources for enhancing learning and improving student's experiences (Hogan, 2017). Literature suggests that while there is general agreement on the benefits of collaboration, that not all institutions, or even departments within a specific institution, have adopted such practices (Bourassa & Kruger, 2001; Hogan, 2017).

The absence of a culture of collaboration may contribute to decreased employee motivation, as it creates a disconnect between best practices practitioners learn in their graduate programs and the reality of their position (Buchanan, 2012; Tull, 2006). This certainly can contribute negatively to an employee's job satisfaction, relationship with supervisor, involvement in decision-making, autonomy, and the ability to use knowledge learned in graduate school, all of which negatively impact attrition among student affairs professionals (Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 200; Bourassa & Kruger, 2001; Evans, 1998; Quaye & Harper, 2014, Tull, 2006).

Workplace politics. A challenge to cross-collaboration between student and academic affairs is that some institutions harness a culture where student affairs practitioners "do not have the same rights and privileges as their teaching colleagues" (Holland & Kleinberg, 2016, p. 115). This results in student affairs practitioners feeling that there is not a level-playing field and that their work is seen as less-than compared to the work of faculty and academic professionals (Hogan, 2017; Holland & Kleinberg, 2016). Some scholars assert that academic affairs is often placed on a higher pedestal,

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making student affairs practitioners see themselves as second-class citizens (Bourassa & Kruger, 2001; Holland & Kleinberg, 2016). Self-Determination Theory suggests that such negative sentiments are detrimental to motivation and moral, as employees who feel connected and valued have a stronger sense of relatedness than those that do not (Deci & Ryan, 1985). This directly impacts the driving force behind why employees do what they do and results in them being more intrinsically motived than intrinsically motivated, which creates does not foster innovation or going above and beyond (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

This inferiority complex can be heightened given that academic affairs positions generally require less night and weekend commitments than student affairs positions, which offers an increased sense of stability and work-life balance to academic affairs professionals (Frank, 2013). Working in an environment that makes one feel undervalued as a second-class citizen can certainly negatively impact job satisfaction, motivation, and morale, making a practitioner more likely to disengage from their role (Tull, 2006; Violanti, 2007; Ward, 1995, Winston & Hirt, 2003).

Academic Affairs Profession

Existing literature describes the student affairs profession as well as ways which practitioners support institution's academic missions (Banta & Kuh, 1998; Hamrick, Evans, & Schuh, 1998; Hirt, 2006). However, literature on academic affairs practice and culture is less robust compared to student affairs and tends to be program-specific. The prevalence of narrow research makes it challenging to describe academic affairs culture with as much breadth and depth as student affairs culture.

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The term academic affairs is frequently used to distinguish student affairs and academic affairs, as academic affairs encapsulates what student affairs has historically not been: curriculum, classroom learning, academic departments, and faculty (Frost et al., 2010). Academic affairs is comprised of faculty and "student affairs practitioners in academic roles" such as academic advisors or assistant deans (Frost et al., 2010; Violanti, 2007, p. 1). This language alludes to a division within academic affairs, whereas practitioners in academic affairs are not necessarily equal to faculty (Frost et al., 2010; Violanti, 2007).

Academic affairs focuses on academic advising, accreditation, institutional ranking, student retention and completion rates, grades, study skills, academic coaching, pedagogy, curricula, course requirements, field placements, research opportunities, and other metrics (Buchanan, 2012; Cappelli, 2008; Evans, 1998; Kezar & Lester, 2011; Zumeta, 2011). Literature does not directly state that academic affairs professionals have a better work-life balance, but it does suggest that student affairs practitioners may be more likely to work after hours or on weekends (Frank, 2013; Hirt, 2006). Additionally, there seems to be a covert hierarchy, where academic affairs professionals are thought to be on a higher pedestal than student affairs practitioners (Holland & Kleinberg, 2016). Thus, it not surprising that some student affairs practitioners may aspire to transition to academic affairs in hopes of better work-life balance, having to work less on nights and weekends, working closer with students and faculty in academic settings, and working in an environment with a higher regard (Holland & Kleinberg, 2016). This pedestal is evident in the fact that literature on academic affairs practice and culture is less robust compared to student affairs and tends to focus on specific programs rather than academic

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affairs as a whole (Banta & Kuh, 1998; Hamrick, Evans, & Schuh, 1998; Hirt, 2006). Literature supports cross-collaboration between student affairs and academic affairs, but this effort seems to be driven more so by student affairs, as evident by publications such as *Student Affairs for Academic Administrators*, which presents student affairs as a resource for academic administrators, one which is often underutilized (Hogan, 2017).

Theoretical Framework: Self-Determination Theory

This study will use Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory to measure job satisfaction and motivation because it examines how both interpersonal and environmental factors influence motivation. Self-determination theory is rooted in positive psychology, positing that motivation is higher when three psychological conditions are met: relatedness, competence, and autonomy. Sense of relatedness refers to a sense of mattering, being interpersonally connected, and feeling cared for (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Competence refers to feeling effective having mastery of things in environment (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Lastly, autonomy refers to self-endorsed behavior as a result of congruence between beliefs and performance—that is, being able to do what one feels should be done (Gagne & Deci, 2005).

Self-determination theory suggests that supporting the three psychological needs of competence, autonomy, and relatedness can lead to the internalization of values, that is, shifting from being extrinsically to intrinsically motivated—doing something because you want to rather than because you have to (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Jones, 2014). This shift results in an alignment between actions, values, and behaviors, which allow for higher levels of motivation and satisfaction (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Jones, 2014).

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The presence or absence of these three psychological needs directly affect extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Self-Determination Theory has been used in educational research to better understand, students, teachers, administrations, and leadership (Lyness et al., 2013; Orsini et al., 2016; Standage, Duda, & Ntoumanis, 2005). It has been applied to classroom teaching styles and curriculum development (Lyness et al., 2013). For instance, a course director used self-determination theory when designing a medical school course after being warned that attendance at lectures was low and that students only cared about information if it would appear on an exam (Lyness et al., 2013). The director wanted students to engage in classroom learning rather than simply meet minimum requirements (Lyness et al., 2013).

Motivation is complex and individualized. However, research has shown patterns in relation to motivation and performance. For example, literature on motivation reveals that unintended consequences are not uncommon. For instance, incentivizing behavior can lead to avoiding non-incentivized behavior (Lyness et al., 2013). Additionally, people are less likely to perform a behavior that has been incentivized after it has been removed (Lyness et al., 2013). Thus, educational leaders need to make informed decisions in how they seek to motivate students, faculty, and staff as they support their institutional mission and appease stakeholders and politicians (Buchanan, 2012; Cappelli, 2008; Evans, 1998; Kirst & Antonio, 2008; Morris, 2016; Zumeta, 2011). The presence or absence of these psychological needs may also impact job satisfaction, which has implications for employee retention and quality of work. Exploring this phenomenon can positively impact the experiences of students across the United States, as they may be interacting with and being served by a revolving door of professionals that are

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dissatisfied and less productive. Doing so may increase staff performance and effectiveness, which is beneficial to a profession facing increased pressure to demonstrate effectiveness and fiscal responsibility (Bender, 1980; Buchanan, 2012; Cappelli, 2008; Evans, 1998; Saks, 2005; Tull 2006; Zumeta, 2011).

Attrition Among Student Affairs Practitioners

Turnover rates have become a point of concern for many leaders because attrition rates among student affairs professionals are as high as 61% within the first five years of completing their graduate programs (Einarsen, Hoel, & Cooper, 2003; Holmes, Verrier, & Chrisholm, 1983; Keashly & Jagatic, 2011; Rosen, Taube, & Wordsworth, 1980; Rosser & Javinar, 2003; Tull, 2006). The question most researchers have asked in response to this phenomenon is: *Why are practitioners leaving?* This has been the focus of many studies on attrition among student affairs professionals (Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000; Evans, 1998; Tull, 2006). Some findings may not directly apply, as some researchers have combined student affairs and academic affairs practitioners into the broader category of higher education, making it difficult to distinguish between the needs of academic affairs and student affairs professionals (Johnsrud, Heck, & Rosser, 2000).

High attrition rates among student affairs professionals suggests that many students are working with a revolving door of student affairs professionals. Additionally, high turnover rates suggest that institutions may be spending time and money on recruiting, training, and onboarding new staff—resources which could be allocated elsewhere if rates were lower (Cappelli, 2008). Research on job satisfaction and morale supports the assertion that satisfied employees are more productive, less absent, and

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remain in their roles for longer periods of time than less satisfied employees (Einarsen, Hoel, & Cooper, 2003; Keashly & Jagatic, 2011). This means that it is in the best interest of educational leaders to invent in their staff's morale and satisfaction if they wish to achieve optimal levels of performance and avoid the costs associated with recruiting, hiring, onboarding, and training new staff (Cappelli, 2008).

A review of existing literature reveals a lack of research on professionals who transition from student affairs to academic affairs, making it difficult to approximate what percentage of student affairs practitioners' transition into student affairs or how many academic affairs professionals formerly worked in student affairs. Research has also not addressed why such transitions occur or practitioner's level of job satisfaction post-transition.

Reasons for Leaving

Previous research has provided a foundation for understanding regarding why attrition rates are so high among new student affairs professionals. Common reasons for leaving the field include job dissatisfaction, ineffective supervision, a disconnect between theory and practice, burnout, decreased motivation, limited professional development, and boredom at work (Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000; Evans, 1998; Tull, 2006). Such findings have resulted in increased interest in exploring attrition among student affairs professionals (Tull, 2006).

Shifts in societal values. According to research, employees feel better about their work when they believe that their work matters and is fulfilling (Branson, 2006; Milliman, Czaplewski, & Ferguson, 2003). While this is partially influenced by the nature of one's work, environmental factors also play a role in feeling that one's work

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matters and is important (Branson, 2006; Milliman, Czaplewski, & Ferguson, 2003). This is vastly different than the pragmatic culture that emerged in the 1950s where work was thought as a means of making a living (Jones, 1980). The value of work has changed overtime, with employees now seeking work to bring fulfillment and joy to their lives (Jones, 1980).

Higher education is not the only job sector that struggles to retain staff (Kalleberg, 2009). This has prompted research across disciplines on issues of staff training, development, and retention (Kalleberg, 2009). The average length of time the average person works for a single company or organization has decreased compared to previous decades (Kalleberg, 2009). This means that current employees are more comfortable to apply for jobs at other companies than they have been in the past. Acts which were once considered taboo are now widely-accepted, which has likely contributed to high turnover rates in student affairs (Kalleberg, 2009).

Job dissatisfaction. High job dissatisfaction and morale increase the likelihood of staff leaving a position (Ward, 1995). Issues related to employee retention and job satisfaction are not unique to student affairs. A broad national study of job satisfaction among academic affairs professionals and reported low satisfaction rates (Glick, 1992). Similarly, 48.4% of respondents from a sample of academic affairs professionals that changed jobs reported poor management as their primary reason for doing so (Violanti, 2007). Such findings support the finding that supervisors have a significant influence on employee satisfaction and retention (Tull, 2006; Violanti, 2007; Winston & Hirt, 2003).

Other research has had a narrower focus, such as Donnelly (2009), who found that about 63% of academic advisors reported being satisfied with their supervisor (Donnelly,

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2009). This was particularly important considering that literature suggests that a negative perception of supervisor effectiveness has the propensity to increase job dissatisfaction and intentions to exit the field (Buchanan, 2012; Tull, 2006; Winston & Hirt, 2003). Another study found that female student affairs practitioners are more often single or divorced compared to their male counterparts, which affects their overall quality of life, work life balance, and ability to engage at work (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

According to research, as little as 36% of student affairs practitioners that report being satisfied in their position intended to remain in the field (Bender, 1980). This suggests the presence of outside variables that influence a student affairs practitioner's level of job satisfaction.

Relationship with supervisor. Supervisors heavily influence whether an employee feels valued in the workplace (Branson, 2006; Milliman, Czaplewski, & Ferguson, 2003). Research also suggests that positive relationships with supervisors and mentors make practitioners less likely to leave the field because they exhibit higher levels of satisfaction (Holmes, Verrier, & Chisholm, 1983; Winston & Hirt, 2003). A lack of positive supervision and mentorship may contribute to current attrition rates. Supervisors directly and indirectly influence employees' workplace environment and job satisfaction (Cappelli, 2008; Holmes, Verrier, & Chisholm, 1983; Tull, 2006; Winston & Hirt, 2003). As such, most studies on attrition among student affairs practitioners have focused on the relationship between supervisors and supervisees or how their relationship influences job satisfaction (Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000; Evans, 1998; Tull, 2006). Some scholars argue that supervision is one of the most important skills leaders should possess (Tull, 2006).

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Research suggests effective supervisors understand characteristics of effective supervision and develop a healthy relationship between supervisors and supervisees (Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000; Arminio & Creamer, 2001; Evans, 1998; Tull, 2006). Supervisors which were highly-ranked by supervisees articulated not having learned how to effectively supervise from their graduate program. Instead, they learned from trial and error and intentionally choosing not to replicate behaviors exhibited by former ineffective supervisors (Arminio & Creamer, 2001).

Studies examining the characteristics of effective supervisors propose that effective supervisors exhibit behaviors such as, "[s]etting the context, motivating, teaching, listening, observing, giving direction, role modeling, and caring" (Arminio & Creamer, 2001, p. 43; Tull, 2006). Additionally, research on talent management suggests that an employee's need for autonomy increases the more knowledgeable and talented they become. The relationship between supervisors and supervisees can be reciprocal--they continue to shape, influence, and challenge each other (Burns, 1996; Kasarda, 1973; Tull, 2006).

Some research explores specific models of leadership. Two common models explored are transformational leadership and synergistic supervision, which foster individual and team success (Burns, 1996; Tull, 2006). Transformational leadership occurs when "[l]eaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (Burns, 1996, p. 101). Transformational leadership involves reciprocal support for a common purpose, incorporating elements of relationship development, morality, and reciprocal growth and influence (Burns, 1996). Similarly, synergistic supervision includes regular discussions of "exemplary performance, long-term career goals,

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inadequate performance, informal performance appraisals, and personal attitudes" (Arminio & Creamer, 2001, pp. 42-43; Tull, 2006).

Literature supports that the environments created by supervisors as well as the relationship between supervisors and supervisees has a lasting effect on employees and significantly affects job satisfaction (Schaufeli, 2016; Tull, 2006). The dynamic between supervisors and supervisees also impacts decision-making and autonomy, which also contributes to attrition among student affairs professionals.

Decision-Making. The privatization of higher education and adoption of free market practices has implications for institutional leadership and how educational organizations operate. Current trends in organizational leadership, decision-making, and institutional culture affect how senior leadership influence the experiences of student and academic affairs practitioners, which may contribute to existing attrition rates among student affairs practitioners (Arminio & Creamer, 2001; Burns, 1996; Schaufeli, 2016; Tull, 2006). However, the current climate does not just affect practitioners, as the marketization of higher education has lessened faculty influence on large-scale decisions as senior-leadership and stakeholders develop a greater say (Kezar & Lester, 2011).

This shift in how and why decisions are made poses a threat to the learning organization model of educational leadership, which challenge traditional top-down decision-making, standardization, uniformity (Altbach, 2015; DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Kwong, 2000). Learning organizations constantly ask questions, explore, and explore ways to improve practice (DuFour & Eaker, 1998). As such, groups within the organization are often observing, questioning, experimenting, and trying something different. Learning organizations do just that—learn. A level of risk-taking occurs as

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organizations explore ways to improve practice, some of which may fail (DuFour & Eaker, 1998). However, the current privatization may exhibit qualities of learning organizations such as a desire to improve practice. However, business practices are being adopted to minimize failure and maximize results (Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004).

Employee burnout. The term *burnout* is used fairly common. Maslach and Jackson (1986) explored burnout and identified three distinct states of burnout syndrome: feeling emotionally exhausted, detachment from others (depersonalization), and a decreased sense of efficacy (diminished personal accomplishment). It is in the best interest of colleges and universities to prevent staff burnout because it has been linked to "[I]increased turnover, increased intention to leave, negative work attitudes, and reduced levels of performance" (Grandey, 2002, p. 17). Many of the conditions new professionals in student affairs work under negatively contribute to burnout. For instance, new professionals are more likely to get lower pay, experience an unhealthy work life balance, and have less autonomy (Frank, 2013; Grandey, 2002). Some units within student affairs yield themselves to better work life balance compared to others.

A qualitative study of personal and professional balance among student affairs practitioner suggests that practitioners have, and continue to, struggle to find healthy work life balance (Guthrie, et al., 2005). One participant said:

> I think this is a profession that professes an ethic of care. I think in reality there are a lot of people that model very unhealthy work habits and there are unhealthy work cultures that people get into where there is an expectation that you work 80 hours a week. (Guthrie, et al., 2005, p. 123)

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This mirrors the findings of other scholars. For instance, "When asked what one lesson they wished they had learned before starting to work at a research university, nearly 5% reported a need to better understand campus politics and power" (Hirt, 2006, p. 96). The way a practitioner describes their work may be a reflection of the type of institution they work at (Hirt, 2006; Manning, Kinzie, & Schuh, 2014). Practitioners at research universities are more likely to speak about working at top-tier or competitive institutions, compared to professionals at liberal arts, sectarian, and comprehensive institutions, which appear to focus more on collaboration than competition (Hirt, 2006).

Achieving a health work life balance is difficult for student affairs practitioners because they often work after-hours or weekends to engage students outside of class for relationship development, program facilitation, lectures, or other campus events—this is especially true for new professionals (Frank, 2013; Hirt, 2006). Some student affairs practitioners participate in after-hours on-call duty rotation or weekend or late-night night meetings or events, which can interfere with their personal lives or even sleep (Frank, 2013; Hirt, 2006). Such a schedule can make it difficult to maintain a healthy work/life balance, which increase chances of burnout, and thus, attrition among practitioners (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Grandey, 2002; Holmes, Verrier, & Chrisholm, 1983; Rosen, Taube, & Wordsworth, 1980; Rosser & Javinar, 2003).

Decreased motivation. The Literature on burnout suggests that intrinsic motivation plays a role in preventing burnout, which may explain why some staff burnout quicker than others (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Grandey, 2002). Self-determination theory stems from positive psychology, positing that motivation is higher when three psychological conditions are met: relatedness, competence, and autonomy. Sense of

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relatedness refers to a sense of mattering, being interpersonally connected, and feeling cared for (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Competence refers to feeling effective having mastery of things in environment (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Lastly, autonomy refers to self-endorsed behavior as a result of congruence between beliefs and performance—that is, being able to do what one feels should be done (Gagne & Deci, 2005).

Boredom at work. The Boredom at work may also contribute to high attrition rates among staff due to low arousal and an unchallenging environment (Schaufeli, 2016). Effective supervision, ongoing professional development, and investing in employee's personal and professional growth helps nurture continued growth and engagement, which prevents the disengagement stemming from boredom in the workplace (Arminio & Creamer, 2001; Burns, 1996; Schaufeli, 2016; Tull, 2006). Research also suggests that supervisors play a vital role in maintaining a stimulating environment for supervisees (Schaufeli, 2016; Tull, 2006).

Disconnect between theory and practice. The Some research suggest that current attrition rates are partially the result of graduate programs in higher education administration inadequately preparing students to succeed in the field (Buchanan, 2012; Tull, 2006). Specifically, some studies have suggested that there is a misalignment between practitioner's values, espoused theories, and theories in use, which increases their chances of exiting the field (Buchanan, 2012; Tull, 2006).

Graduate programs in student affairs administration have traditionally had two concentrations: counseling or administration (Cuyjet, Longwell-Grice, & Molina, 2009). A study found that "the first job in student affairs is full of surprises and quite possibly not what they thought they were training for in graduate school" (Kinser, 1993, p. 7).

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This demonstrates a disconnect between what students are learning and what they need to know, but it does not make it clear what graduate programs in higher education administration are missing (Cuyjet, Longwell-Grice, & Molina, 2009; Kinser, 1993). An example of this phenomenon is the finding that many effective leaders credit their leadership style to trial and error and intentionally avoiding practices modeled by previous ineffective supervisors rather than their graduate programs (Arminio & Creamer, 2001).

Workplace environment. The One's work environment greatly impacts their level of internal and external motivation (Buchanan, 2012; Gagne & Deci, 2005; Jones, 2014; Tull, 2006). Research indicates that student affairs remains a male-dominated profession where it is more difficult for women to advance professionally and women also earn less, on average, than their male counterparts (Guthrie et al., 2005).

Research supports that other environmental factors have negatively impacted student affairs professionals. For instance, a study of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) practitioners reports that 38% of their sample of their participants reported experiencing discrimination or harassment at work (Croteau & Lock, 1983). Such workplace conditions can be detrimental to employee success by lowering their intrinsic motivation and increasing their external motivation. Thus, a practitioner working in a hostile work environment may make decisions based on preventing harassment or intimidation over other factors. This also suggests a disconnect between theory and practice, given that student affairs is heavily focused on student engagement, holistic development, and interpersonal development (Quaye & Harper, 2014).

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Other reasons for leaving. A study examining job satisfaction and turnover at Virginia Tech found that not feeling valued as a professional was a leading reason why student affairs professionals departed from their position (Frank, 2013). Salary was often cited as a reason why professionals felt undervalued, which suggests that student affairs professionals see a correlation between their salary and their worth in the organization (Frank, 2013). Other participants addressed a lack of trust in their ability to properly perform their job responsibilities (Frank, 2013). Research has also found that unreasonable expectations, unprofessionalism, and lack of support resulted in supervision also ranking high as a reason why staff departed from student affairs, which mirrors the findings of other studies (Frank, 2013; Holmes, Verrier, & Chisholm, 1983; Winston & Hirt, 2003).

Reasons for Staying

When studying attrition in student affairs or why some practitioners may transition to academic affairs, it is also important to consider that not all disengaged employees resign from their position.

Job stability. Some literature suggests that the fear of losing job stability may deter dissatisfied or unmotivated employees from switching jobs (Kalleberg, 2009). This is partially the result of lasting effects of the economic recession of the late 2000s. Long-term unemployment (six or more months) remained higher than average during the 2000s, creating a societal fear of joblessness (Kalleberg, 2009). This is partly because the hardships associated with job loss are thought to have worsened as a result of a fragile job market and economy—leaving employees feeling vulnerable (Kalleberg, 2009). Thus, disengaged employees may choose to remain in their position which they not be fully

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committed to (Kalleberg, 2009). This state of mind may explain why and how student affairs practitioners decide to job search as well as the types of positions they look for. This logic may suggest that maintaining job security and benefits may affect why some practitioners transition to academic affairs rather than leave higher education entirely.

Choosing not to start over. It is also important to consider the influence of academic qualifications and work experience have on the job-search process, as an employee with a graduate degree in higher education administration who has only worked in student affairs may feel underqualified for positions outside of higher education. Others may simply fear change or failure (Hall & Chandler, 2004).

Carson, Carson, and Bedeian (1995) discuss career immobility due to economic or psychological stressors. They use two terms to explore this phenomenon further. First, *entrapped workers* describe disengaged staff who are unable to move, whereas *contented workers* satisfied despite their immobility (Carson, Carson, & Bedeian, 1995). Entrapped workers exhibit low satisfaction and motivation, whereas contented workers do not (Carson, Carson, & Bedeian, 1995). For instance, it is possible that disengaged staff who remain in their position do so due to financial immobility, as starting over in another area of higher education may result in a pay-cut.

Thus, a goal for supervisors in an organization with limited opportunities for advancement is to keep staff in the realm of being contended. Similarly**,** Johnsrud and Rosser (1997) found a positive relationship between age and length of employment on likelihood of staying in a position. That is, older employees and those who had been in their position longer were more likely to remain in their position compared to their younger or more novice counterparts (Johnsrud & Rosser, 1997). In addition, institutional

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size affected the likelihood to remain in a position, as larger institutions offer more promotional opportunities (Hall, 1996; Hirt, 2006).

Conclusion

The studies referenced in this literature review address issues related to job satisfaction, motivation, and attrition among student affairs and academic affairs practitioners. Researchers have studied issues related to attrition, job satisfaction, and motivation in higher education using various research designs and sampling methods. Some researchers focused on measuring job satisfaction among senior academic administrators such as academic deans, chief academic officers, and presidents (Glick, 1992). Others focused more narrowly by focusing specifically on faculty turnover (Daly & Dee, 2006; Rosser, 2004). Others have examined mid-level administrators, while others focus specifically on new professionals (Johnsrud, Heck, & Rosser, 2000; Tull, 2006). Many researchers have explored reasons practitioners exit the field, but insufficient research exists on what happens after they leave. Many student affairs practitioners transition to academic affairs, but research has not addressed this phenomenon. This transition has implications for how graduate programs in higher education administration and supervisors prepare and develop future professionals (Buchanan, 2012; Tull, 2006; Winston & Hirt, 2003).

Given the lack of available research on this transition, it remains unclear if academic affairs is a place where former student affairs practitioners find rejuvenation and new-found excitement at work, or if it is a final stepping stone towards exiting higher education altogether. It is also unknown how many practitioners return to student affairs after transitioning to academic affairs. Further research is needed to explore why student

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affairs practitioners transition into academic affairs positions as well as their levels of job satisfaction and motivation post-transition.

Understanding why student affairs staff transition into academic affairs and how successfully they transition into such roles has implications for how academic affairs staff are recruited, trained, and retained, which affects the quality of service an institution can offer constituents. It has specific implications for students whom are on the receiving end of various service and encounters with student and academic affairs staff. Are they meeting with academic advisors that took their position as a last resort to find happiness in higher education, or are they working with a professional that has regained a sense of passion and excitement for their work? Exploring this population of practitioners that exit student affairs is also important because it focuses on a group that has chosen to continue to work in higher education.

Studying the sub-population of academic affairs professionals that formerly worked in student affairs is important because it remains unclear if their needs differ from those academic professionals whom never worked in student affairs. It is important to study this group of practitioners to identify ways to best support them, foster an environment where they can flourish and experience optimal levels of satisfaction, motivation, and productivity, which has implications for students and stakeholders.

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Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this survey design study is to draw upon Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) to examine the influence of transitioning from student affairs to academic affairs on job satisfaction and motivation. The independent variable, job transition, is characterized by participants' transition from working in student affairs to academic affairs. The dependent variables are job satisfaction and job motivation. Furthermore, this study will examine the relationship between demographics, functional areas within student affairs and academic affairs, and institutional type to job satisfaction and job motivation. Three additional independent variables were added to provide greater depth of analysis on how perceived job satisfaction and job motivation might be affected by demographic information, functional area, and institution type. Job satisfaction is defined as the extent that employees enjoy their work (Tull, 2006). Motivation refers to why a person performs an action or task (Bénabou & Tirole, 2003; Gagne & Deci, 2005). The purpose of this survey design was to better understand characteristics of the population of student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs of practitioners from a sample of practitioners that have undergone this transition (Creswell, 2014).

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide this study:

1. How do student affairs and academic affairs professionals rate their job satisfaction and motivation?

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2. How is the job satisfaction of academic affairs professionals who previously worked in student affairs influenced by their experiences in student affairs?
3. How is the motivation of academic affairs professionals who previously worked in student affairs influenced by their experiences in student affairs?

Assumptions of and Rationale for Quantitative Research

Quantitative researchers study variables to test theories and demonstrate causality (Creswell, 2014; Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrerro, 2015). They use research methodology to produce evidence of either a cause-and-effect relationship or a relationship using a theoretical lens (Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrerro, 2015). Quantitative research is deductive in nature, which makes it appropriate for this study, which uses Self-Determination Theory (1985) to explore the relationship between transitioning from student affairs to academic affairs and job satisfaction and motivation.

As with other forms of research, quantitative research has benefits and limitations. However, the benefits of quantitative research outweigh the limitations given how the benefits of quantitative research align with the purpose of this study. Benefits of quantitative research include but are not limited to: replication, generalizability, minimization of bias, inclusion of a large sample size, and objective reporting (Creswell, 2012; Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrerro, 2015). However, the generalizability and validity of data is contingent upon a sound research design, sampling methodology, and data analysis, which is why it is important for this study to demonstrate appropriate use of quantitative research methodology (Fink, 2012).

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Researcher Worldview

Quantitative researchers often operate from a postpositivist worldview, “hold[ing] a deterministic philosophy in which causes (probably) determine effects or outcomes (Creswell, 2014, p. 7). Positivists explores causes and outcomes, such as those in experiments (Creswell, 2014). Positivists assert that absolute truths cannot be found, so rather than looking for it, they test hypotheses and “indicate a failure to reject the hypothesis” (Creswell, 2014, p. 7). This study will collect data from participants across the United States.

Quantitative research was chosen for this study because of its direct correlation to postpositivist worldview and the philosophy of determining the effects or outcomes of variables (Creswell, 2014). Given that it is unclear how large the population of student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs is, a non-experimental quantitative study will be used to provide understanding of the data in relation to Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Survey Research

Survey research studies explore trends, attitudes, and opinions (Creswell, 2014; Fowler 2009). This research design can be used to study independent variables, such as academic affairs or student affairs, because their ability to not be manipulated allows for a correlation to be inferred from the dependent and independent variables (Creswell, 2012; Fowler, 2009; Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrerro, 2015). Furthermore, quantitative research is the chosen methodology for this study because it allows for results from this study to be generalized to the larger population of student affairs

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professionals that have transitioned into academic affairs (Creswell, 2012; Creswell, 2014; Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrerro, 2015).

Survey research best suits the purpose of this study because surveys generally collect information by asking questions from a fraction of the population (Fowler, 2013). These fractions are called samples, which exhibit qualities of the whole population (Fowler, 2013). “The keys to good sampling are finding a way to give all (or nearly all) population members the same (or a known) of being selected and using probability methods for choosing the sample” (Fowler, 2013, p. 4). However, some surveys, such as the U.S. Census, are administered to an entire population (Fowler, 2013). The survey used in this study will be used to produce statistics about job satisfaction and motivation of student affairs practitioners that have transitioned into academic affairs from a sample of the population. A cross-sectional survey will be used because it provides a snapshot of data from a single point in time (Fink, 2012).

Survey research design falls on a continuum and can produce generalizable data through the use of the highest standards of scientific rigor and the use of reliable and valid methodology (Fink, 2012). Surveys typically appear in the form of self-administered surveys and interviews that can be completed by hand or electronically, face-to-face or via telephone (Fink, 2012). A major strength of survey data is that is collected directly from participants (Fink, 2012). Fink (2013) asserts that survey research is particularly effective under the following conditions:

1. Needing to set a policy or plan a program
2. Evaluating program effectiveness
3. Obtaining information to guide studies and programs

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The purpose of this study supports each of these conditions, as the data collected from this study can be used to improve graduate programs in higher education administration, how hiring managers recruit and onboard new staff, and how supervisors of student affairs and academic affairs professionals train and develop their supervisees.

However, it is important to recognize that, "Every survey involves a number of decisions that have the potential to enhance or detract from the accuracy (or precision) of survey estimates" (Fowler, 2013, p. 6). Many of these decisions must be made during the design process, such as whether or not a researcher chooses to use a probability sample, their sample frame, sample size, sampling strategy, and response rate (Fowler, 2013). These decisions made for this study will all be explored and addressed in this chapter.

Other decisions will also be explored, such as how responses will be kept confidential and how the data collected will be analyzed (Fink, 2012). Additionally, pilot testing will be testing to ensure respondents understand the survey directions and can answer the questions (Fink, 2012).

Context

There are over 2,072 bachelor's degree-granting institutions in the United States (Carnegie Classification, 2017). The profession of student affairs has become a specialized field, with institutions commonly requiring personnel to hold a master's degree at minimum and a doctoral degree for administrative leaders and career advancement (Buchanan, 2012). However, attrition rates are estimated to be as high as 61% among new professionals, which suggest that the student affairs workforce, while highly educated, may also be highly dissatisfied (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Grandey, 2002; Holmes, Verrier, & Chrisholm, 1983; Rosen, Taube, & Wordsworth, 1980; Rosser &

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Javinar, 2003). Existing research on job attrition in student affairs suggests that there is a revolving door of practitioners, many of which are dissatisfied in their position, which may decrease effectiveness and productivity (Cappelli, 2008; Tull, 2006; Winston & Hirk, 2003). Such findings have promoted further inquiry among researchers to better understand the connection between job satisfaction among student affairs practitioners and why attrition rates are so high.

It is difficult to determine how many student affairs professionals transition into academic affairs. For instance, when an employee leaves a position, institutions or researchers may or may not record if an employee intends to continue in student affairs, transition into academic affairs, or exit higher education entirely. There is also no uniform way of delineating between individuals who stay in higher education, those that leave a position in pursuit of advancing their education with the intent of returning to higher education, and those that have been involuntarily separated. This makes it difficult to accurately estimate the size of the population of practitioners of academic affairs professionals that previously worked in student affairs.

As such, context for this study is largely shaped by data collected during the fall 2010 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

> Participation in IPEDS was required for institutions and administrative offices that participated in Title IV federal student financial aid programs such as Pell Grants or Stafford Loans during the 2010-11 academic year.1 After submitting fall 2010 data to IPEDS, 3 institutions closed, leaving 7,175 institutions and 81 administrative offices in the United States and other jurisdictions that were required to complete the 2010-11 HR. (Knapp, Kelly-Reid, & Ginder, 2011, p. 1)

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The fall 2010 IPEDS data reports that approximately 3.9 million total individuals worked in institutions of higher education in 2010 (Knapp, Kelly-Reid, & Ginder, 2011). Of this 3.9 million, approximately 1.4 million reportedly worked full-time at non-medical school degree-granting institutions (Knapp, Kelly-Reid, & Ginder, 2011). Approximately 46% of the 1.4 million individuals were reportedly faculty and 54% were non-faculty (Knapp, Kelly-Reid, & Ginder, 2011). Table 1 shows the breakdown of non-faculty staff at Title IV institutions and administrative offices other than medical schools during the fall 2010 semester that worked in Executive/administrative/managerial or Other professional (support/service) positions—910,850 total employees (Knapp, Kelly-Reid, & Ginder, 2011). The fall 2010 IPEDS data is now seven years old and may not reflect current staffing data for institutions of higher education. However, it isolates student and academic affairs professionals by filtering out other positions clerical and secretarial, service/maintenance, technical and paraprofessionals, graduate assistants, and other staff (Knapp, Kelly-Reid, & Ginder, 2011). Thus, Table 1 uses fall 2010 IPEDS data to project the approximate total number of student affairs and academic affairs professionals during the fall 2010 semester, which is 910,850.

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Table 1

Number of Student and Academic Affairs Professionals, Fall 2010

	4-Year (n = 774,943)	2-Year (n = 121,154)	Less-Than 2-Year (n = 14,753)	Total
Non-Faculty Employee Type				
Executive/ administrative/managerial	179,159	38,230	7,451	224,840
Other professional (support/service)	595,784	82,924	7,302	686,010
Total	774,943	121,154	14,753	910,850

Sampling Strategy and Participant Selection

Sampling Strategy

This study is targeting the entire population of academic affairs professionals who previously worked in student affairs. Sampling methods allow researchers to produce data that represents the total population without having to survey the entire population (Fink, 2012). As discussed in Chapter I, the exact size of the population is unclear, making it difficult to approximate the size of the total population (Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrero, 2015).

Given these conditions, confidence intervals will be particularly helpful in determining how closely the characteristics of this study's sample resemble characteristics of the population (Easton & McColl, 1997). Confidence intervals help develop instruments believed to be accurate to within a 0.03 margin of error 19 times out of 20 (95%) (Easton & McColl, 1997). "Confidence interval gives an estimated range of values which is likely to include an unknown population parameter, the estimated range being calculated from a given set of sample data" (Easton & McColl, 1997). This range is

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known also known as confidence limits. Data collected from this study's sample will allow the researcher to be 95% confident that the population mean falls between the confidence limits (Easton & McColl, 1997).

Confidence intervals will be used data to calculate how closely the findings of this study's sample resemble traits of the population, it is especially important to take measures to sample correctly for this study. Purposive sampling will be used for this study, as this sampling strategy is best suited for studying specify qualities or traits. This strategy is best suited for this study of specific participants with specific job functionalities and experiences. Purposive sampling is a nonrandom technique that does not require underlying theories or a specific sample size (Tongco, 2007). This strategy ultimately allows researchers to determine what needs to be known and allows them to find participants that are willing to provide information (Tongco, 2007).

This study aims to cast as wide of a net as possible in hope of recruiting a large diverse sample that accurately represents characteristics of the population (Fink, 2012; Fowler, 2013). In order to do so, this study will target both student affairs and academic affairs practitioners. The researcher will be able to filter responses to identify participants that have transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs while also have data on the larger population of student affairs and academic affairs practitioners.

Participant Selection

Participants will be invited to participate via electronic correspondence from national list serves such as the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), "[T]he leading comprehensive student affairs association that advances student affairs and engages students for a lifetime of learning and discovery" (Who We Are, 2016).

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Invitations will also be sent through organizations such as the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), and NACADA, "an association of professional advisors, counselors, faculty, administrators, and students working to enhance the educational development of students" (About NACADA, 2017).

These forms of participant recruitment will help widen the pool of eligible participants that this study can survey.

Instrumentation

The questions asked of participants in this study were informed by the Abridged Job Descriptive Index, Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale, existing literature, and the research questions of this study. See Appendix C for the 21 questions that comprise the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale.

Key Study Variables

Independent variables. For the purpose of this research, the independent variables measured in this study are number of years of professional experience, area within student affairs, job satisfaction in student affairs, job motivation in student affairs, relationship with supervisor, autonomy, work-life balance, and salary.

Dependent variables. There are two dependent variables measured in this study: job-satisfaction post-transition and motivation in the workplace post-transition.

Abridged Job Descriptive Index

Developed by faculty members and Ph.D. students at Bowling Green University, The Abridged Job Descriptive Index (JDI) measures employee's job satisfaction.

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> The JDI is a "facet" measure of job satisfaction, meaning that participants are asked to think about specific facets of their job and rate their satisfaction with those specific facets. The JDI is comprised of five facets, including satisfaction with: coworkers, the work itself, pay, opportunities for promotion, and supervision. (Job Descriptive Index, 2017).

However, "When questionnaires are long or difficult, respondents may get tired and answer the last questions carelessly or not answer them at all" (Fink, 2012, p. 60). As such the Abridged Job Descriptive Index will be used for this study, as it is smaller—containing 38 of the 90 questions which appear on the full index. The abridged version is being used for this study to avoid participant fatigue or boredom, which can result in respondents giving up and not completing the survey (Fink, 2012).

The Abridged Job Descriptive Index measures job satisfaction in five areas: coworkers, the work itself, pay, opportunities for promotion, and supervision. Respondents are asked to reflect on one area at a time consider one area at a time and answer "yes", "no", or "cannot decide" to statements about each category. Table 2 shows the survey questions asked of participants based off of the AJDI.

The Job Descriptive Index (JDI) has been used to measure job satisfaction both inside and outside of higher education. In the context of higher education, the index has been used to measure the job satisfaction of adjunct faculty serving in the online environment (Satterlee, 2008). Outside of higher education, the index has been used to assess psychological well-being and workplace dynamics, job stressors, and job attitude (Wang, Sinclair, & Tetrick, 2012; Zickar, Balzer, Aziz, & Wryobeck, 2008). The JDI was also used in a meta-analysis of psychological mediators in a study about telecommuting

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(Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). It has also been used to measure employee satisfaction with meetings (Rogelberg et al., 2010). In another study, it was used to better understand conditions where an employee is more likely to intend to resign (Armstrong et al., 2008). For this reason, the AJDI is an effective tool when exploring job satisfaction in a profession with such high turnover rates.

The creators of the AJDI did not list the exact reliability coefficients for the 5 scales (work, pay, promotion, supervision, and coworkers), but reported that each scale was above the recommended threshold of .70 (Stanton et al., 2002). Survey standards of reliability and validity frequently cite Bernstein and Nunnally's (1994) threshold for measuring internal consistency, where a value of .70 is high (Bernstein & Nunnally, 1994; Cronk, 2013; Stanton et al., 2002). See Appendix D for the original Abridged Job Descriptive Index (AJDI).

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Table 2

Questions Based on Abridged Job Descriptive Index

Statement	*Category*
My present job is satisfying	The job itself
My present job is exciting	The job itself
My present job is rewarding	The job itself
My present salary is below what I deserve	Pay
My present salary is well paid	Pay
My present salary is comfortable	Pay
My present opportunities for promotion are good	Promotional Opportunities
My present opportunities for promotion are limited	Promotional Opportunities
My present opportunities for promotion are non-existent	Promotional Opportunities
My current supervisor is appreciative of me	Supervisor
My current supervisor is tactful	Supervisor
My current supervisor is up-to-date	Supervisor
My current supervisor is someone I admire	Supervisor
My current supervisor is pleasant	Supervisor
My current supervisor is invested in me	Supervisor
My current co-workers are entertaining	Coworkers
My current co-workers are smart	Coworkers
My current co-workers are dependable	Coworkers
My current co-workers are hardworking	Coworkers

Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale

This study will use Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory to measure job satisfaction and motivation because it examines how both interpersonal and environmental factors influence motivation. Self-determination theory stems from positive psychology, positing that motivation is higher when three psychological conditions are met: relatedness, competence, and autonomy. Sense of relatedness refers to a sense of mattering, being interpersonally connected, and feeling cared for (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Competence refers to feeling effective having mastery of things in environment (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Lastly, autonomy refers to self-endorsed behavior as

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a result of congruence between beliefs and performance—that is, being able to do what one feels should be done (Gagne & Deci, 2005).

Self-determination theory suggests that supporting the three psychological needs of competence, autonomy, and relatedness can lead to the internalization of values, that is, shifting from being extrinsically to intrinsically motivated (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Jones, 2014). The presence or absence of the three psychological needs affect levels of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation.

Self-determination theory suggests that the psychological needs of competence, autonomy, and relatedness must be continuously satisfied in order for people to achieve healthy and optimal development and function (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagné, 2003). The Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale is a 21-item scale assessing need satisfaction at work (Deci, Ryan, Gagné, Leone, Usunov, & Kornazheva, 2001; Ilardi, Leone, Kasser, & Ryan, 1993; Kasser, Davey, & Ryan, 1992). It measures the 3 psychological conditions which comprise Self-Determination Theory: relatedness, competence, and autonomy (Deci, Ryan, Gagné, Leone, Usunov, & Kornazheva, 2001; Ilardi, Leone, Kasser, & Ryan, 1993; Kasser, Davey, & Ryan, 1992).

The scale was first used in Kasser, Davey, and Ryan (1992) and has since evolved. The scale asks respondents to self-report the level of truth each statement has to their work on a scale of one to seven, where one is not at all true, four is somewhat true, and seven is very true. Table 3 shows what questions participants will be asked based off of the Abridged Job Descriptive Index.

The Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale has been used in previous studies to explore autonomy, competence, and relatedness at work (Broeck et

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al., 2008). One study explored the relationship between job characteristics, burnout, and engagement (Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, De Witte, & Lens, 2008). Another used the scale to explore the motivation of young athletes (Reinboth, Duda, & Ntoumanis, 2004). The scale has been used to better understand the relationship between life satisfaction and workplace behaviors (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2010).

The creators of the scale did so using 4 samples. Their research yielded high reliability and validity. Consistent with the theoretical framework of Self-Determination Theory, the constructs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness were related, yet distinct (Broeck et al., 2010). The reliability coefficient for the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale was high (α=.93) (Brien et al., 2012). Survey standards of reliability and validity frequently follow Bernstein and Nunnally's (1994) threshold for measuring internal consistency, where α=.93 is considered very high (Bernstein & Nunnally, 1994; Cronk, 2013).

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Table 3

Questions Based on Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale

Question	Question #	Competency
I have input on how I do my job	1	Autonomy
I feel a lot of pressure at work	7	Autonomy
At work I can deviate from what I am told	10	Autonomy
I can be myself at work	13	Autonomy
I get to decide how my work gets done	15	Autonomy
My job is stressful	16	Autonomy
I freely express ideas/opinions at work	18	Autonomy
I know how to do my job	3	Competence
People tell me I am good at my job	4	Competence
I have learned interesting skills at work	9	Competence
Most days I feel a sense of accomplishment	11	Competence
My work reflects my capabilities	12	Competence
I like the people I work with	2	Relatedness
I get along with my coworkers	5	Relatedness
I keep to myself at work	6	Relatedness
The people I work with are my friends	8	Relatedness
People at work like me	14	Relatedness
People at work care about me	17	Relatedness

Data Analysis

The highest standards of scientific rigor will be used to thoroughly analyze the data collected from this study (Fink, 2012). Parametric tests will be conducted such as descriptive statistics, chi-squares, Pearson correlation, and Simple Linear Regressions (Creswell, 2013).

Descriptive statistics will be run to generate measures of central tendency and other analyses to begin interpreting the results of the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale and the Abridged Job Descriptive Index. They will also produce information such as how long participants worked in student affairs before transitioning, reasons for leaving, and what functional areas they transitioned from and to. Such tests will also

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provide other information such as demographic information, participant's institution type, and the number of years of professional experience participants have.

Chi-Squares will also be used. Chi-Squares are a statistical technique designed to test for significant relationships (or associations) between two nominal or ordinal variables (Cronk, 2012). A chi-square test of independence will be conducted to test if the variables are truly independent, as suggested by the null hypothesis, or if some relationship or association exists (Cronk, 2012). This analysis can be used to measure relationships such as functional area or years of experience.

A Pearson Correlation Coefficient will also be used to determine the strength of the linear relationships between two variables (Cronk, 2012). This specific test will indicate if the relationship is positive, negative, or inverse, as well as the strength of the relationship (Cronk, 2012).

Additionally, a Simple Linear Regression analysis will be conducted to predict one variable from another (Cronk, 2012). An Independent-Samples *t* Test will be used to compare the means of two independent samples (Cronk, 2012). This may reveal differences based on individual functional areas within student affairs or academic affairs.

Such statistical analyses are contingent upon proper cleaning of the data (Fink, 1995). Rossi, Wright, and Anderson discuss steps such as identifying speeders (respondents who took the survey at rapid speed) and flat-liners (respondents who answered all questions the same way). Other vital steps including identifying key variables and recoding as needed. For instance, a demographic variable capturing various ethnicities can be recoded into a binary variable of White and non-White. Additionally,

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some questions will need to be reverse coded. For instance, respondents will be asked to what level they agree their salary is “well-paid” and one asking if their salary is “below what [they] deserve”. A response of strongly agree has the opposite value in these questions, as such, the later question will be reverse coded such that a value of 1 for either question implies the respondent is satisfied with their pay rate.

Other steps taken before any analysis is conducted includes recoding variables into nominal, ordinal, or numerical as needed so that they meet the conditions of various statistical analyses. Nominal scales are categorical and absent of numerical values, such as male or female (Fink, 1995). Ordinal scales are categorical but sequential. For instance, a tumor may be Stage I, II, III, or IV (Fink, 1995). This study will use many ordinal scales, such as Likert scales. Finally, numerical scales are used when differences between variables have meaning on a numerical scale (Fink, 1995). Common examples of numerical scales are age and weight.

Validity

A strength of this study is that most of the questions in the survey instrument are either directly taken from the Abridged Job Descriptive Index or Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale or mirror their line of questioning (Fink, 2012). Both scales have high reliability coefficients (α=.70, α=.93) and have been cited many times (Brien et al., 2012; Stanton et al., 2002).

Threats to internal validity include the selection of participants, history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, statistical regression, and attrition (Fink, 2012). “Threats to external validity are most often the consequence of the way in which respondents are selected and assigned to groups” (Fink, 2012, p. 110). They often occur

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because respondents are conscious of the fact that they are being tested, survey, or observed and respond disingenuously (Fink, 2012). As such, the researcher will have respondents sign an informed consent form informing them of the nature of the study and how their responses will be completely anonymous—even the researcher will not have a way of identifying respondents. Furthermore, respondents will be informed that participation is optional and completely voluntary. External validity will also be controlled by not be formally grouping participants. Instead, responses may be used to identify underlying patterns or trends. For instance, responses may be filtered and analyzed to test for correlations between functional areas in student affairs and units within academic affairs.

As a researcher operating from a postpositivist paradigm, I will accept and report the findings of this study and analyze data absent of interpretation. Lastly, the fact that this survey will incorporate Self-Determination Theory, the pilot test should demonstrate that the instrument has content validity (Fink, 2012).

Ethical Considerations

No data will be collected until the researcher has obtained approval from the Rowan University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Additionally, participants will receive an informed consent form that must be read and electronically signed before beginning the assessment. There are no known risks to participating in this study. The survey itself will be administered using an online survey instrument.

Personal information will not be collected in order to maintain anonymity and protect participant's privacy and confidentiality. The researcher alone will have access to

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the results using a secure username and password. As an added measure, the results will be stored on a password protected computer and removed from the secure website.

Limitations

Literature on survey design research addresses limitations which must be taken into account when conducting survey research and presents possible ways to ameliorate the effects of such limitations such as internal validity and external validity (Creswell, 2014; Fink, 2012). Limitations frequently involve instrumentation and sampling methodology (Fink, 2012). Unlike qualitative research, quantitative research has embedded in it the rule that sample sizes should be as large as possible (Fink, 2012). The survey in this study is self-administered in an attempt to cast a wider-net and capture as large of a sample as possible given that the exact size of the population of student affairs professionals who transitioned into academic affairs remains unspecified. Various steps will be taken in order to capture an acceptable response rate. First, public forums such as the Student Affairs Professionals Facebook group, a public group with over 26,000 members, will be used to recruit participants as well as allow members to identify potential participants.

One of the greatest limitations of survey research involves the development of the survey itself (Fink, 2012). Survey research often builds on itself, allowing researchers to expand upon existing instruments with the intention of meeting the unique needs of their research and ensuring the validity of the data collected (Fink, 2012; Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrerro, 2015). This study will incorporate the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale and incorporate questions from the Abridged Job Descriptive Index. Additional close-ended questions will be asked as well based on the omitted

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sections of the AJDI and the themes which emerged in the literature review of this study. The Job in General section will be omitted because participants will be completing the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale and to prevent participant fatigue. These instruments have been successfully used in educational research despite the fact that they were not developed solely for use in educational settings.

Pilot testing will occur in order to develop an instrument for this study which is valid and reliable (Fink, 2012; Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrerro, 2015). A test-retest measure will be conducted in order to ensure that the instrument yields the same results when administered to the same participant. This will help ensure that the instrument is easily understood and produces responses which accurately capture respondent's thoughts and experiences (Fink, 2012; Salant, 1994).

Social desirability can also limit survey research, as respondents sometimes distort responses in ways which make them look good (Randall & Fernandes, 1991). However, social desirability is considered a small threat to the validity of this study because it's focus is not controversial, the instrument is self-administered, and responses are completely anonymous. Another limitation of this anonymous survey study is that the researcher does not have the ability to conduct any kind of follow-up or probing which would allow for a greater understanding of participants thoughts, feelings, and experiences.

While quantitative research is subject to bias and limitations, the same can be said with other forms of research. Quantitative research has many benefits, such as the ability to generalize data collected from a sample to a population (Creswell, 2012; Creswell, 2014; Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrerro, 2015). Other benefits of quantitative

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research include but are not limited to: replication, generalization, minimization of bias, inclusion of a large sample size, and objective reporting (Creswell, 2012; Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrerro, 2015). Quantitative research uses statistical analysis to identify the relationship between variables as well as overall patterns and trends (Fink, 2012). However, a limitation of quantitative research is that explanations for the observed phenomenon are not always clear and is open to interpretation.

Conclusion

This chapter provided a review of the research methodology this study will employ as well as context such as where, why, and how the study is taking place, sampling, and instrumentation. This chapter provided an overview of how data will be analyzed. This chapter also discussed possible limitations of survey research in addition to issues of validity, reliability, and ethical considerations. The following chapter will discuss the results of the survey. The final chapter will conclude this dissertation with conclusions and recommendations for future research, as this study aims to promote further inquiry on student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs.

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Chapter 4

Results

This chapter presents the results from the statistical analyses discussed in Chapter 3 (methodology). Information regarding participants and salient characteristics will also be discussed. The findings will be presented in chronological order answering the three research questions of this study.

Modification to Methodology

Chapter Three of this study presented this study as purely quantitative in nature; providing a rationale for a survey research design. Prior to distribution, two open-ended questions were added to the survey instrument given that such limited information exists on the transition from Student Affairs to Academic Affairs. The qualitative questions were only asked of participants that reported transitioning from Student Affairs to Academic Affairs or vice versa. The question asked participants what advice they would give to someone making such a transition. The responses will be discussed later in this chapter.

The two qualitative open-ended questions were used in order to collect rich data, context, and narratives to explore the connection(s) between the aforementioned job transitions and job satisfaction and motivation. Rossman and Rallis (2012) write that qualitative researchers "…search for truths, not Truth" (p. 62). This worldview aligns well with this study's positivist worldview, as positivists assert that absolute truths cannot be found (Creswell, 2014).

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Data Analysis

Independent Variables

For the purposes of this study, the independent variables measured were the Division that respondents worked in (academic affairs or student affairs) and whether participants ever transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs.

Division. The division variable was measured by a question on the survey asking respondents to indicate if they worked in student affairs or academic affairs. Student affairs and academic affairs were described using the definitions provided in Chapter 1. Possible responses were "Student Affairs," "Academic Affairs," and "Other," which required respondents the opportunity to provide an open-ended response. A response of "Student Affairs" was coded as 1, whereas "Academic Affairs" was coded as 2. No respondents responded "Other," which would have been coded as 3.

Transition. The transition variable was measured by a question on the survey, which asked respondents if they have ever transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs. A separate survey question captured the opposite transition (academic affairs to student affairs), but only the former aligns with the research questions of this study, determining job satisfaction and motivation of student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs. Possible responses to this question were "Yes" coded as 1 and "No" coded as 2. Respondents that answered "Yes" were then asked a subset of questions asking them about their transition, including the open-ended question, "What advice would you give to someone transitioning from student affairs to academic affairs?". The sub-questions explored reasons for transitioning, their level of preparation for working in

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Academic Affairs, the accuracy of their perception of academic affairs when they worked in student affairs, and respondent's job satisfaction post-transition.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables measured in this study were job satisfaction and job motivation.

Job satisfaction variable. The job satisfaction variable was measured by four questions created specifically for this study and 18 questions taken directly from the Abridged Job Descriptive Index (AJDI). Some questions were ordinal, such as one asking respondents who transitioned from Student Affairs to Academic Affairs to report their job satisfaction post-transition. Possible response options included: "Less Satisfied After Transition" coded as 1, "About the Same" coded as 2 and "More Satisfied After Transition" coded as 3. Finally, the responses to questions taken from the AJDI were categorical, with possible responses being "Yes" coded as 1, "No" coded as 2, and "Cannot Decide" coded as 3.

Job motivation variable. The job motivation variable was measured by 10 questions created by the researcher of this study and14 questions either taken directly or slightly reworded from the Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale. Some questions were on a Likert-sale, such as one asking respondents the degree to which they agree that Academic Affairs is placed on a higher pedestal than Student Affairs. Response options included "Strongly Disagree" coded as 1, "Disagree" coded as 2, "Agree" coded as 3, and "Strongly Agree" coded as 4. The questions based on the Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale were on a Likert-sale, with response options on a scale of one to seven, where one was "Not at all true," four was "Somewhat true" and seven was "Very true."

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Finally, some questions were categorical, such as a question asking respondents if they would rather work in Student Affairs or Academic Affairs. "Student Affairs" was coded as 1, "Academic Affairs" was coded as 2, and "No preference" was coded as 3.

The quantitative data was analyzed using pragmatic strategies, such as, descriptive statistics, independent samples t-tests, and chi-squares (Creswell, 2013). Since operating from a post-positivist worldview, this cross-sectional survey research asserts that absolute truths cannot be found, so rather than looking for it, hypotheses were tested and when appropriate, the researcher "indicate[d] a failure to reject the hypothesis" (Creswell, 2014, p. 7).

Results

Demographics

A total of 524 respondents took the survey, but only 468 participants completed the survey in its entirety. Only the 468 responses were uses in the analyses that follow. See Table 4 for characteristics of the survey respondents.

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Table 4

Characteristics of Survey Respondents

	Total	Percent
Division		
Student Affairs	323	69.0%
Academic Affairs	145	31.0%
Total	468	100%
Institution Type		
Two-year	27	5.77%
Four-year public	291	62.18%
Four-year private	139	29.70%
Exclusively graduate/professional	4	0.85%
Other	7	1.50%
Total		100%
Transitioned from SA to AA		
Yes	74	51.0%
No	71	49.0%
Total	145	100%
Transitioned from AA to SA		
Yes	29	9.0%
No	294	91%
Total	323	100%
Highest Degree Earned		
Bachelor's degree	45	9.62%
Master's Degree	362	77.35%
Professional degree	3	0.64%
Doctorate degree	58	12.39%
Total	468	100%
Gender		
Female	331	70.70%
Male	135	28.80%
Non-binary	2	0.40%
Total	468	99.90%

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Table 4 (Continued)

	Total	Percent
Ethnicity		
White	329	70.30%
Hispanic or Latino	44	9.40%
Black or African American	61	13.03%
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	0.43%
Asian	13	2.78%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	3	0.64%
Other	15	3.21%
No Answer	1	0.21%
Total	468	100%
Years of Post-Master's Experience		
Less than 1	59	12.55%
1 to 5	170	36.17%
6 to 10	122	25.96%
11 to 15	54	11.49%
16 to 20	35	7.45%
20+	29	6.17%
No Answer	1	0.21%
Total	470	100.00%

Research Question 1

The first research question explored the question, "How do student affairs and academic affairs professionals rate their job satisfaction and motivation?"

Abridged Job Descriptive Index. The Abridged Job Descriptive Index measures job satisfaction in five areas: coworkers, the work itself, pay, opportunities for promotion, and supervision. Respondents were asked to reflect on one area at a time and answer "yes", "no", or "cannot decide" to statements about each category. Appendix E shows the survey questions asked of participants taken from the AJDI.

The response to questions from the Abridged Job Descriptive Index were used to conduct chi-square analyses, which test for significant relationships (or associations)

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between two nominal or ordinal variables (Cronk, 2012). The significant results are listed below.

Coworkers. The chi-square analysis comparing the responses of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs professionals to the statement, "My current co-workers are smart," found a significant finding, with 91.72% of Academic Affairs professionals saying "yes," compared to only 80.19% of Student Affairs professionals.

Table 5

Crosstabulation of Division and "My current coworkers are smart"

Division	Response to Statement Yes	No	Cannot Decide
Student Affairs	259 (80.19%)	37 (11.46%)	27 (8.36%)
Academic Affairs	133 (91.72%)	4 (2.76%)	8 (5.52%)

Note. $\chi^2 = 11.311^*$, df = 2. Numbers in parentheses indicate column percentages.
$^*p < .05$

Similarly, the chi-square analysis comparing the responses of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs professionals to the statement, "My current co-workers are dependable," found a significant finding, with 83.45% of Academic Affairs professionals saying "yes," compared to only 75.23% of Student Affairs professionals.

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Table 6

Crosstabulation of Division and "My current coworkers are dependable"

Division	Response to Statement		
	Yes	No	Cannot Decide
Student Affairs	243 (75.23%)	48 (14.86%)	32 (9.91%)
Academic Affairs	121 (83.45%)	10 (6.9%)	14 (9.66%)

Note. $\chi^2 = 5.997^*$, df = 2. Numbers in parentheses indicate column percentages.
*p < .05

Thus, the findings for the *coworkers* category suggests that academic affairs professionals report more positive relationships with coworkers than their counterparts in student affairs.

The work itself. The chi-square analysis comparing the responses of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs professionals to the statement, "My present job is satisfying," found a significant finding, with 80.69% of Academic Affairs professionals saying "yes" compared to 69.97% of Student Affairs professionals.

Table 7

Crosstabulation of Division and "My present job is Satisfying"

Division	Response to Statement		
	Yes	No	Cannot Decide
Student Affairs	226 (69.97%)	67 (20.74%)	30 (9.29%)
Academic Affairs	117 (80.69%)	16 (11.03%)	12 (8.28%)

Note. $\chi^2 = 7.002^*$, df = 2. Numbers in parentheses indicate column percentages.
*p < .05

Similarly, the chi-square analysis comparing the responses of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs professionals to the statement, "My present job is rewarding," found a

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significant finding, with 80.69% of Academic Affairs professionals responding “Yes” compared to only 69.97% of Academic Affairs professionals.

Table 8

Crosstabulation of Division and “My present job is rewarding”

Division	Response to Statement		
	Yes	No	Cannot Decide
Student Affairs	238 (73.68%)	55 (17.03%)	30 (9.29%)
Academic Affairs	124 (85.52%)	16 (11.03%)	5 (3.45%)

Note. $\chi^2 = 8.744^*$, df = 2. Numbers in parentheses indicate column percentages.
$^*p < .05$

Thus, the findings for the *work itself* category suggests that academic affairs professionals answer more favorably when asked about job satisfaction and how rewarding their work is than their counterparts in student affairs.

Pay. The chi-square analyses comparing the responses of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs professionals to the following statements did not yield significant findings: "My present salary is below what I deserve,” “My present salary is well paid,” and “My present salary is comfortable.” This suggests that there was no significant difference in whether student affairs and academic affairs professionals believe they are appropriately compensated for their work.

Opportunities for advancement. The chi-square analysis comparing the responses of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs professionals to the statement, "My current opportunities for advancement are limited" found a significant finding, with 72.14% of Student Affairs professionals saying "yes,” compared to only 63.45% of Academic Affairs professionals.

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Table 9

Crosstabulation of "Opportunities for advancement are limited" by Division

Division	Response to Statement		
	Yes	No	Cannot Decide
Student Affairs	233 (72.14%)	61 (18.89%)	29 (8.98%)
Academic Affairs	92 (63.45%)	29 (20.00%)	24 (16.55%)

Note. $\chi^2 = 6.221^*$, df = 2. Numbers in parentheses indicate column percentages.
$^*p < .05$

Thus, the findings for the *opportunities for advancement* category suggests that academic affairs professionals answer more favorably when asked about opportunities for advancement than their counterparts in student affairs.

Supervision. The chi-square analysis comparing the responses of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs professionals to the statement, "My current supervisor is someone I admire" found a substantive finding, with 66.21% of Academic Affairs professionals saying "yes," compared to 55.11% of Student Affairs professionals.

Table 10

Crosstabulation of Division and "My current supervisor is someone I admire"

Division	Response to Statement		
	Yes	No	Cannot Decide
Student Affairs	178 (55.11%)	86 (26.63%)	59 (18.27%)
Academic Affairs	96 (66.21%)	25 (17.24%)	24 (16.55%)

Note. $\chi^2 = 5.987^*$, df = 2. Numbers in parentheses indicate column percentages.
$^*p < .05$

Thus, the findings for the *supervision* category suggests that academic affairs professionals answer more favorably when asked if their supervision is someone whom they admire, than their counterparts in student affairs.

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Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale. The Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale is a 21-item scale assessing need satisfaction at work (Deci, Ryan, Gagné, Leone, Usunov, & Kornazheva, 2001; Ilardi, Leone, Kasser, & Ryan, 1993; Kasser, Davey, & Ryan, 1992). It measures the 3 psychological conditions which comprise Self-Determination Theory: relatedness, competence, and autonomy (Deci, Ryan, Gagné, Leone, Usunov, & Kornazheva, 2001; Ilardi, Leone, Kasser, & Ryan, 1993; Kasser, Davey, & Ryan, 1992). The scale asks respondents to self-report the level of truth each statement has to their work on a scale of one to seven, where one is not at all true, four is somewhat true, and seven is very true. See Appendix C for the comprehensive Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale and Appendix E for the 18 questions that were asked of participants based on the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale. Some questions were taken directly, whereas others were slightly re-worded.

The responses to questions from the Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale were used to conduct independent samples t-tests, which compare the means of two independent samples (Cronk, 2012). In this instance, the means of each question were compared based on division: student affairs and academic affairs. Table 5 provides the results of all of the tests performed, noting those of significance.

Relatedness. Participants were asked to respond to the statement, “I like the people I work with.” There was a significant difference in the scores for student affairs practitioners ($M=5.53$, $SD=1.340$) and academic affairs practitioners ($M=6.04$, $SD=1.053$) conditions; $t(466)=-4.069$, $p = 0.000$. These results suggest that both sets of professionals like their co-workers, but academic affairs practitioners are more likely to

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like their co-workers. Similarly, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare how student affairs and academic affairs practitioners responded to the statement, “I get along with my coworkers.” There was a significant difference in the scores for student affairs practitioners (M=5.85, SD=1.112) and academic affairs practitioners (M=6.23, SD=0.903) conditions; t(466)=-3.636, p=0.002. This suggests that while both sets of professionals get along with their coworkers, that academic affairs professionals get along better.

Competence. This variable was taken from Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale statement, “People tell me I am good at my job.” An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare how student affairs and academic affairs practitioners have coworkers who believe they perform their job well. There was a significant difference in the scores for student affairs practitioners (M=5.86, SD=1.256) and academic affairs practitioners (M=6.23, SD=1.021) conditions; t(466)=-3.121, p = 0.002. These results suggest that both sets of professionals are told they were good at their job, but academic affairs practitioners received more positive feedback than student affairs practitioners.

Similarly, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare how student affairs and academic affairs practitioners reported feeling a sense of accomplishment at work on most days. There was a significant difference in the scores for student affairs practitioners (M=4.61, SD=1.475) and academic affairs practitioners (M=5.37, SD=1.633) conditions; t(466)=-5.288, p = 0.000. This suggests that academic affairs professionals feel a greater sense of accomplishment.

Additionally, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare if student affairs and academic affairs practitioners feel that their work reflects their capabilities.

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There was a significant difference in the scores for student affairs practitioners (M=4.83, SD=1.633) and academic affairs practitioners (M=5.19, SD=1.638) conditions; t(466)=-2.205, p = 0.028. These results suggest that academic affairs professionals responded more favorably to the statement.

Autonomy. This variable was taken from Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare how student affairs and academic affairs practitioners responded to the statement, "I feel pressure at work." There was a significant difference in the scores for student affairs practitioners (M=4.69, SD=1.579) and academic affairs practitioners (M=4.21, SD=1.542) conditions; t(466)=3.041, p =0.000. These results suggest that both sets of professionals reported feeling a pressure at work, but student affairs professionals felt a greater amount of pressure. Similarly, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare how student affairs and academic affairs practitioners responded to the statement, "My job is stressful." There was a significant difference in the scores for student affairs practitioners (M=5.28, SD=1.577) and academic affairs practitioners (M=4.59, SD=1.665) conditions; t(466)=4.316, p =0.000. These results further suggest that student affairs professionals feel greater levels of stress than their academic affairs counterparts.

Another significant finding in the autonomy competency was evident in the result of the independent-samples t-test conducted to compare how student affairs and academic affairs practitioners express their ideas and opinions at work. There was a significant difference in the scores for student affairs practitioners (M=5.02, SD=1.633) and academic affairs practitioners (M=5.41, SD=1.412) conditions; t(466)=-2.686, p = 0.008.

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These results suggest that academic affairs professionals are more likely to express their ideas and opinions in the workplace.

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Table 11

Independent Samples t-tests of Questions from Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale

	Division			
	Student Affairs	Academic Affairs	*t*	*df*
I have input on how I do my job	5.71 (1.311)	5.90 (1.311)	-1.455	466
I like the people I work with	5.86 (1.256)	6.23 (1.021)	-3.121**	466
I know how to do my job	6.28 (0.917)	6.43 (0.888)	-1.676	466
People tell me I'm good at my job	5.86 (1.256)	6.23 (1.021)	-3.121**	466
Get along with coworkers	5.85 (1.112)	6.23 (0.903)	-3.636**	466
I keep to myself at work	3.84 (1.645)	3.75 (1.734)	.540	466
I feel a lot of pressure at work	4.69 (1.579)	4.21 (1.542)	3.041***	466
The people I work with are my friends	4.46 (1.475)	4.30 (1.459)	1.032	466
I have learned interesting skills at work	5.40 (1.253)	5.50 (1.434)	-.794	466
At work I can deviate from what I am told	4.25 (1.462)	4.35 (1.644)	-.685	466
Most days I feel a sense of accomplishment	4.61 (1.475)	5.37 (1.6330)	-5.288***	466
My work reflects my capabilities	4.83 (1.633)	5.19 (1.638)	-2.205**	466
I can be myself at work	5.30 (1.531)	5.47 (1.509)	-1.087	466
People at work like me	5.64 (1.121)	5.79 (0.999)	-1.404	466
I get to decide how my work gets done	5.35 (1.369)	5.57 (1.383)	-1.598	466
My job is stressful	5.28 (1.577)	4.59 (1.665)	4.316***	466
People at work care about me	5.19 (1.428)	5.40 (1.351)	-1.526	466
I freely express ideas/opinions at work	5.02 (1.633)	5.41 (1.412)	-2.686**	466

Note. ** = $p \leq .05$., *** = $p \leq .001$. Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means.

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Table 11 shows the full list of Independent Samples t-tests of Questions Based on Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale based on respondent's division.

Research Question 2

The second research question explores the question, "How is the job satisfaction of academic affairs professionals who previously worked in student affairs influenced by their experiences in student affairs?"

Abridged Job Descriptive Index. As discussed, the Abridged Job Descriptive Index measures job satisfaction in five areas: coworkers, the work itself, pay, opportunities for promotion, and supervision. Only one area, coworkers, yielded results which were statistically significant. The chi-square analysis comparing the responses of Academic Affairs professionals who previously worked in student affairs to those whom have not to the statement, "My current coworkers are dependable," had a significant finding, with 86.73% of Academic Affairs professionals who previously worked in student affairs responding "yes," compared to only 75.41% of Academic Affairs professionals that never worked in student affairs. This suggests that those who have transitioned from Student Affairs to Academic Affairs are more likely to believe their coworkers are dependable than Academic Affairs professionals who have never worked in student affairs but does not explain why.

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Table 12

Crosstabulation of Academic Affairs Professionals Who Previously Worked in Student Affairs and "My current coworkers are dependable"

	Response to Statement		
Has Transitioned from SA to AA	Yes	No	Cannot Decide
Yes	85 (86.73%)	4 (4.08%)	9 (9.18%)
No	279 (75.41%)	54 (14.59%)	37 (10.00%)

Note. $\chi^2 = 8.241^*$, df = 2. Numbers in parentheses indicate column percentages.
$^*p < .05$

Based on responses to questions based on the AJDI, there were no other significant differences between student affairs practitioners who transition into academic roles and their colleagues whom have never worked in student affairs.

Post-Transition experience. To better account for the experiences of student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs, respondents who transitioned from one division to another were asked questions about their level of preparation for transitioning divisions, accuracy of their perception of the opposite division, job satisfaction post-transition, and if they believe academic affairs is placed on a higher pedestal than student affairs.

Table 13 shows the breakdown of participant's responses to questions in these areas. 74.3% of respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs felt they were prepared or very prepared for their new role after working in student affairs. Only 52.7% of respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs felt that their perception of academic affairs prior to transitioning was moderately or extremely accurate. 54.1% of respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs reported being more satisfied with their job post-transition. Lastly,

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82.4% of respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “Academic affairs is placed on a higher pedestal than student affairs.”

Table 13

Job Satisfaction Post-Transition from SA to AA

	Total	Percent
Preparation to transition from SA to AA		
Not at all prepared	2	2.7%
Somewhat prepared	17	23.0%
Prepared	27	36.5%
Very Prepared	28	37.8%
Total	145	100%
Accuracy of Perception of AA		
Not at all accurate	4	5.4%
Slightly accurate	8	10.8%
Somewhat accurate	23	31.1%
Moderately accurate	25	33.8%
Extremely accurate	14	18.9%
Total	145	100.00%
Job satisfaction post-transition		
Less satisfied after transition	9	12.2%
About the same	25	33.8%
More satisfied after transition	40	54.1%
Total	145	100.00%
"AA is placed on a higher pedestal than SA”		
Strongly disagree	2	2.7%
Disagree	11	14.9%
Agree	37	50.0%
Strongly Disagree	24	32.4%
Total	145	100.00%

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Research Question 3

The final research question of this study is, "How is the motivation of academic affairs professionals who previously worked in student affairs influenced by their experiences in student affairs?"

Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale. As previously discussed, the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale is a 21-item scale assessing need satisfaction at work (Deci, Ryan, Gagné, Leone, Usunov, & Kornazheva, 2001; Ilardi, Leone, Kasser, & Ryan, 1993; Kasser, Davey, & Ryan, 1992). The scale asks respondents to self-report the level of truth each statement has to their work on a scale of one to seven, where one is not at all true, four is somewhat true, and seven is very true. It measures the 3 psychological conditions which comprise Self-Determination Theory: relatedness, competence, and autonomy (Deci, Ryan, Gagné, Leone, Usunov, & Kornazheva, 2001; Ilardi, Leone, Kasser, & Ryan, 1993; Kasser, Davey, & Ryan, 1992). See Appendix C for the comprehensive Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale. Appendix E lists the 18 questions that were asked of participants based on the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale. Some questions were taken directly, whereas others were slightly re-worded.

For this research question, only the data collected from the 74 participants currently working in Academic Affairs who previously worked in Student Affairs were analyzed. This decision was made because the sample size of 145 academic affairs professionals, 74 of which transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs, created two samples that were particularly low for crosstabulating seven-scale questions. Instead, as discussed in Chapter Three, confidence intervals were used in relation to the sample

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means. “Confidence interval gives an estimated range of values which is likely to include an unknown population parameter, the estimated range being calculated from a given set of sample data” (Easton & McColl, 1997). This range is known also known as confidence limits.

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Table 14

CI for Questions Based on Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale

	Question	Competency	Sample Mean	Confidence Intervals at 95% Confidence
Question				
I have input on how I do my job	1	Autonomy	5.74	5.46 to 6.02
I feel a lot of pressure at work	7	Autonomy	4.43	4.09 to 4.77
At work I can deviate from what I am told	10	Autonomy	4.23	3.85 to 4.61
I can be myself at work	13	Autonomy	5.47	5.12 to 5.82
I get to decide how my work gets done	15	Autonomy	5.38	5.02 to 5.74
My job is stressful	16	Autonomy	4.8	4.43 to 5.17
I freely express ideas/opinions at work	18	Autonomy	5.46	5.16 to 5.76
I know how to do my job	3	Competence	6.34	6.13 to 6.55
People tell me I am good at my job	4	Competence	6.16	5.92 to 6.40
I have learned interesting skills at work	9	Competence	5.59	5.32 to 5.86
Most days I feel a sense of accomplishment	11	Competence	5.18	4.83 to 5.53
My work reflects my capabilities	12	Competence	5.16	4.80 to 5.52
I like the people I work with	2	Relatedness	6.08	5.85 to 6.31
I get along with my coworkers	5	Relatedness	6.18	5.97 to 6.39
I keep to myself at work	6	Relatedness	3.86	3.50 to 4.22
The people I work with are my friends	8	Relatedness	4.47	4.12 to 4.82
People at work like me	14	Relatedness	5.84	5.62 to 6.06
People at work care about me	17	Relatedness	5.51	5.22 to 5.80

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Autonomy. The first competency measured by the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale is autonomy. The scale asks respondents to report the level of truth each statement has to their work on a scale of one to seven, where one is not at all true, four is somewhat true, and seven is very true. Overall, respondents indicated feeling a sense of autonomy.

The sample mean of the statement, "I have input on how I do my job" was 5.74 with 95% CI [5.46, 6.02]. However, the mean of the statement "I can deviate from what I am told" was lower—4.23 95% CI [3.85, 4.61]. The later finding is important to note, as a possible population mean of 3.85 is below four (somewhat true). However, the response to the statement, "I can decide how my work gets done" yielded more positive results, with a sample mean of 5.38 with 95% CI [5.02, 5.74]. These values are higher than four (somewhat true), with the upper limit closer to seven (very true). Table 14 lists the questions asked based on the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale, specifying the competency area, sample mean, and confidence intervals.

Competence. The final competency measured by the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale is competence. These questions used the same scale of one to seven as the other competency areas, where one is not at all true, four is somewhat true, and seven is very true. Overall, respondents reported high levels of competence. Particularly noteworthy, was the sample mean of the statement, "I know how to do my job", which was 6.38 with 95% CI [6.13, 6.55]. Additionally, respondents reported receiving positive affirmation from coworkers, as noted by the sample mean of the statement, "People tell me I'm good at my job." The sample mean was 6.16 with 95% CI [5.92, 6.40].

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However, respondents reported lower feelings about their sense of accomplishment and if their work reflects their level of ability. Specifically, the sample mean of the statement, “Most days I feel a sense of accomplishment” was 5.18 with 95% CI [4.83, 5.53]. Furthermore, the sample mean of the statement, “My work reflects my capabilities” was 5.16 with 95% CI [4.80, 5.52]. Table 4 lists the questions asked based on the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale, specifying the competency area, sample mean, and confidence intervals.

Relatedness. The second competency measured by the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale is relatedness. These set of questions used the same scale of one to seven, where one is not at all true, four is somewhat true, and seven is very true. Overall, respondents reported having positive relationships with co-workers and liking them. The sample mean of the statement, “I get along with my coworkers” was 6.18 with 95% CI [5.97, 6.39]. However, a notable finding was that the average respondent disagreed with the statement, “I keep to myself at work,” with a sample mean of 3.86 with 95% CI [3.50, 4.22]. Additionally, the sample mean of the statement, “The people I work with are my friends” was 4.47 with 95% CI [4.12, 4.82]. This suggests that while positive, relationships between respondents and their coworkers are not particularly close. Table 4 lists the questions asked based on the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale, specifying the competency area, sample mean, and confidence intervals.

Qualitative Analysis

This study used a survey research design to explore the three research questions posed. However, two open-ended questions were also included in the survey, one which was asked of participants who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs, with

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the other being asked of participants who made the opposite transition. Given the scope of this study, only the question pertaining to practitioners transitioning from student affairs to academic affairs will be discussed. It should be noted, however, that the open-ended response questions were optional, resulting in approximately half of eligible participants responding.

Table 15

Characteristics of Open-Ended Respondents

	Total	Percent
Transitioned from SA to AA		
Yes	74	51.0%
No	71	49.0%
Total	145	100%
Answered Open-Ended Question		
Yes	33	44.5%
No	41	55.4%
Total	74	100.00%

Participants who reported having transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs were asked what advice they would give to a professional making the same transition. The analysis was guided by Saldaña (2013), Ryan and Bernard (2003) and Merriam (2009) to identify emerging themes from the data. The classification of data into themes was based on the observation of recurring patterns in the data (Merriam, 2009). For the purposes of qualitative analysis, “a theme is an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience and its variant manifestations” (Saldaña, 1995, p. 76). The open-ended responses were initially coded using a priori codes based on the

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dependent variables: (a) satisfaction, (b) autonomy, (c) relatedness, (d) competence. The next step involved process coding, as the initial codes then suggested other related processes (Saldaña, 2013). This allowed for the formation of categories, which led to the creation of themes (Merriam, 2009; Ryan & Bernard, 2003; Saldaña, 2013).

Overall, three themes emerged from the open-ended responses: career trajectory, relationship building, and cultural differences. The first theme revolves around career goals, a "typical" career path, and promotional opportunities in academic affairs compared to student affairs. Central to this theme is the importance of learning positionality and organizational structure to best understand what opportunities a position may lead to. For instance, in student affairs, a Resident Director may wish to pursue an Area Coordinator or Assistant Director position, whereas an Academic Advisor may pursue an Assistant Dean or Dean position. The second theme, relationship building, references support systems, mentors, developing professional relationships, and connecting with faculty. This theme includes using relationships to better understand academic affairs and how to succeed in a new position in a new division. The final theme, cultural differences, refers to norms, expectations, values, and behaviors. This theme also incorporates responses about meeting culture and characteristics of a successful leader in academic affairs. Together, these themes reflect the advice respondents who have transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs would give to other practitioners embarking on the same transition. They also provide context for understanding the subtle and extreme differences between academic and student affairs, as expressed by participants of this study.

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Career trajectory. The first emerging theme based on the analysis of open-ended questions was career trajectory. This theme reflects responses about differences in upward mobility and career paths. One respondent said, "[B]eing a major advisor for a department might be the only front-line position and the next one above that would be dean." Other respondents spoke about level of responsibility, with one saying, "The position I took in academic affairs end up being less responsibility than I had previously, so I was not fulfilled there." This particular response illustrates how level of responsibility impacts autonomy, one of the competencies of Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory. This response also illustrates an inaccurate perception of academic affairs when working in student affairs. This compliments the quantitative findings of this study. Lastly, many respondents discussed the importance of getting connected in order to succeed and excel in their new position, which ties into the second theme, relationship building. One participant said, "Get connected to leadership quickly and share your previous experiences working in student affairs." This response suggests that the inaccurate perception may work both ways, with academic affairs leadership not fully understanding the skills and competencies required to succeed in student affairs.

Relationship building. The second emerging theme was how crucial relationship building is to successfully transitioning from student affairs to academic affairs. One respondent said, "Connect w coworkers early on," whereas another respondent emphasized the importance of connecting with faculty, saying "Get to know faculty members and make connections with academic departments." Some respondents discussed using relationships to improve job effectiveness, saying, "Meet with faculty and departmental representatives to learn more about the majors you will work with."

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Lastly, there was some overlap between the first theme, career trajectory, and the second theme, relationship building, with one respondent saying, "Get connected to leadership quickly and share your previous experiences working in student affairs." Thus, building relationships helps establishing social, which can benefit one's career trajectory.

Cultural differences. The final emerging theme based on the analysis of open-ended responses suggests that there are distinct differences between student affairs and academic affairs culture. Some respondents addressed decision-making, with responses such as, "Don't expect decisions to be logical, visionary or meet student needs." Another respondent referenced policy in relation to culture, saying, "Do your research on your universities policies and procedures when it comes to academic affairs." Another example of this was the response, "Expect that many of your colleagues are there to work their hours and then go home to be with family/loved ones and aren't really looking for social times outside of the office. You will find those who are open to this, but most will not be."

These quotes denote distinct cultural differences between student affairs and academic affairs in terms of policy, values, beliefs, and decision-making. Some respondents provided greater level of detail in their description of cultural differences between student affairs and academic affairs. For instance, one respondent said:

> Don't expect the same type of working environment. I remember from my brief time in student affairs that many of my colleagues were big on ice breakers/getting to know you activities during training sessions. There was a big push for staff development activities and social interactions outside of the office. From my experience in academic affairs, this doesn't really happen so much.

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> Expect that many of your colleagues are there to work their hours and then go home to be with family/loved ones and aren't really looking for social times outside of the office. You will find those who are open to this, but most will not be.

This particular response addresses various differences in divisional culture, focusing heavily on meeting culture and the depth of relationships. This response also denotes a clear distinction in values which guide decision-making, tricking down to meeting culture and relationships between coworkers. This also suggests that the ways in which coworkers form bonds vary by division, with student affairs colleagues forming relationships outside of work and academic affairs colleagues only have relationships in the workplace. Thus, relationships between coworkers in academic affairs may lack depth or closeness.

Integration of Findings

As discussed, both the qualitative and quantitative data show that student affairs professionals do not have accurate perceptions of academic affairs. Additionally, 74.3% of respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs felt they were prepared or very prepared for their new role after working in student affairs. Additionally, only 52.7% of respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs felt that their perception of academic affairs prior to transitioning was moderately or extremely accurate. The qualitative data shows how transitioning from student affairs to academic affairs can result in having less responsibility or oversight, which can negatively affect job satisfaction (and motivation). However, despite the challenges and opportunities that accompany the three qualitative themes of career

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trajectory, relationship building, and cultural differences, 54.1% of respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs reported being more satisfied with their job post-transition. This is slightly more than half of those who transition, suggesting that the other participants who transitioned were just as satisfied or less satisfied post-transition.

Another significant finding when merging the quantitative and qualitative data collected in this study is in the competency of relatedness in Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory. Specifically, the quantitative data collected in this study suggests that academic affairs professionals felt their colleagues were more dependable compared to how student affairs professionals scored their coworkers. One might expect that working in a division where coworkers form close personal relationships would result in a higher perception of dependency of said colleagues. However, it is possible that the formation of closer personal relationships reveals aspects about their coworkers result in believing they are less dependable. Further research is needed to better understand this phenomenon and the relationship between forming personal relationships with coworkers and feeling they are dependable.

Merging the qualitative and quantitative data help clarify areas where student affairs and academic affairs have divergent cultures, values, or philosophies. The quantitative data revealed that 82.4% of respondent who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs agreed or strongly agreed that "Academic affairs is placed on a higher pedestal than student affairs," whereas the qualitative data illustrates how the pedestal manifests itself. For instance, the qualitative data suggests that academic affairs professionals and student affairs professionals work different hours, with student affairs

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practitioners working nights and weekends and academic affairs professionals working more traditional business hours. In this example, one division goes home at 5:00pm and the other continues to work. Additionally, one division sees teambuilding and ice-breakers as integral to meeting culture, whereas the other does not.

Both the qualitative and quantitative analyses helped answer the three research questions. The quantitative data provided overall trends and associations, whereas the qualitative helped provide context to explain the quantitative findings. Other times, as discussed, the data conflicted, indicating a need for additional research.

Conclusion

This chapter reveals the findings of the study. Chapter Five discusses the findings in light of the existent literature on student affairs and academic affairs practitioners, highlights the implications of the study for leadership, policy, practice, and research and provides a set of recommendations for supporting student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs.

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Chapter 5

Discussion and Implications

In this chapter, I will discuss the findings from the data analysis presented in Chapter 4 and related the analysis to the research questions driving this study. I will contextualize the findings by situating them with the extent literature related to the topic of this study. Third, I will present the limitations of the study. Next, I will outline the implications of this study as they relate to policy, practice, leadership, and research. Finally, I will conclude the chapter with a brief discussion of recommendations for student affairs professionals.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore levels of job satisfaction and motivation among student affairs professionals who transition into academic roles to understand how to best support the unique needs of this group of practitioners. Data was collected using a self-administered anonymous survey of student affairs and academic affairs professionals. That various analyses sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How do student affairs and academic affairs professionals rate their job satisfaction and motivation?
2. How is the job satisfaction of academic affairs professionals who previously worked in student affairs influenced by their experiences in student affairs?
3. How is the motivation of academic affairs professionals who previously worked in student affairs influenced by their experiences in student affairs?

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Job Satisfaction

In the context of this study, job satisfaction refers to the extent that employees enjoy their work and remain invested and committed (Tull, 2006). This study used questions taken from the Abridged Job Descriptive Index (AJDI) to measure respondent's job satisfaction.

Academic affairs practitioners report greater levels of satisfaction. The first research question compared job satisfaction between student affairs and academic affairs professionals. This study found that academic affairs professionals demonstrate overall job satisfaction compared to their counterparts in student affairs. Specifically, academic affairs professionals scored higher in four out of five areas measured by the Abridged Job Descriptive Index (AJDI): coworkers, the work itself, opportunities for advancement, and relationship with supervisor. There was no significant difference in the fifth category—pay.

Academic affairs professionals in this study rated that their coworkers as smarter and more dependable compared to how student affairs professionals scored their colleagues. Academic affairs professionals reported being more satisfied and also found their job to be more rewarding than student affairs professionals. Student affairs professionals reported having more limited opportunities for advancement compared to academic affairs professionals. Finally, academic affairs professionals were more likely to admire their supervisor.

The finding that academic affairs professionals are more satisfied than student affairs professionals is not surprising considering that current attrition rates among student affairs professionals are as high as 61% within five years of completing their

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graduate program (Einarsen, Hoel, & Cooper, 2003; Holmes, Verrier, & Chrisholm, 1983; Keashly & Jagatic, 2011; Rosen, Taube, & Wordsworth, 1980; Rosser & Javinar, 2003; Tull, 2006). Academic affairs houses faculty, and faculty members conduct research, which generates revenue, attracts prospective students, and helps secure alumni donations (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Zumeta, 2011). As previously discussed, the need for institutions to secure funds impacts student affairs practice, as many housing programs have turned to public private partnerships (p3's) to reduce or minimize institutional debt while granting private developers access to students or land which they would not be able to access otherwise (Bernstein, 2017).

The competing values of the student development theory practitioners learn in graduate school and the business-model practices, which often guide decision-making, may be a point of contention for some staff (Bernstein, 2017; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Zumeta, 2011). The qualitative analysis in this study revealed that student affairs professionals who transitioned into academic affairs reported that decision-making in student affairs was not always logical or student-centered compared to how they remember them being made in student affairs. As such, practitioners in student affairs who feel decision-making is illogical or not student-centered may be more likely to report job dissatisfaction and disagreement with supervisors and senior leadership. Existing literature shows that disagreement with how organizations make decisions can negatively impact job satisfaction (Arminio & Creamer, 2001; Burns, 1996; Schaufeli, 2016; Tull, 2006). Additionally, the current pool of literature emphasizes the importance of ongoing professional development and training—preparing staff for the realities of the business of higher education could help staff better navigate the complexity of higher education

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leadership and (Cappelli, 2008; Kalleberg, 2009). This need is exacerbated by the fact that many student affairs graduate programs fail to adequately prepare practitioners with the necessary skills and knowledge—designed to have practitioners learn necessarily skills on the job rather than in graduate school (Hirt, Schneiter, & Amelink, 2005).

Unlike prior studies, which either focused on academic affairs or student affairs practitioners, or not clearly distinguishing between the two, the findings of this study contribute to the existing body of literature by collecting data on the experiences of student affairs *and* academic affairs professionals, while also comparing and contrasting responses on the basis of participant's division (Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000; Evans, 1998; Johnsrud, Heck, & Rosser, 2000; Tull, 2006).

Post-Transition motivation and assimilation. The second research question examined job satisfaction among student affairs professionals who transitioned into academic affairs. In this study, 54.1% of respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs reported being more satisfied with their job post-transition. This study found that 51% of academic affairs professionals reported previously working in student affairs, compared to only 9% of student affairs professionals having previously worked in academic affairs. The analyses conducted for the second research question used the data collected from the 74 respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs, comparing their responses to academic affairs professionals whom had not previously worked in student affairs.

These findings are significant, as they expand upon further research, which has primarily focused on how many practitioners exit student affairs and reasons for leaving (Holmes, Verrier, & Chrisholm, 1983; Rosen, Taube, & Wordsworth, 1980; Rosser &

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Javinar, 2003). This does not account for what happens after practitioners leave, what fields, if any, they gravitate towards, or how satisfied they are in their new roles—all of which has implications for how graduate programs in higher education administration and supervisors prepare and develop new professionals. While this study does not fully address these questions, it does account for the post-transition levels of job satisfaction and motivation of student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs.

As discussed, the comparison of student affairs and academic affairs practitioners showed that academic affairs professionals exhibited higher levels of workplace satisfaction and motivation. The comparison of academic affairs professionals who previously worked in student affairs to those whom had not showed no significant difference in four of the five areas measured by the Abridged Job Descriptive Index (the work itself, opportunities for advancement, pay, and relationship with supervisor). However, the influence of coworkers yielded results that were statistically significant. Specifically, academic affairs professionals who previously worked in student affairs ranked their colleagues as more dependable compared to academic affairs professionals whom had never worked in student affairs. There were no other significant differences between the job satisfaction of academic affairs professionals who previously worked in student affairs and those who had not.

The only significant different difference between academic affair professionals who have worked in student affairs and those who have not was in their rating of their coworkers—with those who previously worked in student affairs being more favorable of their academic affairs colleagues. This finding, coupled with the finding that student affairs professionals developed stronger relationships with colleagues outside of work

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suggest that the closeness of these interpersonal relationships may have negatively impacted their professional relationship. This coincides with Strayhorn (2009)'s finding that job satisfaction among student affairs professionals is correlated with the nature of their relationship with peers. In this study, Strayhorn (2009) asserts that staff who report "very positive and supportive" (p. 49) relationships with peers were more satisfied with their work environment and the work itself.

Prior research has examined the relationship between self-determination theory and value normalization, suggesting that students internalized and accepted the values and practices of those they either felt a connection to or wanted to connect with in an effort to grow closer to them (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). However, in the professional context of this study, academic affairs practitioners were more likely to rate their colleague as dependable despite being less likely to report having developed interpersonal relationships with colleagues. These findings are somewhat contradictory, possibly due to the influence of maturation on respondent's level of *relatedness* and value normalization.

Existing research has focused heavily on the influence of the relationship between supervisors and supervisees on job satisfaction (Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000; Evans, 1998; Tull, 2006). For instance, Schaufeli (2016) found that the relationship between supervisors and supervisees has a lasting effect on employees and significantly affects job satisfaction. While the *coworkers* category is from the AJDI, the relatedness competency of Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory incorporates both relationships with coworkers and supervisors.

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Job Motivation

The first and third research questions explored respondent's job motivation. The first research question examined job satisfaction and motivation of student affairs and academic affairs professionals. The findings associated with job satisfaction were discussed in a previous section and the following section will discuss the findings of the first research question as they relate to job motivation. The results of the third research question will be addressed in a subsequent section. In the context of this study, motivation refers to why a person performs an action or task. Specifically, extrinsic motivation refers to acting or performing for a reward (Bénabou & Tirole, 2003; Gagne & Deci, 2005), whereas intrinsic motivation refers to doing so for the sake of doing it (Bénabou & Tirole, 2003; Gagne & Deci, 2005). This study used questions taken from The Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale to measure respondent's job motivation.

Higher motivation among academic affairs professionals. In addition to job satisfaction, the first research question also assessed job motivation between student affairs and academic affairs professionals using Self-Determination Theory and the Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale. This study found that academic affairs professionals scored higher than student affairs professionals in each of the three competencies Self-Determination Theory uses to assess motivation: relatedness, competence, and autonomy. Sense of relatedness refers to a sense of mattering, being interpersonally connected, and feeling cared for (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). Competence refers to feeling effective having mastery of things in environment (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). Lastly, autonomy refers to self-endorsed behavior as a result of

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congruence between beliefs and performance—that is, being able to do what one feels should be done (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). Self-determination theory explores the internalization of values—shifting from being extrinsically to intrinsically motivated, and ultimately, doing something because you want to rather than because you have to (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Jones, 2014). For instance, "As examples, high-school students may not find fun or interest in arduous math problems, and college students in anatomy may not find memorizing the parts of the human body enjoyable. In such cases, intrinsic motivation is not evident and, therefore, students will need other incentives or reasons to learn" (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009).

Autonomy. Student affairs professionals reported higher instances of stress and pressure at work compared to academic affairs professionals. Furthermore, academic affairs professionals were more likely to freely express their ideas and opinions in the workplace, compared to student affairs professionals.

Competence. Academic affairs professionals reported being told more frequently that they were good at their job. Additionally, 74.3% of respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs felt they were prepared or very prepared for their new role as a result of working in student affairs.

Relatedness. In this study, 82.4% of respondent who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs either agreed or strongly agreed that, "Academic affairs is placed on a higher pedestal than student affairs." This is a salient finding in better understanding student affairs and academic affairs cultures and ways to support professionals who transition from division to another. The survey results also suggest that academic affairs professionals like their coworkers more and get along with them better

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than student affairs professionals do. Thus, academic affairs professionals exhibited higher levels of motivation compared to their counterparts working in student affairs. These findings contribute to the existing body of literature by exploring workplace motivation in student affairs and academic affairs work environments. As cited in Niemiec and Ryan (2009), "[H]igh-school students who reported higher autonomous self-regulation for attending college reported higher well-being (vitality, life satisfaction) and lower ill-being (depression, externalizing Problems" (Niemiec et al., 2006;). This suggests that one's level of autonomy extends beyond their level of intrinsic or extrinsic motivation, but also overall wellness. In the context of this study, student affairs professionals reported lower levels of autonomy, relatedness, and competence, which suggest that the decreased levels of job satisfaction and motivation may be, in part, the result of "lower ill-being" (Niemiec et al., 2006; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009).

The lower overall autonomy, relatedness, and competence of student affairs professionals may be due to changes in practice. For instance, many housing and residence life programs in student affairs have shifted from a traditional programmatic approach to a curricular approach, whereby students are engaged in intentional conversation and interactions based on specific learning goals and outcomes (Kerr & Tweedy, 2006), which is indicative of a larger paradigm shift from housing professionals *supporting* student learning to contributing to student learning (Kerr & Tweedy, 2006). This paradigm shift is also explored by Quaye and Harper (2014), who write,

> Negligence is synonymous with magical thinking; simply providing services for students is not sufficient enough to enrich their educational experiences. Rather, we defend a position of intentionality where faculty and student affairs educators

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are conscious of every action they undertake and are able to consider the long-range implications of decisions. (p. 6).

Thus, the lower job satisfaction and motivation exhibited by participants of this study is partially the result of a larger shift in the roles student affairs professionals play in student learning—especially if this does not mirror what practitioners learned in their graduate programs (Buchanan, 2012; Tull, 2006).

Academic affairs offers greener pastures. As discussed in Chapter 4, the final research question examines job motivation of student affairs professionals who transitioned into academic affairs. As such, only the data collected from the 74 participants currently working in Academic Affairs who previously worked in Student Affairs were used to explore this research question. The instrument used for the final research question revealed salient characteristics of this sub-group of participants as they relate to job motivation. The means of this group of respondents was compared to the mean of respondents currently working in student affairs. However, an Independent-Samples *t* Test could not be performed because the survey instrument allowed for cross-pollination of both groups of respondents. It is recommended that future researchers control for this to allow for more sophisticated statistical analyses and a deeper understanding of the phenomenon.

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Table 16

Means of Student Affairs Professionals and Those Who Transition

	Question	Competency	Mean of Student Affairs Professionals	Mean of Respondents Who Transitioned
Question				
I have input on how I do my job	1	Autonomy	5.71	**5.74**
I feel a lot of pressure at work	7	Autonomy	3.84	**4.43**
At work I can deviate from what I am told	10	Autonomy	**4.25**	4.23
I can be myself at work	13	Autonomy	5.30	**5.47**
I get to decide how my work gets done	15	Autonomy	5.35	**5.38**
My job is stressful	16	Autonomy	**5.28**	4.80
I freely express ideas/opinions at work	18	Autonomy	5.02	**5.46**
I know how to do my job	3	Competence	6.28	**6.34**
People tell me I am good at my job	4	Competence	5.86	**6.16**
I have learned interesting skills at work	9	Competence	5.40	**5.59**
Most days I feel a sense of accomplishment	11	Competence	4.61	**5.18**
My work reflects my capabilities	12	Competence	4.83	**5.16**
I like the people I work with	2	Relatedness	5.86	**6.08**
I get along with my coworkers	5	Relatedness	5.85	**6.18**
I keep to myself at work	6	Relatedness	3.84	**3.86**
The people I work with are my friends	8	Relatedness	4.46	**4.47**
People at work like me	14	Relatedness	5.64	**5.84**
People at work care about me	17	Relatedness	5.19	**5.51**

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Autonomy. Table 16 shows a comparison of responses to survey statements based on the Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale by student affairs professionals and current academic affairs professionals that previously worked in student affairs. Overall, respondents who transitioned indicated feeling a sense of autonomy, as demonstrated by responses to the statements, “I have input on how I do my job,” and “I can decide how my work gets done” on a scale where four means somewhat true and seven is very true. Additionally, the means for the statement, “I can deviate from what I am told” were above 4 (somewhat true).

The mean of student affairs professionals was only higher than the mean of those who transitioned into academic affairs in only two statements, of which was, “My job is stressful,” where a higher score denotes a negative experience. This means that student affairs professionals only scored “better” in the statement, “At work I can deviate from what I am told” by 0.02.

The presence or absence of autonomy can influence each of these reasons for leaving, as supported by existing literature, which suggests that common reasons for leaving student affairs include job dissatisfaction, ineffective supervision, a disconnect between theory and practice, burnout, decreased motivation, limited professional development, and boredom at work (Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000; Evans, 1998; Tull, 2006). The mean scores listed in Table 16 are suggestive of a strong sense of autonomy among both groups, meaning that perceived level of autonomy is not contributing to the lower job satisfaction and motivation exhibited by student affairs professionals participating in this study.

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Competence. Overall, respondents reported high levels of competence. The mean of the statement, "I know how to do my job," was particularly interesting, with a mean of 6.38 out of seven. Additionally, respondents reported receiving positive affirmation from coworkers, as noted by the sample mean of the statement, "People tell me I'm good at my job," which had a mean of 6.16. However, respondents reported lower feelings about feeling a sense of accomplishment on most days (5.18) and their work reflecting their capabilities (5.16).

This study found student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs exhibit workplace competence, which is crucial to employee success. This is an interesting finding considering that many supervisors expect for newly-hired staff to either already possess the necessary skills and traits or to learn them while on the job (Burkard et al., 2004; Hirt, 2006; Tull, 2006). These assumptions can negatively impact performance, as it can result in a lackluster onboarding process (Burkard et al., 2004; Hirt, 2006; Hirt, Schneiter, & Amelink, 2005; Tull, 2006). While this study found that this group of practitioners successfully transitioned into their new roles, a limitation is that it does not account for how long it took staff to feel a positive sense of workplace competence.

Additionally, research has found that common reasons for leaving student affairs include ineffective supervision and limited professional development—which can influence a person's workplace competence (Buchanan, 2012; Tull, 2006; Winston & Hirt, 2003). Employer's return on investment for ongoing talent management and professional development far outweighs the costs (Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000; Cappelli, 2008; Lorden, 1998). This is because researchers have found a

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correlation between increases in employee talent, skills, and competence and their levels of productivity and innovation (Cappelli, 2008; Lorden, 1998). Unfortunately, this study did not capture data on professional development opportunities offered to participants in current or previous positions, so it is difficult to capture the influence of training and development on respondent's perceived workplace competence.

Relatedness. In a study of peer relationships among student affairs professionals, 92% of new professionals reported interacting with coworkers more than four times per week, compared to only 68% reporting interacting with their supervisor just as frequently (Strayhorn, 2009). In this same study, 50% of participants rated their peer relationships as "very positive, supportive" (Strayhorn, 2009, p. 48), meaning that half of participants did not. In this study of student affairs professionals who transitioned into academic affairs, respondents generally reported having positive relationships with co-workers. The sample mean of the statement, "I get along with my coworkers" was very high—6.18 out of seven. This finding is vastly different from Strayhorn (2009), who found that half of student affairs professionals rated their relationships with peers as "very positive, supportive" (Strayhorn, 2009, p. 48).

Additionally, in this study of professionals who transition from one division to another, the mean for the statement, "I keep to myself at work," among professionals who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs, had a lower mean of 3.86—which is positive given the implication of the statement. It is not clear how this data compares to Strayhorn's (2009) finding that 92% of professionals interact with their colleagues more than four times per week, as it is possible to keep to one's self and interact with colleagues at least four times per week.

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Lastly, the sample mean of the statement, “The people I work with are my friends” was 4.47 (somewhat true). When integrated with the open-ended data, it seems that while positive, the relationships student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs develop with colleagues may not extend beyond the workday. The open-ended responses supported this finding, with student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs reporting a lack of structured opportunities to develop deeper relationships such as team-building, ice-breakers, and socializing outside of work. These findings support Strayhorn (2009)’s finding that staff who report “very positive and supportive” (p. 49) relationships with peers were more satisfied with their work environment and the work itself. Thus, positive peer relationships can enhance job satisfaction among student affairs professionals, while negative ones can lower it.

This study’s methodology in itself is a contribution to the existing body of literature, as it presents a new way of examining job satisfaction and motivation among student affairs and academic affairs professionals. Unlike prior studies, this study intentionally included participants from both divisions, while also accounting for those who transitioned from one division to the other (Johnsrud, Heck, & Rosser, 2000; Tull, 2006). However, a limitation of the findings of this study is that length of service and job functionality were not controlled for—which could also impact job satisfaction and motivation.

Distinct Values in Student Affairs and Academic Affairs

The final research question explored job motivation among student affairs professionals who transition into academic roles. Respondents who reported having transitioned from one division to another were asked about their experience post-

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transition. 74.3% of respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs felt they were prepared or very prepared for their new role as a result of working in student affairs. Furthermore, 52.7% of respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs felt their perception of academic affairs prior to transitioning was moderately or extremely accurate, further supporting that prominence of cultural differences between student affairs and academic affairs. The existence of cultural differences between both divisions was an emerging theme of the qualitative data analysis, with participants referencing a lack of ice-breakers and team-builders in meetings. Additionally, respondents referenced academic affairs leadership not promoting staff development and social interaction outside of work.

Existing literature has focused heavily on levels of job satisfaction and attrition rates among student affairs practitioners (Einarsen, Hoel, & Cooper, 2003; Holmes, Verrier, & Chrisholm, 1983; Keashly & Jagatic, 2011; Rosen, Taube, & Wordsworth, 1980; Rosser & Javinar, 2003; Tull, 2006). This study contributes to the existing body of literature by comparing and contrasting the cultures of student and academic affairs and using job satisfaction job motivation to better understand attrition rates and how well student affairs professionals transition into academic roles.

Self-Determination Theory

This study used Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory to measure job satisfaction and motivation because it examines how interpersonal and environmental factors influence motivation. Self-determination theory is rooted in positive psychology, positing that motivation is higher when three psychological conditions are met: relatedness, competence, and autonomy. The survey data collected in this study provided

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overall patters and trends among student affairs professionals who transitioned into positions in academic affairs, while also yielding significant differences between the experiences, satisfaction, and motivation of student affairs and academic affairs professionals. As discussed, academic affairs professionals in this study demonstrated higher levels of workplace motivation and job satisfaction than student affairs professionals. However, the quantitative data does not provide context needed to explain these findings. As such, it is recommended that future research exploring job satisfaction or motivation among student affairs or academic affairs profession incorporate some element of qualitative inquiry in order to better capture participant's experiences.

Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory provided a theoretical framework for this study, and the Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale measured participant's levels of motivation at work (Deci, Ryan, Gagné, Leone, Usunov, & Kornazheva, 2001; Ilardi, Leone, Kasser, & Ryan, 1993; Kasser, Davey, & Ryan, 1992). While this instrument provided significant findings regarding participant's levels of relatedness, competence, and autonomy, the statements had a broader scope, with statements such as, "People tell me I am good at my job." As such, this study did not collect data regarding participant's average number of hours worked per week, salary, or their level of agreement with how decisions are made. It is recommended that future research incorporate specific questions based on existing literature, including this study's findings. Other profession-specific topics for questions may include: student development theory, the ability to positively impact student engagement, and helping students learn outside of the classroom may help address the disparity in results between student affairs and academic affairs professionals.

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While not exhaustive, Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory helped build foundational research on job satisfaction and motivation of student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs. Using this theory as the theoretical framework for this study expanded existing research on job satisfaction and the culture of academic and student affairs by going beyond satisfaction and examining how motivation affects student affairs and academic affairs professional's experiences.

In the context of this study, it is important for future research to consider the influence of identity development on career trajectory. For instance, a student leader who had a positive experience during college may develop an interest in working professionally in student affairs but may not be interested in academic affairs. It is important to better understand what attracts professionals to academic affairs and what motivates student affairs professionals to transition to academic affairs. It is possible that this pattern is a normal career trajectory as the student develops into a professional and better understand their own talents and professional interests. However, additional research is needed to ascertain this.

Similarly, external factors such as family may influence motivation in areas such as career path and establishing relationships with colleagues outside of work. For example, a professional may be more passionate about student affairs buy may find academic affairs more appealing given the consistent work schedule and limited after-hour and weekend commitments. Thus, future research should explore other internal and external motivators that may contribute to the patterns and trends that emerged in this study.

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Implications

The findings of this study have implications for policy, practice, research, and leadership in student affairs and academic affairs. Immersing myself in this study's research questions and data has challenged me to ask questions such as: What makes working in student affairs and academic affairs so different? Is academic affairs placed on a higher pedestal? What makes academic affairs a better work environment than student affairs? And lastly, what practices from academic affairs leadership can be adopted into student affairs to improve practitioner job satisfaction and motivation? It is my hope that these questions will be explored in future research, as they have implications for policy, practice, research, and leadership.

Policy

The findings of this study have implications for policy creation and assessment. How are Higher Education Administration graduate programs preparing students to enter a profession that offers such vast work experiences? How are graduate programs helping students frame their understanding of what it means to work in student affairs and academic affairs to help them develop more accurate perceptions. Attrition rates as high as 61% may indicate a disconnect between student's understanding of what it means to work in student affairs versus what it is like to work in student affairs. Hirt (2006) asserts that the work of student affairs practitioners is largely correlated with their institutional type and size. How are graduate programs educating students about this so that they can make informed decisions as they enter the field? Furthermore, how aware are graduate students of the environment and conditions under which they flourish so that they can conduct an informed job search process?

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It is recommended that graduate programs engage students in experiential learning in the form of assistantships, field-placements, and site-visits in both student affairs and academic affairs settings at different types of institutions. This is crucial to success in the field, as institutional type and size influences job satisfaction, which is directly tied to workplace efficiency and productivity (Hirt, 2006; Hoel, Einarsen, & Cooper, 2003; Keashly & Jagatic, 2003). As such, departments need to invest in the satisfaction and motivation of their staff in order to maximize ways in which they can support individual, divisional, and institutional missions and objectives.

The finding that academic affairs professionals in this study reported higher levels of job satisfaction and motivation is also significant to policy formation. Anyone interacting with a current or prospective student affairs professional can help them form realistic expectations, have a meaningful onboarding experience that prepares them to flourish, providing opportunities for ongoing development, creating an environment that promotes open and honest ongoing dialogue, providing compensation packages that reflect meaningful and thoughtful work, helping staff find personal and professional networks and support systems, and providing autonomy as much as possible.

Finally, prior research on attrition among student affairs professionals suggest that the most common reasons practitioners leave the field are shifts in societal values, general job dissatisfaction, relationship with supervisor, disagreement with how decisions are made, employee burnout, decreased motivation, boredom at work, a disconnect between theory and practice, the workplace environment, and not feeling valued (Arminio & Creamer, 2001;Branson, 2006; Buchanan, 2012; Burns, 1996; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Frank, 2013; Grandey, 2002; Jones, 2014; Maslach & Jackson, 1986, Milliman,

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Czaplewski, & Ferguson, 2003; Schaufeli, 2016; Tull, 2006; Ward, 1995). The findings of this study complement existing literature, while also findings other prominent reasons for exiting the field. In this study, work-life balance was the most cited for transitioning into academic affairs, with salary increase being the second most-cited reason. This suggests a need for department, divisional, and institutional leadership to assess existing policies as they relate to work-life balance and compensation in order to increase employee satisfaction, efficiency, and productivity (Hoel, Einarsen, & Cooper, 2003; Keashly & Jagatic, 2003).

Practice

The findings of this study have implications for ways practitioners contribute to student learning. Over half of the academic affairs professionals surveyed in this study reported previously working in student affairs (51%), which establishes a baseline figure where previously none existed. Furthermore, 82.4% of the survey respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs agreed that, “Academic affairs is placed on a higher pedestal than student affairs.” This phenomenon was addressed in the 1996 publication, *The Student Learning Imperative: Implications for Student Affairs*, which called scholars and practitioners to collaborate and come together to “…create conditions that motivate and inspire students to devote time and energy to educationally-purposeful activities, both in and outside the classroom” (Calhoun, 1996). The divisive and unequal political clout of student affairs and academic affairs was also discussed by Bourassa and Kruger (2001), who suggested that academic affairs sat on a higher pedestal than student affairs. The results of this survey suggest that this disparity continues nearly 20 years after both articles were published.

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Attrition rates of 61% are less shocking when taking into account that student affairs is the seemingly the less prestigious and respected division to work in within higher education. It is possible that a self-fulfilling prophecy exists, whereby student affairs professionals work in a less respected division, and challenged with demonstrating their contribution to student learning, work outside of business hours, and seek a new experience (Bourassa & Kruger, 2001; Frank, 2013; Hirt, 2006; Kerr & Tweedy, 2006; Tull, 2006).

Literature supports and calls for increased collaboration between student affairs and academic affairs practitioners. This is critical to the development of high-impact practices and student affairs and academic affairs practitioners better understanding each division's unique contributions to student learning, development, and success. The fact that only 52.7% of respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs felt their perception of academic affairs prior to transitioning was moderately or extremely accurate indicates that those practitioners transitioned into an unfamiliar environment. Without appropriate support, this has the potential to negatively impact motivation, which is comprised of competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Aside from viewing their colleagues as more dependable, the respondents of this survey who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs showed no significant difference in job satisfaction or motivation compared to academic affairs professionals who never worked in student affairs. However, academic affairs professionals reported higher levels than student affairs professionals and also were more likely to admire their supervisor.

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The finding that academic affairs professionals are generally more satisfied than their student affairs counterparts has implications for student affairs divisions demonstrating effectiveness, as existing research suggests that satisfied employees exhibit higher levels of workplace efficiency and productivity (Hoel, Einarsen, & Cooper, 2003; Keashly & Jagatic, 2003). Thus, it is imperative that leadership explore ways to foster better experiences with coworkers, the work itself, opportunities for advancement, and relationship with supervisor for student affairs professionals.

The quantitative analyses suggest that practitioners transitioning from student affairs to academic affairs acclimate well, as indicated by there being only one significant difference in how academic affairs professionals that previously worked in student affairs and those who never worked in student affairs responded to the survey questions. The only notable difference was that academic affairs professionals who previously worked in student affairs were more likely to believe their academic affairs coworkers were dependable than those who never worked in student affairs. It is recommended that senior student affairs leadership assess staff and team dynamics to foster a culture of support, accountability, and respect. The qualitative data indicates that student affairs fosters interpersonal relationships between coworkers, while the quantitative results demonstrates a perceived lack of follow-through of coworkers in student affairs. Many open-ended responses reinforced the absence of ice-breakers, team-builders, or staff-development activities in academic affairs compared to student affairs work settings. Supervisor may wish to work with their supervisees to establish professional expectations and boundaries before exploring personal ones, which could potentially interfere with professional success.

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Given that current attrition rates are as high as 61%, it is recommended that supervisors provide and request ongoing feedback to help supervisees learn and develop, while providing them with opportunities to help shape their professional experiences. Ongoing regular communication can ameliorate issues or concerns negatively impacting performance, job satisfaction, or job motivation. Capturing this in early onset can help reduce attrition by improving satisfaction and motivation, which can improve performance.

The survey data suggests that affairs personnel are less likely to admire their supervisors. Thus, it is imperative that supervisors engage supervisees in intentional dialogue to better understand ways to support and motivate supervisees to create a positive environment for them. Existing literature emphasizes the influence supervisors have on job satisfaction (Tull, 2006). It is important to revisit how supervisors are coached and trained to support their supervisees. It is important to better understand characteristics of effective supervisors in higher education and whether those traits vary by division or functional area.

The results of this study also suggest that standards of professionalism vary between student affairs and academic affairs. For instance, in student affairs, it was not only acceptable, but almost expected for professionals to engage in team-building activities that result in self-disclosure, whereas this was not reported in academic affairs. It is recommended that leaders and supervisors explore this to understand their existing culture and how it impacts employee's levels of satisfaction and motivation, and professional identity.

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Lastly, existing literature and the findings of this study reflect a paradigm shift from student affairs professionals *supporting* student learning to *contributing* to student learning (Kerr & Tweedy, 2006). Student affairs professionals are educators. They help students develop life-skills and manage issues impacting their academics. While there are distinct differences between both divisions, it important to acknowledge erosion of some of the differences between student affairs and academic affairs. Such erosion directly impacts how higher education administration graduate programs prepare students to enter the profession as well as how practitioner's job satisfaction and motivation post-graduation.

Research

Existing research on attrition among student affairs professionals is robust, focusing heavily on job satisfaction and reasons for leaving. However, the findings of this study suggest that academic affairs professionals demonstrate statistically significantly higher levels of job satisfaction and motivation in the workplace. Thus, an equally robust pool of research is recommended to better understand why and how academic affairs professionals are so much more satisfied and motivated at work. In addition to improving the experience of academic affairs professionals, this line of research has the potential to identify specific ways to enhance the experiences of student affairs professionals.

The findings of this study suggest that academic affairs professionals are more satisfied and motivated at work than student affairs professionals, with 82.4% of respondents working in academic affairs that previously worked in student affairs agreed that, "Academic affairs is placed on a higher pedestal than student affairs." Exploring this

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phenomenon may allow for the implementation of targeted interventions to improve the experiences of student affairs professionals.

This study used modified versions of the Abridged Job Descriptive Index and the Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale to measure job satisfaction and motivation, respectively. With the field lacking a formal instrument to measure job satisfaction and motivation among student affairs and academic affairs professionals, researchers may wish to use these modified instruments in the field for further validation. It would be suggested that questions be more tailored to the experiences and work responsibilities of professionals working in student and academic affairs rather than overall workplace satisfaction and motivation.

This study was quantitative, with the exception of two open-ended questions asked of participants. Future researchers may wish to conduct qualitative or mixed-methods research to collect rich data, context, and narratives in relation to overall patterns and trends.

A limitation of the findings of this study is that length of service and job functionality are not controlled for. It is recommended that future research better control for their influence on job satisfaction and motivation to better account for the strength of division and transition as independent variables. For instance, it would be helpful for supervisors to understand how levels of job satisfaction and motivation may vary according to functional area (i.e. housing and residence life).

Lastly, it is recommended that future researchers explore qualitative or mixed-methods research to explore job satisfaction and motivation among student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs. A limitation of quantitative research is

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that it does not provide the context for the observed pattern, making it difficult to explain "why" (Creswell, 2014). For example, academic affairs professionals in this study reported higher levels of job satisfaction and motivation than their colleagues in student affairs, but reasons they were more satisfied were not explicitly clear.

Leadership

This study aimed to fill the existing gap in literature on student affairs professionals who transition into academic roles. It also provides a foundation for other researchers interested in studying this population or who wish to expand upon or replicate existing research. This study has implications for supervisors and leaders at all levels of institutions of higher education, who navigate politics, organizational change, and managing employee expectations. This study found that academic affairs professionals are more likely to admire their supervisor compared to student affairs professionals. It is important to understand why this occurs and what styles of supervision help staff feel supported, valued, and motivated. Leaders are facing increasing pressure to demonstrate institutional effectiveness, which is more difficult to do with unsatisfied and unmotivated employees (Bender, 1980; Buchanan, 2012; Cappelli, 2008; Evans, 1998; Lorden, 1998Saks, 2005; Tull 2006; Zumeta, 2011).

Student affairs and academic affairs professionals are leaders on campus. They directly and indirectly impact student's experiences. The policies they create, decisions they make, programs they implement, and how they interact with students can have a lasting impact on their learning, engagement, and development. A dissatisfied employee is likely less effective and productive, which is a disadvantage to students and an institution's reputation.

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Conclusion

The purpose of this survey research study was to explore levels of job satisfaction and motivation among student affairs professionals who transition into academic roles to understand how to best support the unique needs of this group of practitioners. This study contributes to the existing body of research by going beyond job satisfaction and use Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory to explore job motivation of student affairs professionals, academic affairs professionals, and student affairs professionals who transition into academic affairs. Additionally, this study collected data from both student affairs professionals and academic affairs professionals in order to expand the current body of literature on job satisfaction among both sets of practitioners, as well as those whom transition from student affairs to academic affairs. Finally, this study furthered existing research by comparing and contrasting data collected from student affairs and academic affairs professionals.

This study found that academic affairs professionals exhibited higher levels of job satisfaction and motivation than student affairs professionals. Using the Abridged Job Descriptive Index to measure job satisfaction, academic affairs professionals scored higher in four out of five areas: coworkers, the work itself, opportunities for promotion, and supervision. There was no significant difference in how both groups of respondent's level of satisfaction with their pay.

The results of this study suggest student affairs professionals who transition into academic roles only exhibited one significant difference in job satisfaction compared to their academic affairs colleagues who never worked in student affairs. The difference was that practitioners who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs believed their

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colleagues in academic affairs were more reliable. Exploration of job satisfaction of student affairs professionals who transitioned into academic affairs found that, in this study, 74.3% of respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs felt they were prepared or very prepared for their new role after working in student affairs. Only 52.7% of respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs felt that their perception of academic affairs prior to transitioning was moderately or extremely accurate. 54.1% of respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs reported being more satisfied with their job post-transition. Finally, 82.4% of respondent who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "Academic affairs is placed on a higher pedestal than student affairs."

Lastly, the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale measures job motivation in the three competency areas which comprise Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Overall, respondents who transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs reported feeling a sense of autonomy, with a sample mean of 5.74 out of 7 for the statement, "I have input on how I do my job." Overall, respondents reported high levels of competence, with a sample mean of 6.38 out of 7 for the statement, "People tell me I'm good at my job." Lastly, respondents scored high in the area of relatedness, with respondents reporting positive relationships with colleagues, as indicated by a sample mean of 6.18 out of 7 for the statement, "I get along with my coworkers."

This survey research design study also included an open-ended question to the respondents who indicated that they transitioned from student affairs to academic affairs,

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asking them what advice they would give to someone about to embark on this transition. Through qualitative data analysis, three themes emerged, indicating notable differences between student affairs and academic affairs culture in: career trajectory, relationship building, and cultural differences.

Finally, study explored a phenomenon that is not reflected in the current body of research. I hope that this study encourages graduate students, faculty, and student affairs and academic affairs professionals of all levels to reflect on what brings them joy, excitement, and a sense of fulfillment in a professional setting; so that they can be their best selves at work. Furthermore, I hope that the findings of this study encourage students, faculty, and practitioners to engage in much-needed discourse to help graduate students in higher education administration programs to frame realistic job expectations and develop the skills they will need to flourish in higher education during a time of increased marketization and privatization. Lastly, I hope that the findings of this study inform policy, practice, research, and leadership to help student affairs and academic affairs be perceived as equally distinguished, respected, and necessary in shaping college student's experiences.

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Appendix A

eIRB Notice of Approval

** This is an auto-generated email. Please do not reply to this email message.
The originating e-mail account is not monitored.
If you have questions, please contact your local IRB office **

DHHS Federal Wide Assurance Identifier: FWA00007111
IRB Chair Person: Harriet Hartman
IRB Director: Sreekant Murthy
Effective Date: 9/29/2017

eIRB Notice of Approval

STUDY PROFILE

Study ID: Pro2017001887

Title: DETERMINING JOB SATISFACTION AND MOTIVATION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS PROFESSIONALS THAT TRANSITION INTO ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Principal Investigator:	Ane Johnson	**Study Coordinator:**	None
Co-Investigator(s):	Angel Hernandez	**Other Study Staff:**	There are no items to display
Sponsor:	Pending	**Approval Cycle:**	Not Applicable
Risk Determination:	Minimal Risk	**Device Determination:**	Not Applicable

Review Type:	Exempt	**Exempt Category:**	2
Subjects:	50		

CURRENT SUBMISSION STATUS

Submission Type:	Research Protocol/Study	**Submission Status:**	Approved
Approval Date:	9/29/2017	**Expiration Date:**	N/A

Pregnancy Code:	No Pregnant Women as Subjects	**Pediatric Code:**	No Children As Subjects	**Prisoner Code:**	No Prisoners As Subjects

Protocol:	Survey Consent Form as of 9.29.17 Survey Instrument as of 9.29 Study Protocol as of 9.28 E-Mail Invitation 9.29.17	**Consent:**	Study Protocol as of 9.28.pdf Survey Instrument as of 9.29.pdf	**Recruitment Materials:**	Email Invitation

* **Study Performance Sites:**

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Glassboro Campus Self-administered web-based survey--no physical address

There are no items to display

ALL APPROVED INVESTIGATOR(S) MUST COMPLY WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. Conduct the research in accordance with the protocol, applicable laws and regulations, and the principles of research ethics as set forth in the Belmont Report.
2. **Continuing Review:** Approval is valid until the protocol expiration date shown above. To avoid lapses in approval, submit a continuation application at least eight weeks before the study expiration date.
3. **Expiration of IRB Approval:** If IRB approval expires, effective the date of expiration and until the continuing review approval is issued: **All research activities must stop unless the IRB finds that it is in the best interest of individual subjects to continue. (This determination shall be based on a separate written request from the PI to the IRB.) No new subjects may be enrolled and no samples/charts/surveys may be collected, reviewed, and/or analyzed.**
4. **Amendments/Modifications/Revisions**: If you wish to change any aspect of this study, including but not limited to, study procedures, consent form(s), investigators, advertisements, the protocol document, investigator drug brochure, or accrual goals, you are required to obtain IRB review and approval prior to implementation of these changes unless necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects.
5. **Unanticipated Problems**: Unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or others must be reported to the IRB Office (45 CFR 46, 21 CFR 312, 812) as required, in the appropriate time as specified in the attachment online at: http://www.rowan.edu/som/hsp/
6. **Protocol Deviations and Violations**: Deviations from/violations of the approved study protocol must be reported to the IRB Office (45 CFR 46, 21 CFR 312, 812) as required, in the appropriate time as specified in the attachment online at: http://www.rowan.edu/som/hsp/
7. **Consent/Assent**: The IRB has reviewed and approved the consent and/or assent process, waiver and/or alteration described in this protocol as required by 45 CFR 46 and 21 CFR 50, 56, (if FDA regulated research). Only the versions of the documents included in the approved process may be used to document informed consent and/or assent of study subjects; each subject must receive a copy of the approved form(s); and a copy of each signed form must be filed in a secure place in the subject's medical/patient/research record.
8. **Completion of Study:** Notify the IRB when your study has been stopped for any reason. Neither study closure by the sponsor or the investigator removes the obligation for submission of timely continuing review application or final report.
9. The Investigator(s) did not participate in the review, discussion, or vote of this protocol.
10. Letter Comments: *There are no additional comments.*

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Appendix B

Survey Consent Form

Survey Consent Form

You and 200 other participants are invited to participate in this online research survey entitled Determining Job Satisfaction and Motivation of Student Affairs Practitioners Who Transition into Academic Affairs. The survey may take approximately 12 minutes to complete.

To participate in this study, you must be 18 years or older and currently work in student affairs or academic affairs. The Investigator is Dr. Ane Johnson (johnsona@rowan.edu) and Angel Hernandez will be serving as her co-investigator. The purpose of this study is to explore levels of satisfaction and motivation among student affairs professionals who transition into academic roles to understand how to best support the unique needs of this group of practitioners.

There are no foreseeable risks associated with the study. There may be no direct benefit to you however, by participating in this study, you may help improve how student affairs professionals across the country are trained and developed to flourish in their positions and encourage additional research. **Completing this survey indicates that you are voluntarily giving consent to participate in the survey.**

Your response will be kept confidential. We will store the data in a secure computer file and the file will be destroyed once the data has been published. Any part of the research that is published as part of this study will not include your individual information. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Angel Hernandez at hernandeza@rowan.edu.

Please complete the checkboxes below:
☐ To participate in this survey, you must be 18 years or older
☐ Completing this survey indicates that you are voluntarily giving consent to participate in the survey

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Appendix C

Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale

1. I feel like I can make a lot of inputs to deciding how my job gets done.
2. I really like the people I work with.
3. I do not feel very competent when I am at work.
4. People at work tell me I am good at what I do.
5. I feel pressured at work.
6. I get along with people at work.
7. I pretty much keep to myself when I am at work.
8. I am free to express my ideas and opinions on the job.
9. I consider the people I work with to be my friends.
10. I have been able to learn interesting new skills on my job.
11. When I am at work, I have to do what I am told.
12. Most days I feel a sense of accomplishment from working.
13. My feelings are taken into consideration at work.
14. On my job, I do not get much of a chance to show how capable I am.
15. People at work care about me.
16. There are not many people at work that I am close to.
17. I feel like I can pretty much be myself at work.
18. The people I work with do not seem to like me much.
19. When I am working I often do not feel very capable.
20. There is not much opportunity for me to decide for myself how to go about my work.

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21. People at work are pretty friendly towards me.

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Appendix D

Abridged Job Descriptive Index

People on Your Present Job

Think of the majority of people with whom you work or meet in connection with your work. How well does each of the following words or phrases describe these people? In the blank beside each word or phrase below, write

Y for "Yes" if it describes the people with whom you work
N for "No" if it does not describe them
? for "?" if you cannot decide

__ Boring
__ Slow
__ Responsible
__ Smart
__ Lazy
__ Frustrating

The Job Descriptive Index
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Job in General

Think of your job in general. All in all, what is it like most of the time? In the blank beside each word or phrase below, write

Y for "Yes" if it describes your job
N for "No" if it does not describe it
? for "?" if you cannot decide

__ Good
__ Undesirable
__ Better than most
__ Disagreeable
__ Makes me content
__ Excellent
__ Enjoyable
__ Poor

The Job In General Scale
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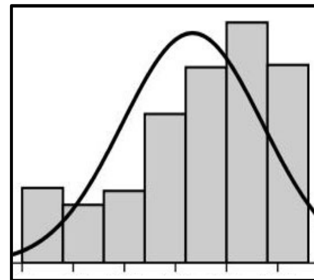
ABRIDGED JOB DESCRIPTIVE INDEX



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Abridged Job in General Scale

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Work on Present Job

Think of the work you do at present. How well does each of the following words or phrases describe your work? In the blank beside each word or phrase below, write

Y for "Yes" if it describes your work
N for "No" if it does not describe it
? for "?" if you cannot decide

__ Fascinating
__ Satisfying
__ Good
__ Exciting
__ Rewarding
__ Uninteresting

Pay

Think of the pay you get now. How well does each of the following words or phrases describe your present pay? In the blank beside each word or phrase below, write

Y for "Yes" if it describes your pay
N for "No" if it does not describe it
? for "?" if you cannot decide

__ Barely live on income
__ Bad
__ Well paid
__ Underpaid
__ Comfortable
__ Enough to live on

Opportunities for Promotion

Think of the opportunities for promotion that you have now. How well does each of the following words or phrases describe these? In the blank beside each word or phrase below, write

Y for "Yes" if it describes your opportunities for promotion
N for "No" if it does not describe them
? for "?" if you cannot decide

__ Good opportunities for promotion
__ Opportunities somewhat limited
__ Dead-end job
__ Good chance for promotion
__ Fairly good chance for promotion
__ Regular promotions

Supervision

Think of the kind of supervision that you get on your job. How well does each of the following words or phrases describe this? In the blank beside each word or phrase below, write

Y for "Yes" if it describes the supervision you get on the job
N for "No" if it does not describe it
? for "?" if you cannot decide

__ Praises good work
__ Tactful
__ Influential
__ Up to date
__ Annoying
__ Knows job well

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Appendix E

Questions From Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale

1. I have input on how I do my job
2. I like the people I work with
3. I know how to do my job
4. People tell me I am good at my job
5. I get along with my coworkers
6. I keep to myself at work
7. I feel a lot of pressure at work
8. The people I work with are my friends
9. I have learned interesting skills at work
10. At work I can deviate from what I am told
11. Most days I feel a sense of accomplishment
12. My work reflects my capabilities
13. I can be myself at work
14. People at work like me
15. I get to decide how my work gets done
16. My job is stressful
17. People at work care about me
18. I freely express ideas/opinions at work

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Appendix F

Survey Questions Based on Abridged Job Descriptive Index

1. My present job is satisfying
2. My present job is exciting
3. My present job is rewarding
4. My present salary is below what I deserve
5. My present salary is well paid
6. My present salary is comfortable
7. My present opportunities for promotion are good
8. My present opportunities for promotion are limited
9. My present opportunities for promotion are non-existent
10. My current supervisor is appreciative of me
11. My current supervisor is tactful
12. My current supervisor is up-to-date
13. My current supervisor is someone I admire
14. My current supervisor is pleasant
15. My current supervisor is invested in me
16. My current co-workers are entertaining
17. My current co-workers are smart
18. My current co-workers are dependable
19. My current co-workers are hardworking

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